

Voter Turnout in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Michaelmas 2010

Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of DPhil in Politics in the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Oxford.

Word Count: 90,797

Abstract

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This thesis addresses the question of who votes in Africa and why. It uses three sets of quantitative data at three different levels to test its claims: an original compilation of national level institutional and socioeconomic indicators for over 700 elections from independence until 2006 compiled by the author; the Afrobarometer survey of almost 50 000 voters in 17 multiparty African regimes; and the first ever purpose-built survey aimed at testing rational choice turnout models in an African case study, which was designed, administered and analysed by the author in 2005 in Durban, South Africa. It uses a mixture of statistical methods to test comprehensively the determinants of voting in pooled and multilevel, logistic and linear, individual and national level models.

It finds that the central claims of the rational choice model do not generally apply in African elections. Both the closeness of the election and the costs of participation are not found to be central to the voting calculus of African voters. Instead those citizens who face the highest barriers to participation in the West: the rural, poor and minimally educated, are the citizens who vote most in Africa. The thesis argues that this is because turnout in Africa is mobilised turnout and these are the groups of people targeted by mobilising agents. It further finds that three central institutions of African politics; ethnicity, clientelism and regime type further structure patterns of mobilisation in ways that have been entirely neglected in studies of turnout until now. Finally, it confirms that voting is habitual and that voters are socialised by formative experiences in their youth, especially the nature of the regime that they grow up in and how democratic they think the country is.

Acknowledgements

My study at Oxford was funded first by the Cecil Renaud Foundation and then by the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission. Without their funding I would never have been able to come up to Oxford and I am incredibly grateful for their support. I'm also grateful for the comments and suggestions made at the various seminars and conferences that this work was presented at in some form or another.

My academic journey owes its beginnings to Prof Raphael De Kadt (formerly of the University of Natal) and to Mr Jeremy Hall (formerly of Glenwood High School), both of whom probably do not realise just how important they were to me at the time. At Oxford my supervisors Gavin Williams and James Tilley have always been very helpful. Dr Tilley has always been available and his help on the statistical methods which underpin this thesis was crucial. I am incredibly indebted to him for his kindness and willingness to put up with me. Gavin has been more than a supervisor. He has been a friend, a mentor and is an academic giant who has defined the discipline of African politics.

Special thanks must go to my family and friends. My parents have always been supremely supportive and encouraged me even when they didn't quite understand why I didn't just get a job after one, two, three and hopefully four degrees. Thank you also to my brother and sister for putting up with all my moaning and for the long distance phone calls. To my girlfriend Lou, thank you for putting up with me and looking after me. I know that this has been a very long journey and one that was just as hard for you as for me. I love you very much.

I need to thank all the people in Durban who responded to my rather lengthy survey and the Councillors who I interviewed. This thesis is your story.

Finally, thank you God for always being there and for getting me through this. I could never have done it without you.

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We need to be empirical - that is, to take seriously the specific problems of establishing evidence and justifying interpretations. This is completely opposed to empiricism, the nonsensical doctrine of that straw man who thinks that the facts, or sources, speak for themselves.¹

The great difficulties which confront scientific knowledge in this realm (Politics) arise from the fact that we are not dealing here with rigid, objective entities but with tendencies and strivings in a constant state of flux²..... We are dealing here with a dynamic process in man, in that his characteristics emerge in the course of his concrete conduct and in confrontation with actual problems.³

¹ Williams G. 1979."Towards a Socialist History: In Defence of History" *History Workshop Journal* Vol 7 No. 1:118-9.

² Mannheim K. 1936. *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*.:103.

³ Mannheim K. 1936: 151.

Part A⁴

⁴ The structure of this section is derived primarily from Creswell, J. 2003. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* and King G, Keohane R, and Verba S. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry*.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Statement of Problem

Voting is fundamental to representative politics, even if it is not, as Schumpeter⁵ insists, all that defines it. A study of turnout helps us to gain a greater understanding of citizens' attitudes to their systems of rule through their participation in the process, and their understanding of what participation means. The act of voting in regular, competitive elections delineates the boundaries of democracy and is the key feature in determining the health of a democracy.⁶ Uniquely, it is the only form of participation open to all citizens, equally.⁷ It is also representative politics' most widespread articulation, always included in studies of political participation,⁸ and it is the only form of participation that is totally private and open to engagement free from interference.⁹ It is indispensable,¹⁰ a right won after serious struggle,¹¹ the symbol of citizenship itself. By voting citizens signal acceptance of the system and their role therein.¹²

Low turnout is a serious problem for politics; it is seen to create a bias against the poorer members of society who are perceived as least likely to vote and thus creates undue influence by the more affluent. It can change electoral outcomes,¹³ result in the election of illegitimate or unpopular governments,¹⁴ or effect a loss of legitimacy for the system as a

⁵ Schumpeter J.1962. *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*:242.

⁶ Blais A, Gidengil E, Nevitte N and Nadeau R.2001. "The Evolving Nature of Non-Voting," paper delivered at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association.

⁷ Crewe I. 1981. "Electoral Participation" in Butler D, Penniman H and Ranney A (eds).1981. *Democracy at the Polls: A Comparative Study of Competitive National Elections*.

⁸ De Rooij E. nd. "The Structure of Political Participation: Types and Dimensions of political participation in Europe"

⁹ Rokkan S.1962. "The Comparative Study of Political Participation: Notes towards a perspective on current research" in Ranney A (ed.) *Essays on the Behavioural Study of Politics*.

¹⁰ Perea E.2002. "Individual Characteristics, institutional incentives and electoral abstention in Western Europe." *European Journal of Political Research* 41:643-673.

¹¹ Crewe I. 1981.

¹² De Rooij, E. nd.

¹³ Hansford T and Gomez B. 2010. "Estimating the electoral effects of Voter Turnout. *American Political Science Review* Vol. 104 No 2. This claim is contested by a number of researchers including Lutz and Marsh (2007), Wattenburg (2002) and Brunell and DiNardo (2004) who find that in the West, voters and non-voters have very similar preferences. This may be less likely to be the case in the African context where violence and intimidation may depress opposition turnout.

¹⁴ MORI. 2005. "Don't Count on My Vote".

whole.¹⁵ Policy makers and politicians often ignore groups that systematically decline to participate in elections,¹⁶ particularly when modern statistical analysis makes these groups relatively easy to identify, generating an unrepresentative policy agenda.¹⁷ However, non-voting can also be seen as a potential tool of those alienated from the political process, who use it as a means to express their dissatisfaction with either the political system as a whole, or a party so hegemonic that voting is meaningless. It could thus be that the politically-informed who do not vote¹⁸ do so either as a protest, or to show satisfaction with a system where individuals feel secure enough not to need to vote.¹⁹ This might be particularly the case in electoral authoritarian regimes which use elections to reinforce their legitimacy.²⁰

We need to understand voters in context²¹ and to overcome the dominance of the American and European cases in comparative government in general²² and the voter turnout literature in particular.²³ There is a wide variance in turnout patterns across Africa,²⁴ and even though over 750 national elections have taken place in Africa since independence,²⁵ little research has been done on voter turnout on the continent²⁶ as a whole, even less on South Africa and almost none on local government elections and individual cities. Before evaluating *how* people in Africa vote, it is necessary to know *who* actually votes and *why*.²⁷ After focusing on democratisation as an international trend for over thirty years, Hiskey and Bowler argue that the interesting question now is to see whether political participation can be

¹⁵ Kohler U and Rose R. 2008. "Under what conditions can voters non-voters affect an elections outcome?" *Studies in Public Policy* Number 438.

¹⁶ Doppelt J and Shearer E.1999.*Nonvoters*.

¹⁷ Teixeira R.1992. *The Disappearing American Voter*.

¹⁸ Lipset S.1960. *Political Man*.

¹⁹ Butler D et al (eds).1981.*Democracy at the Polls : A Comparative Study of National Elections*.

²⁰ Schleiter, A (ed). 2006. *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*.

²¹ Curtice J. 2002. "The state of election studies" in Franklin M and Wlezien C. 2002. *The Future of Election Studies*.

²² Dalton R. 1991. 'Comparative Politics of the Industrial Democracies: From the Golden Age to Island-hopping' in Crotty W (ed) *Political Science: Looking to the Future Vol 2: Comparative Politics, Policy and International Relations*: 15-43.

²³ Bratton M, Chu Y and Lagos M. 2010. "Who votes? Implications for New Democracies" in *Taiwan Journal of Democracy* Vol. 6 No. 1: 107-136.

²⁴ May, R. 2000. "The Limits of Democracy in Commonwealth Africa". *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* Vol. 38 No. 3:171-180

²⁵ Authors Data set.

²⁶ Throughout this thesis "Africa" shall mean Africa south of the Sahara.

²⁷ Abrahamson P, Aldrich J, Rohde D.2003.*Change and Continuity in the 2000 and 2002 elections*.

strengthened and consolidated within democratising countries.²⁸ This thesis will try to fill this gap and initiates the process of theory building to account for who votes in Africa, and why they do so.

1.2 Studying Elections in Africa: Where to begin?

Before we begin there is a major issue that needs to be addressed, one rarely encountered in studies of voter participation in Europe and the United states. If this thesis is to be a study of voter turnout in elections in Africa, which elections are we looking at? Many African people may be fairly recent participants in democracy, but they are not new to elections. Even the most repressive African regimes, have had regular mass elections for over fifty years with many of the formal characteristics of the elections that occur in the West.²⁹ Ballot boxes, election campaigns and mass mobilisation have all been part of the lived experience of people in regimes as diverse as the military governments of Nigeria and Ghana, the one party states of Zambia and Kenya, the white settler states of Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and South Africa, and the relatively successful democracies of Botswana and Mauritius. While real choice has often been limited or non-existent, and while many if not most, of these elections have by no means been “free and fair”,³⁰ it is a fallacy to assume that elections are not part of the lived experience of African people.

Indeed, the formal distinction between democracies and non-democracies is often of limited use. Countries like Botswana³¹ and post-apartheid South Africa³² are commonly held to be democracies in spite of having no viable opposition candidates for fifty and fourteen years respectively. The semi competitive one party regimes of Zambia, Kenya, Malawi and

²⁸ Hiskey J and Bowler S. 2005. "Local context and democratisation in Mexico" *American Journal of Political Science* 49:57-71

²⁹ Ogendo O. 1999. "The quest for constitutional government" in Hyden G, Ogendo O and Olowu D (eds). *The Politics of Opposition in Africa*.

³⁰ Adejumo A. 2000. "Elections in Africa: A Fading Shadow of Democracy." *International Political Science Review*. 21(1) : 59-73.

³¹ Swatuk L. 1999. "Botswana: The Opposition implodes" *Southern African Report* 14(3).

³² Habib A and Taylor R. 2001. "Political Alliances and parliamentary opposition Post Apartheid South Africa". *Democratisation* 8(1).

Tanzania consistently held parliamentary elections where real contests occurred between candidates³³ (even if not between parties) and where incumbents were defeated if they did not provide material benefits for their constituencies,³⁴ but are not classified as democratic. Rwanda³⁵ and Senegal³⁶ continue to be plagued by voter intimidation and corruption but are seen as "democratic". Almost all African countries are, effectively, hybrid regimes.³⁷

The question of how to classify regimes as democratic is notoriously difficult and heavily contested. Is a democratic election one where real choice exists? Where peaceful alternation of power has occurred? Where formal elections have been held? Where there is a lack of intimidation? Recent debate has cast a great deal of doubt on whether we can in fact create an easy dichotomous variable of democracy versus non-democracy. Take for example the claim by Diamond that an important measure of democracy is not just that free and fair elections happen, but that they take place in a framework where rights are protected and where access to elected office is open to all.³⁸ Under this measure some countries that we consider to be democratic, and which for the purposes of a study of turnout are to all intents and purposes democratic, might be excluded. In countries like the United states candidates face incredibly high costs of participation which cast a great deal of doubt on the claim that elected office is open to all. Equally though, a "floating but anchored"³⁹ approach which conceptualises democracy as encompassing broad streams of meaning in which democratic discourse is intelligible doesn't really help our project. Whilst there are limits which give Whitehead's conceptualisation a "substantive edge", its lack of a minimum definition or an

³³ Nohlen, Dieter, Bernard Thibaut, and Michael Krennerich. *Elections in Africa - A Data Handbook*.

³⁴ Hayward F (ed). 1987. *Elections in Independent Africa*. Westview Press, Colorado ; Collier R. 1982. *Regimes in Tropical Africa, 1945-1975*. University of California Press, Berkley ; Almond G and Coleman J (eds). 1960. *Politics in Developing Countries*. Princeton University Press, Princeton ; Chazan N. 1979. "A Re-examination of the Role of Elections in Independent Africa." *Journal of Comparative and Commonwealth Politics*. 14(2).

³⁵ Majtenyi C. 27 August 2003. "EU observers report Rwanda election irregularities" VOA news.

³⁶ Schwartz N. 25 February 2007. "High Turnout as Senegal votes for President" VOA news.

³⁷ Barnes W. 1998. "Incomplete democracy in Central America: polarisation and turnout in Nicaragua and El Salvador". *Journal of Interamerican studies and world affairs* 40:63-101.

³⁸ Diamond. 1999. *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*.

³⁹ Whitehead. 2002. *Democratization: Theory and Experience*.

immutable outer boundary makes case selection near impossible when most of the cases are on that very boundary.

This thesis cannot emphatically answer this question. This will not be a thesis on democratisation. It is a thesis on voter turnout in elections, whether they are democratic or not. This corresponds with the work done by Bowdler and Cotter who look at a variety of electoral regimes from the relatively free and fair ones of Costa Rica to the elections which were used to legitimise the despots of Nicaragua.⁴⁰ It is also the approach taken by all the authors who make use of all the cases in the Afrobarometer data set, though they do not acknowledge it. These studies include Burkina Faso, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, all examples of countries very much on the boundaries of procedural democracy.

Whilst I cannot, and do not seek to answer this question, I will not ignore it. Acknowledging that African politics is shaped by the structure of power,⁴¹ I will first attempt to model and control for a dichotomous definition of democratic versus authoritarian regimes and then, when dealing with a subset of more procedurally democratic regimes, will assess the differing playing fields generated by Liberal Democratic, Electorally Democratic and Electoral Authoritarian regimes to help us build a preliminary understanding of African voter turnout.

I will not, however, ignore elections which do not fit neatly into categories. They have exhibited a remarkable resilience in Africa, in part because they provide one of the only ways

⁴⁰ Bowdler G and Cotter P. 1982. *Voter Participation in Central America, 1954-1981*.

⁴¹ Ake C. 2000. *The Feasibility of Democracy in Africa*.

open to people to affect the political process.⁴² Even though care must be taken not to attribute too many functions to elections⁴³ as they cannot bridge the gap between leaders and the population on their own, find acceptable answers for political participation, or reach consensus on the framework of politics itself and the values necessary to sustain the system, studies are finding increasingly that elections are important in and of themselves. What happens in elections is symptomatic of the state of society as a whole.⁴⁴ Lindberg shows that democratising nations in Africa learn how to be democratic through repeated democratic behaviour, even if their elections are sometimes flawed.⁴⁵

My contention is that the entire range of electoral regimes, from electoral authoritarian to liberal democratic need to be considered in the turnout literature. Any study of elections in Africa would be incomplete without a study of *elections* in Africa, rather than of simply the elections deemed to be *democratic elections*. In order to understand the determinants of turnout we need more than a study of turnout from the point of democratisation. We need to understand the processes and institutions that were set up to order turnout when elections were held under imperfect conditions as these self same processes and institutions often survive the passage to democracy. We need to realise that a culture of fear and violence surrounding and driving turnout in a dictatorial regime does not disappear overnight just because an election is declared democratic. Parties and politicians who have learnt how to influence turnout in non-democratic states don't discard those lessons when the state becomes democratic. Citizens do not forget the elections that they have participated in before democratisation, and their attitudes towards elections in general, and thus in part toward democracy, are informed by those experiences.

⁴² Hayward F. 1987. "Conclusions" in Hayward F (ed) *Elections in Independent Africa*.

⁴³ Whitfield L. Unpublished. "Democracy as Idea and Democracy as Process: The Politics of Democracy and Development in Ghana". D.Phil Thesis, Oxford University, Trinity 2005 ; Chazan N. 1979. "African Voters at the Polls: a re-examination of the role of elections in African Politics" *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* Vol. 17 No. 2: 136-59.

⁴⁴ Bowdler G and Cotter P. 1982. *Voter Participation in Central America, 1954-1981*.

⁴⁵ Lindberg, 2006. *Democracy and Elections in Africa*.

Indeed, if we want to accumulate knowledge we cannot continue to routinely select cases that have experienced the same outcome of interest rather than comparing these cases with those that have not. No amount of evidence gathered from cases selected on the dependent variable will confirm a hypothesis.⁴⁶

Without taking this into account we are also unable to really understand the calculus of voting that operates in the minds of African Voters. A calculus where the costs of voting are not only things like the time that it takes to get to the voting station or the costs of knowledge acquisition, but also the potential violent reprisals that may be unleashed by ruling parties who note that you have not voted. A calculus where the probability that your vote may be decisive is not merely a factor of the actual predicted closeness of the race, but also of the probability that the election will be rigged or the result manipulated. A calculus where the benefits of voting include real, individual monetary incentives such as bribes and job offers, as well as the selective allocation of public goods to areas where turnout for the ruling party was high. A calculus where the most important individual decision may not be "who do I want to win", but "who is going to win and how can I tie myself to the victor in order to secure patronage benefits and access to limited resources". And a calculus where duty is not only duty to a state or nation, but also perhaps to a liberating party or individual without whose efforts you might still be suffering under a colonial, dictatorial or racist regime.

We also cannot continue to ignore the importance of the "local". Each locality provides a different set of decisions for voters to make. With different parties and candidates all elections are snapshots in time where parties react differently to different local contexts.

⁴⁶ Geddes, Barbara. 1991. 'Paradigms and Sand Castles in Comparative Politics' in William Crotty (ed) *Political Science: Looking to the Future Vol. 2: Comparative Politics, Policy and International Relations*: 45-75.

Whilst always trying to create generalisable theories, we must also acknowledge that the meaning of issues or the effects of being in a particular social group may change depending on the context.⁴⁷

1.3 Research Question and Contribution to the Field

The overarching question that this thesis seeks to answer is, who votes in Africa and why? No work on this scale has ever been attempted regarding Africa whether in terms of generating data, understanding voting, or testing theory. This thesis uses three sets of data at three different levels: an original compilation of national level indicators for over 700 elections created by the author; a survey of almost 50 000 voters in 17 multiparty African regimes; and the first ever purpose-built survey aimed at testing rational choice turnout models in an African case study, which was designed, administered and analysed by the author using the strictest possible controls for data quality. It uses the most up-to-date statistical methods to test comprehensively the determinants of voting in pooled and multilevel, logistic and linear, individual and national level models. It breaks new paths by comparing rational choice, socioeconomic, mobilisation, and habitual models of turnout generated in the electoral studies of European and North American countries with factors specific to the African case. And it rigorously checks and cross checks its own findings and assumptions by testing them across countries, elections, regimes and time at a national level, a cross-national individual level, and then again in a carefully selected case study. Whilst it is, by necessity, a first step in the process of understanding turnout in Africa, it will be able to lay the groundwork for future theory building and empirical analysis.

⁴⁷ Marsh M. 2002. "Electoral Context" in Franklin M and Wlezien C. 2002. *The Future of Election Studies*.

By knowing why voters do or don't vote, governments can adapt their programmes and policies to meet and deal with these concerns. Given the emphasis that the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and other African Union (AU) programmes put on good governance, it is important for African countries and South Africa in particular to be able to cultivate a citizenry that is able to hold Governments in check and to create institutions that properly reveal the preferences of all citizens. Election Officials also need to be able to work out how to increase turnout, particularly in local elections where in South Africa it has been below 50% in both the democratic local government elections, and even lower in Zambia and Botswana. This topic is particularly relevant at this point in time given the mass wave of re-democratisation in Africa over the past 20 years and the increased focus on good governance, democracy and African renewal. Moreover, by identifying those systems with the highest turnout, institutional change can occur in a more directed fashion. In protests that erupted in the run up to the 2006 Local Government Elections in South Africa dissatisfied voters threatened to use abstention as a political tool. These actors are not unique. It has become particularly important to find out how to draw these individuals back into the political process if the positive effects of elections which Lindberg posits⁴⁸ are to come to fruition.

⁴⁸ Lindberg, 2006. *Democracy and Elections in Africa*.

Chapter 2: The Turnout Literature

2.1 Introduction

This chapter does two things. It begins by looking at the best articulated and theorised conceptualisation of the turnout puzzle: the rational choice model, which also forms the underlying theoretical starting point from which this thesis progresses. Second, it outlines the separate paths that studies of turnout based upon individual level decision-making and cross-national comparison have taken. This distinction has, to a large extent, been a product of the data and methods at hand, but also has a solid theoretical base in that the former is concerned predominantly with why individuals in a given context vote, whilst the latter tries to explain variance in turnout across countries.

2.2 The Rational Choice model

Public choice theory, heavily influenced by Arrow,⁴⁹ Tullock, Buchanan⁵⁰ and Black⁵¹ applies economic methods to political science in order to understand voting through rational choice accounts of behaviour. Its most basic starting point, that voters act according to their own preferences, with near perfect information and firm preferences, has been relaxed to apply to real world scenarios.⁵² This may still be insufficient. Without perfect information voters should always abstain. Ghirardato and Katz argue that when there is a lack of quality information about candidates voters do abstain.⁵³ Voting is also taken as a clear example of the collective action problem advanced by Olson, where while all may benefit from voting, it is not in the individual's self interest to vote because individual costs are only offset by collective benefits.⁵⁴ Perhaps the greatest public failure of rational choice theory has been its inability to resolve this "paradox of voting". Why, when the individual act of voting usually

⁴⁹ Arrow K.1951.*Social Choice and Individual Values*.

⁵⁰ Buchanan J and Tullock G.1962.*The Calculus of Consent*.

⁵¹ Black D.1958.*The Theory of Committees and Elections*.

⁵² Tullock G.1998. *On Voting: A Public Choice Approach*.

⁵³ Ghirardato P and Katz J.2002. "Indecision Theory : Quality of Information and Voting Behaviour".

⁵⁴ Aldrich J. 1993. "Rational Choice and Turnout" in *American Journal of Political Science*. 37(1).

has virtually no effect on the outcome, do citizens continue to vote at all, and in large numbers for that matter? It would seem that rational choice is at a loss when it comes to explaining turnout.⁵⁵ These models have often been shown to have limited empirical validity.⁵⁶

In spite of the claim that rational choice theories have been particularly poor at explaining turnout we need to recognise that this is not unique to rational choice theories, as all accounts of turnout share rather severe evidential problems in this regard.⁵⁷ As Aldrich argues, rational choice models are valuable in that they go beyond the search for variables associated with increases in the likelihood of voting, and begin to ask why people vote in the first place.⁵⁸

What is not often noted is that it may not be the theory which is at fault, but rather the empirical measures used to test the theory. Castanheira argues that if we a) don't assume that costs are the same for each voter, b) don't model the shares of votes to each party as fixed, c) look at the effect of vote shares on the actually implemented policy instead of just who won, and d) focus on the mandate accrued by victories that are decisive rather than focusing purely on closeness, then the model becomes a lot better at predicting actual turnout figures. It is not that the original models of voter turnout are wrong; it's just that they are too simplistic.⁵⁹

There are three rational choice models that have dominated the field and which we will be testing in this thesis. The basic model, according to Aldrich,⁶⁰ Franklin,⁶¹ and Blais et

⁵⁵ Aldrich J.1993.

⁵⁶ Blais A, Young R, Fleury C, Lapp M.1995. "Do People Vote on the basis of Minimax Regret?" in *Political Research Quarterly* 48 (4).

⁵⁷ Aldrich J and Simon D.1986. "Turnout in American National Elections" *Research in Micropolitics*,1:271-301.

⁵⁸ Aldrich J.1993.

⁵⁹ Castanheira, M. 2002. "On the (non) paradox of (non) voting". *Centre for Economic Policy Research, London*. Discussion Paper No. 3126.

⁶⁰ Aldrich J.1993.

⁶¹ Franklin M.2004. *Voter Turnout and the Dynamics of Electoral Competition in Established Democracies since 1945*. Ch2

al,⁶² is derived from a scenario where there are two candidates and three possible choices available to citizens: they can vote for candidate A, candidate B or abstain. There are also three possible outcomes: candidate A could win, candidate B could win or there could be a tie. Rational choice theory contends that each citizen will derive a quantifiable level of utility from each of the separate outcomes and will try to maximise her utility by attempting to secure that outcome which provides the greatest level of utility. In other words, actions are instruments to achieve beneficial outcomes.⁶³

In order to acquire the benefits accrued from voting the citizen must take on certain costs. These costs include opportunity costs,⁶⁴ the cost of gathering information on candidates, processing that information and actually going to vote. While there are costs involved in abstaining, these costs are limited to decision costs on whether or not to vote. Thus the costs of abstaining should always be lower than the costs of voting, even if the only difference in costs is that involved in going out to vote on the day of the election. As these costs increase, citizens become less inclined to vote as the net benefit of their candidate winning decreases.⁶⁵

Voters will accrue these benefits if their favoured candidate wins, even if they do not vote themselves. As such, there is an obvious collective action problem as if there are any costs involved voters have an incentive to free ride if they believe that their candidate can win without them. As the actions of others are unknown voters must make decisions based on their predictions of what others will do.

⁶² Blais A, Young R, Fleury C, Lapp M.1995.

⁶³ Fiorina M.1976. "The voting decision: Instrumental and expressive Aspects". *Journal of Politics* 38:390-415

⁶⁴ Blais A.2000. *To vote or not to vote: the merits and limits of rational choice theory.*

⁶⁵ Aldrich J.1993.

In order to take account of this, the “calculus of voting” model amends the simple model by using *expected* utility, which is based on citizens' estimates of the probability of various outcomes arising. This is an estimate of the probability that an individual's vote will be the crucial vote in determining the election, how decisive her vote will be. How high that probability will be depends on the number of voters and her assessment of the closeness of the election.⁶⁶ In this model the expected benefit of voting equals the probability of her vote being a decisive vote multiplied by the benefits accrued from her preferred outcome, in other words how important it is that the preferred party or candidate wins. As either one of these factors decline, the likelihood of voting declines as the citizen either does not feel particularly strongly about a given outcome, or does not believe that they can affect the outcome in any way.⁶⁷

Both Downs,⁶⁸ and Riker and Ordeshook⁶⁹ add a variable called “duty” to the calculus of voting model. For Downs, citizens may vote in part because they value the continuation of democracy as a system and recognise that not voting could harm the legitimacy and continuation of that system. Riker and Ordeshook argue that citizens value doing their duty as a citizen, and use the “duty” term to incorporate the expressive components of voting. There are thus two kinds of benefits associated with voting: the investment benefits contingent upon casting a decisive vote, the expected benefit of which will always be small; and the consumption benefits which are not contingent, but instead are derived by the satisfaction accrued by her voting for voting's sake.⁷⁰

We have thus developed the model from:

⁶⁶ Blais A.2000.

⁶⁷ Aldrich J.1993.

⁶⁸ Downs A.1957.*An Economic Theory of Democracy*.

⁶⁹ Riker W and Ordeshook P. 1968. “A Theory of the Calculus of Voting.” *American Political Science Review*. Vol. 62:25-42.

⁷⁰ Blais A.2000.

$$R = B - C \quad (1)$$

where R constitutes the “rewards from voting” (ie. the likelihood of voting), B are the relative utility benefits accrued from a preferred electoral outcome, and C are the costs of voting; to:

$$R = P * B + D - C \quad (2)$$

where P represents the probability that the citizens' vote will be decisive and D represents duty. By including P we are able to integrate a potential voter's prediction of what other voters will do.

Empirically, the strength of this model has been mixed. Aldrich⁷¹ contends that most tests find that C , D , and B are strong predictors of turnout, and that many tests (such as those by Barzel and Silverberg⁷² and Hofsetter⁷³) also find P or closeness to be significant. Tests in a laboratory experiment find that voters learn over time, so that their decisions are eventually more consistent with actual closeness.⁷⁴ Teixeira argues that low turnout in the US is due to low benefits (weak party mobilisation) and high costs (personal registration).⁷⁵ Johnson and Pattie find that an analysis of British election data in a multilevel model including constituency and individual level data reveals no relationship between closeness and turnout.⁷⁶

⁷¹ Aldrich J. 1993.

⁷² Barzel and Silberberg. 1973. “Is the act of voting rational?” *Public Choice*, 16:51-58

⁷³ Hofsetter RC. 1973. “Inter-Party Competition and Electoral Turnout: The case of Indiana.” *American Journal of Political Science*, 17(2)

⁷⁴ Duffy J and Tavits M. 2008. “Beliefs and Voting Decisions: A Test of the Pivotal Voter Model” *American Journal of Political Science* 52 (3):603-618

⁷⁵ Teixeira, R. 1987. *Why Americans Don't Vote*

⁷⁶ Johnston R and Pattie C. 1997. “Towards an Understanding of Turnout at British General Elections: Voluntary and Involuntary Abstention in 1992” in *Parliamentary Affairs* Vol 50 No. 2: 280-91

Theoretically, Ferejohn and Fiorina⁷⁷ argue that P is entirely unrelated to a citizen's likelihood of voting. They contend that we need to differentiate between decisions taken under risk, and those taken under uncertainty. They argue that people do not make probability assessments on individual elections as they cannot assess the closeness of elections to the degree necessary to determine the importance of their vote. Instead their rationale is based on what Ferejohn and Fiorina call "minimax-regret". Uncertain of what to do, citizens decide on the utility that will be accrued from each of the possible outcomes of an election. They then compute the level of regret that they will accrue should each different state arise, and choose the action that will minimise their maximum regret. In order for this hypothesis to hold, Ferejohn and Fiorina attempt to show that out of the PB interaction in the calculus-of-voting model, only B should be significant. Using election surveys from the 1952-1964 US presidential elections they find that in five out of seven cases this hypothesis stands. Kenney and Rice⁷⁸ find similar results in surveys of two US cities where they find that individuals who claim to agree with the minimax-regret maxim⁷⁹ are more likely to have voted. Their analysis is, however, problematic in that they don't control for other factors. Dennis⁸⁰ looks at a survey conducted in Wisconsin for the 1984 US presidential elections and finds that minimax-regret is a significant indicator when analysed with other rational choice indicators, but not when psychological measures and attitudes are added. Blais et al⁸¹ use survey data from ten university classes at two universities in Canada before and after Canadian elections. They find that while a clear majority agreed with the maxim, and while those that agreed were more likely to have voted, both P and the minimax-regret variables were not significant in a logistic regression which included all the variables in equation two and the minimax-

⁷⁷ Ferejohn J and Fiorina M. 1974. "The paradox of not voting: a decision theoretic analysis". *American Political Science Review* 68:525-36; Ferejohn J and Fiorina M. 1975. "Closeness counts only in horseshoes and dancing". *The American Political Science Review* 69(3)

⁷⁸ Kenney and Rice. 1989. "An empirical examination of the minimax hypothesis". *American Politics Quarterly* 17:153-162

⁷⁹ "I would feel really terrible if I didn't vote and my candidate/party lost by one vote."

⁸⁰ Dennis. 1991. "Theories of Turnout: An empirical comparison of alienationist and rationalist perspectives" in Crotty, W (ed). *Political Participation and American Democracy*

⁸¹ Blais A, Young R, Fleury C, Lapp M. 1995.

regret term. They find a strong correlation between the D and minimax-regret term, and argue that the D term includes the conception of minimax-regret.

Barry⁸² argues that the biggest problem with the amended models revolves around the D term. He argues that the success of the D term in increasing the statistical significance of the model means that the model no longer really provides an answer as to why people vote, it just reveals a preference for voting. One ballot can make no more difference in saving democracy than it can in determining the outcome of an election, and as such it still makes no sense to vote. He further argues that rational choice models are meant to show how actors act given preferences. Blais et al⁸³ argue that the D term means that the model is reduced to one that just reveals long term psychological preferences and thus has little predictive or explanatory power, if D is the whole story then the model is not very helpful. Blais⁸⁴ contends that the D term does not fit into the rational choice paradigm, but instead explains the aspect of voting that falls outside of rational choice. He argues that the core of rational choice has to be investment, not consumption benefits. In some ways it appears that D is simply measured in a way that “fits” the equation, a measure of everything that falls outside the explanatory power of the model.

Critics of the minimax-regret model note that it seems rather silly to propose that voters have no ability whatsoever to predict the probability of a close race. They also argue that it is too conservative in that the risk of death or injury while driving to the polls is presumably far greater than the risk that one’s preferred candidate will lose by one vote.⁸⁵

⁸² Barry B.1970. *Sociologists, Economists and Democracy*.

⁸³ Blais A, Young R, Fleury C, Lapp M.1995.

⁸⁴ Blais A.2000.

⁸⁵ Blais A, Young R, Fleury C, Lapp M.1995.

One of the fundamental objections to the parameters of the rational choice models is that the *B* term is incorrectly construed and constructed. Franklin⁸⁶ argues that the model, by focusing on benefits accrued to the individual from the victory of individual candidates, ignores the value placed by individuals on the benefit to the group that they see themselves as a part of. By ignoring this, the rational choice paradigm ignores the role that individuals see their otherwise insignificant vote having contributed to achieving group ends. More than that, there are other benefits accrued from voting that are covered neither by the *B* or *D* terms. For example, voters may want to send a message to politicians on a particular issue by voting for a party that cannot win but which stands for a specific issue. This was notably the case with the initial rise of Green parties in Europe.⁸⁷

Franklin further argues that turnout is not a particularly good example of a collective action problem in that the costs and benefits are so low that very minor fluctuations in either could affect the rate of turnout. He also argues that in the West, voters perceive very little difference in the outcomes attained by the victory of different parties and that the benefits that that party provides when in office are in any case public goods and available to all, whether one voted or not.⁸⁸

2.3 Individual Level Determinants of Turnout

The reader will note that the model above is predominantly a model of the individual level turnout decision. To these rational choice accounts may be added various empirically derived accounts, many of which contest the basic assumption of instrumental voting, that voters make an active effort to vote in order to affect the outcome. There are four reasons

⁸⁶ Franklin, M.2004.Ch2.

⁸⁷ Brodmann A.1995.“Public Confidence in Institutions: Change and continuity in Mass Political attitudes and behaviour in the Federal Republic of Germany”.

⁸⁸ Franklin, M.2004.Ch2.

why people are commonly believed to not vote; they can't, they don't want to, they haven't been asked⁸⁹ or they've never done so before. Rational choice explanations tend to focus on the first two reasons. The "Socioeconomic status (SES)"⁹⁰ and Resource⁹¹ models tend to emphasise costs, while those focusing on attitudes try and understand why individuals have an aversion to voting.⁹² Mobilisation theories look at who parties target, and why some groups of people are not mobilised.⁹³ Finally, proponents of the Habit thesis try to find evidence that voting is in and of itself habit forming.⁹⁴

2.3.1 Socioeconomic Factors and Resources

A more educated person may find it less costly to acquire information about an election, for example, partly because he may already have acquired the information, but also because he is more likely to know where to look, is more likely to have access to a network of similarly educated friends who can help him/her acquire that information, and also because he has been socialised into thinking that civic participation is important thus perceiving the costs as lower in relation to the benefits of participation. Individuals who earn more will have more resources in terms of time and money and so the marginal costs of participation will be lower. Whilst some studies have found that there is little socio-economic disparity amongst voters in European nations⁹⁵, more recent work has shown a movement towards the sharp turnout biases found in the United states for decades.⁹⁶

⁸⁹ Brady H, Verba S, Schlozman K.1995.

⁹⁰ Wolfinger R and Rosenstone S.1980. *Who Votes?*

⁹¹ Verba S and Nie, N.1972; Verba S, Schlozman K, and Brady H.1995; Miller W and Shanks M.1996.

⁹² Campbell et al.1960. *The American Voter*

⁹³ Verba S, Schlozman K and Brady H.1995.

⁹⁴ Green D and Scachar R.2000.

⁹⁵ Topf R. 1995.

⁹⁶ Kittilson. 2005. "Rising Political Inequality in Established Democracies: Mobilization, Socio-Economic Status and Voter Turnout" Paper prepared for the 2005 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, 1-4 September 2005

Education, income and occupation have been the variables that proponents of the “SES” model have found to be significant.⁹⁷ Age, gender and race are also often found to impact voting. While support has been found for this theory in the US,⁹⁸ Bratton finds none for the model in Zambia⁹⁹ and Kuenzi and Lambright find that these variables are heavily context specific in Africa.¹⁰⁰

The Resource model contends that it is resources which, by decreasing the costs of voting, are key to understanding an individual’s decision not to vote.¹⁰¹ Proponents of the model ignore the *B* term in the rational choice explanation, taking it as given, focussing entirely on costs.¹⁰² These models find that time, money and civic skills are the most important variables as they decrease voting costs, and antedate or occur independently of political activity, unlike motivations or attitudes. Young and Cohen argue that the major reason for abstention in Botswana is related to problems with registration and getting to the polling station on election day rather than a conscious decision not to vote, with 62% of respondents in their survey attesting to this.¹⁰³ Fisher notes that in Britain non-voters predominantly listed problems getting out to vote as the reason for abstention.¹⁰⁴ One example is distance from the polling station. Taylor finds that in the 1972 local government elections in Swansea 65% of people living one minute away from the polling booth voted. Only 35% of those living six minutes away voted.¹⁰⁵ Brady, Verba and Schlozman find that while income is not important in understanding voter turnout, time and civic skills are. By acquiring skills such as letter writing and presentation making in various fora, citizens

⁹⁷ Verba S and Nie N. 1972 and 1987. *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality*.

Verba S, Schlozman K Brady H. 1995. *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*.

Miller W and Shanks M. 1996. *The New American Voter*.

⁹⁸ Wolfinger R and Rosenstone S.1980.

⁹⁹ Bratton, M.1999.“Political Participation in a New Democracy: Institutional Considerations from Zambia” *Comparative Political Studies* 32(5):549-88

¹⁰⁰ Kuenzi M and Lambright G. 2005.

¹⁰¹ Perea E.2002.

¹⁰² Blais A.2000.

¹⁰³ Young H and Cohen D.1979.

¹⁰⁴ Fisher S.2001.

¹⁰⁵ Taylor A.1973. “Journey time, perceived turnout and electoral turnout-Victoria Ward, Swansea” *Area* 5:59-63.

acquire the capacity for political activity, overcome fears they initially have about the process, and, over time, are able to make up for civic skills deficiencies caused by growing up in a disengaged environment.¹⁰⁶

2.3.1.1 Age, Gender and Race

Young citizens vote at lower rates than their elders in the US,¹⁰⁷ Canada,¹⁰⁸ the Netherlands,¹⁰⁹ the EU as a whole,¹¹⁰ Kenya,¹¹¹ Nigeria,¹¹² Botswana¹¹³ and in Africa as a whole.¹¹⁴ This can be understood in terms of life cycle effects and generational effects. Life cycle effects are those which cause lower turnout due to specific circumstances and costs associated with age. Older citizens are more inclined to see politics as important as they are more integrated into their communities, have more responsibility towards those communities and are more affected by government policies and taxation. Young people are often still engaged in formal education, more mobile and thus less tied to a community, have little experience of voting, and have few responsibilities.¹¹⁵

Voting for the first time is a costly exercise. Not only do the young face start-up costs in their non-political lives, such as putting down roots in a community, moving out of home, purchasing a first house, getting a first job or pursuing higher education, all of which are often accompanied by changing city, or transferring from rural to urban areas; but they also face start-up costs when voting for the first time. New voters need to procure an Identity Document, find out that they are supposed to register, find out how and where to register,

¹⁰⁶ Brady H, Verba S and Schlozman K.1995.

¹⁰⁷ Berelson B et al.1954:336-7.

¹⁰⁸ O'Neill B.2005. "Examining declining Electoral Turnout Among Canada's youth".

¹⁰⁹ Van Egmond M, De Graaf N and Van Der Eijk C.1998.

¹¹⁰ Gronlund, K.nd.

¹¹¹ Niemi RG and Barkan JD. 1987.

¹¹² Piel M. 1974. "The Common Man's Reaction to Nigerian Urban Government" *African Affairs* 74: 300-13.

¹¹³ Democracy Research Project (University of Botswana).2002. *Voter apathy report*.

¹¹⁴ Baker B. 2000. *Escape from Domination in Africa*.: 58-60.

¹¹⁵ Blais A, Gidengil E, Nevitte N and Nadeau R.2002.

register, find out when and where one votes, learn how the voting system works, learn what the various parties positions are, and do all this while they have only a limited social network. Over the course of their lifetime they usually acquire the skills and attributes of their elders and should become as involved as their neighbours, *ceteris paribus*. The problem is that negative experiences when young can have negative knock on effects. Franklin shows that in established democracies a bad first experience of voting can leave a permanent imprint making someone permanently less likely to vote.¹¹⁶

The even more worrying effects are generational. In spite of the weight of life cycle effects, it has been found that the decline in turnout in the West and the significantly lower rates of voting of younger citizens cannot be explained without taking into account generational effects.¹¹⁷ Generational effects arise out of the shared experiences of different generations and unlike life cycle effects, will be maintained for the electoral life of their members.¹¹⁸ Blais et al¹¹⁹ find that in Canada the decline in turnout is due in large part to the generation born after 1970 who vote at much lower rates than their parents did, when their parents were the same age. They find that this generation is less likely to have a sense of duty, an attitude likely to stay with a generation throughout their lives. Bratton et al find that those young Africans who have achieved voting age after the transition to multiparty rule are least likely to vote, 24% less than their older compatriots.¹²⁰

Until the 1970s in the UK¹²¹ and the 1980s in the US¹²², the dominant paradigm suggested that women were less likely to vote than men.¹²³ Much of the reason for that

¹¹⁶ Franklin M.2004.Ch3.

¹¹⁷ Blais A, Gidengil E, Nevitte N and Nadeau R.2004.“Where does turnout decline come from?” *European Journal of Political Research* 43:221-36.

¹¹⁸ Franklin, M.2004.Ch3

¹¹⁹ Blais A, Gidengil E, Nevitte N and Nadeau R.2002.

¹²⁰ Bratton M, Mattes R and Gyimah-Boadi.2005.

¹²¹ Randall V.1987. *Women and Politics*.

differential is now understood to have been due to generational effects as newly enfranchised women and women who had grown up in traditional environments voted at lower rates than men, something confirmed in Zambia in the 1990s¹²⁴ and the third world in general.¹²⁵ More recent studies have found that this has changed. Women are now more likely to vote than men in the US,¹²⁶ UK,¹²⁷ and the Netherlands¹²⁸ and young women vote more than young men in Germany.¹²⁹ That said, young women in Canada vote less than their male counterparts. This has been explained by a lack of political knowledge and interest, and the maintenance of traditional gender roles, socialisation and a lack of female role models.¹³⁰ Ingelhart and Norris find a continuing gender gap amongst older cohorts of voters, those not working, the poorly educated, and those from traditional environments.¹³¹ In the developing world women in Latin America and Asia now vote at the same level as men as they have attained parity with men when it comes to education and labour-market participation.¹³²

Race is also often an influential predictor of turnout, particularly in divided societies. In Britain, Welch and Studlar find that Asians and blacks vote less than whites.¹³³ Verba finds that African Americans and Latinos are significantly less likely to vote in the US than whites, but that these differences can be attributed almost entirely to resources.¹³⁴

¹²² Kenski H.1988. "The Gender Factor in a changing electorate" in Mueller C (ed) *The Politics of the Gender Gap*; Berelson B et al. 1954:336-7.

¹²³ Almond G and Verba S.1963.*The Civic Culture*:388.

¹²⁴ Bratton M et al 1999. "The Effects of Civic Education on Political Culture: Evidence from Zambia" *World Development* 5:807-24.

¹²⁵ Randall V.1987.

¹²⁶ Ingelhart R and Norris P. 2003. *Rising Tide: Gender Equality and Cultural Change around the World*.

¹²⁷ Fisher S.2001.

¹²⁸ Van Egmond M, De Graaf N and Van Der Eijk C.1998.

¹²⁹ Franklin M. 2004.

¹³⁰ Thomas M and Young L.2006."More Subject than Citizen: Gender and Political Disengagement in Canada". Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association.

¹³¹ Ingelhart R and Norris P.2003.

¹³² Bratton M, Chu Y and Lagos M. 2010. "Who votes? Implications for New Democracies" in *Taiwan Journal of Democracy* Vol. 6 No. 1: 107-136.

¹³³ Welch, S and Studlar, D.1985. "The impact of race on political behaviour in Britain" *British Journal of Political Science* 15(4).

¹³⁴ Verba, S et al.1993. "Race, Ethnicity and Political Resources: Participation in the United states." *British Journal of Political Science*, 23(4).

2.3.1.2 Education, Income and Employment

Education socialises citizens into norms of civic engagement, equips them with the cognitive skills that active engagement requires,¹³⁵ and is key to political participation.¹³⁶ It lowers the costs of getting information and is associated with a conception of voting as a duty.¹³⁷ Gronlund¹³⁸ finds that 90% of the highly educated and informed in the 19 countries in his study voted in PR systems as opposed to 72% of the least educated. Blais et al¹³⁹ find that turnout is 50 percentage points higher amongst university graduates than amongst non graduates in the youngest cohort in Canada. This relationship is confirmed by a number of studies in the US,¹⁴⁰ India¹⁴¹ and the Netherlands¹⁴² though the magnitude of the effect differs depending on context.

In opposition to these findings Topf finds that turnout does not vary with education in 16 EU countries,¹⁴³ Corbetta and Parisi find an inverse relationship in some countries,¹⁴⁴ and IDEA find no correlation between literacy rates and turnout.¹⁴⁵ In Kenya and Ghana, Holm et al¹⁴⁶ find an inverse relationship between education and voting. They attribute this to increased education generating increased cynicism and awareness of corruption, and the fact that educated Africans are often no longer part of traditional communities where mobilisation networks are particularly effective.

¹³⁵ Blais A, Gidengil E, Nevitte N and Nadeau R.2002.

¹³⁶ Almond G and Verba S.1963.

¹³⁷ Abrahamson P, Aldrich J and Rohde D.2003.

¹³⁸ Gronlund K. nd.

¹³⁹ Blais A, Gidengil E, Nevitte N and Nadeau R.2002.

¹⁴⁰ Verba S and Nie N.1972; Verba S, Schlozman K, and Brady H.1995; Miller W and Shanks M.1996; Berelson B et al.1954:336-7.

¹⁴¹ Krishna A.2002. "Enhancing Political Participation in Democracies: What is the role of social capital?" *Comparative Political Studies* 35(4)

¹⁴² Van Egmond M, De Graaf N and Van Der Eijk C.1998.

¹⁴³ Topf R. 1995. "Electoral Participation" in Klingemann HD and Fuchs D (eds). *Citizens and the state*.

¹⁴⁴ Corbetta P and Parisi A.1994. "Smobilizzazione politica e astensionismo elettorale" *Polis* 8:423-443.

¹⁴⁵ IDEA. 1997.

¹⁴⁶ Holm J, Hayward F, Ross M and Graeser M.1978.

Non-voting could also be related to persistent social conditions. Some parties lack mobilisation capacity as their constituents are from lower socio-economic groups who are more difficult to mobilise. It is widely assumed that the poor are systematically excluded from political participation.¹⁴⁷ They are believed to feel that the system is not responsive to their needs while the more affluent have the resources and perceived stake to get involved.¹⁴⁸ This influence comes across clearly in the Netherlands¹⁴⁹ and the US.¹⁵⁰ This is not true in Zambia¹⁵¹ or the rest of Africa where the poor are more likely to vote as they are more likely to be targeted for mobilisation.¹⁵² It may be the case that income and class are less potent variables where the poor make up the vast majority of the population, are systematically mobilised, or believe that they have a definite stake in the system. Occupation and being employed are also often good indicators of turnout for many of the reasons associated with income, but also as employment provides civic skills and an opportunity for mobilisation.¹⁵³

2.3.2 Psychological and Attitudinal Assessments

Almond and Verba¹⁵⁴ divide psychological orientations into three categories: cognitive orientations such as knowledge of the political system, the roles fulfilled by individuals therein and the incumbents of those offices; affective orientations or feelings about the system and actors as well as evaluations of their performance; and finally evaluational orientations or judgements and opinions about political objects involving a combination of values and standards.

¹⁴⁷ Brady H, Verba S, Schlozman K.1995; Rasheed S.1996.*Development, Participation and Democracy in Africa*.

¹⁴⁸ Blais A, Gidengil E, Nevitte N and Nadeau R.2002.

¹⁴⁹ Van Egmond M, De Graaf N and Van Der Eijk C.1998.

¹⁵⁰ Brady H, Verba S, Schlozman K.1995.

¹⁵¹ Bratton M.1999.

¹⁵² Kuenzi M and Lambright G.2005

¹⁵³ Brady H, Verba S, Schlozman K.1995.

¹⁵⁴ Almond G and Verba S.1963

In the turnout literature secondary political attitudes have often been found to be associated with voting, with interest in politics and political knowledge¹⁵⁵ being a base for developing other more complicated values like trust.¹⁵⁶ Affective engagement in the form of political interest, and cognitive engagement in the form of political information or knowledge are the two most important determinants of turnout in Canada, providing motivations to vote and resources to choose who to vote for.¹⁵⁷ A correlation between political interest, information and turnout is found in the US,¹⁵⁸ and the UK,¹⁵⁹ while Gronlund finds knowledge to be an important predictor across countries¹⁶⁰ and Hobolt finds that political awareness has a significant impact on turnout in EU elections.¹⁶¹

Others question whether attitudes are catalysts or merely products of political participation.¹⁶² Howe finds that political knowledge is much less important in the Netherlands than in Canada, perhaps due to the PR system which makes knowledge of individual candidates relatively unimportant.¹⁶³ In Africa, Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi find no attitudinal variables to be significant,¹⁶⁴ while Holm et al,¹⁶⁵ and Kuenzi and Lambright¹⁶⁶ find that only political interest is significant and that voters are no more likely to be informed than non-voters. Tonneblanca argues that this is because voters don't need exhaustive information, but rather need knowledge of the principal candidates and what is at stake in each election, information readily available in the media.¹⁶⁷ This is one reason why PR increases turnout as it means that voters no longer need knowledge of individual

¹⁵⁵ Fisher SD.2001.

¹⁵⁶ Roniger L.1992.“Public Trust and Consolidation of Latin American Democracies” in Ritter A et al (eds) *Latin America in the Year 2000: Reactivating growth, improving equity, sustaining democracy*

¹⁵⁷ Blais A, Gidengil E, Nevitte N and Nadeau R.2002.

¹⁵⁸ Berelson, B et al.1954:336-7

¹⁵⁹ Fisher S.2001

¹⁶⁰ Gronlund K. nd.

¹⁶¹ Hobolt, S.2005.“When Europe matters: the impact of Political Information on Voting Behaviour in EU Referendums” *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 15(1)

¹⁶² Brady H, Verba S, Schlozman K.1995.

¹⁶³ Howe, P.2006. “Political Knowledge and Electoral Participation in the Netherlands” *International Political Science Review* 27(2)

¹⁶⁴ Bratton M, Mattes R and Gyimah-Boadi.2005.

¹⁶⁵ Holm J, Hayward F, Ross M and Graeser M.1978

¹⁶⁶ Kuenzi M and Lambright G. 2005.

¹⁶⁷ Torreblanca J.2004.“Keys to Understanding Abstention in the European Elections”

candidates, decreasing the costs of information acquisition.¹⁶⁸ That said, Barkan¹⁶⁹ argues that rural African voters are actually very good at identifying their MPs and have high levels of political knowledge as, in the absence of public goods provided centrally by the state, the MP is very important. Under this explanation the knowledge problem isn't very much of a problem at all, and PR has the potential to lower turnout by breaking the connections between MPs and the public.

Apart from general feelings about the political system three other assessments are often found to be associated with turnout - impressions on the efficacy and performance of the government, anti-party feelings, and assessments of corruption. In Britain, Curtice finds that voters are less likely to vote in local elections if they believe that local decisions do not decide what happens in their area and that local government is not important or if they find local elections complicated.¹⁷⁰ Kuenzi and Lambright find that Africans who have a favourable opinion of the performance of government and parliament are more likely to vote.¹⁷¹

Fisher¹⁷² finds that turnout is very low for those who gave the same strength-of-feeling score for all three parties in Britain, and very high for those who strongly preferred their favourite over their least favourite party. Gidengil et al¹⁷³ find that anti-party sentiment in Canada is more likely to result in an anti-party vote than abstention. Finally, Cover¹⁷⁴ argues that the more perceived corruption there is, the less participation in conventional

¹⁶⁸ Milner, H.2002. "The Voters' Paradox: Bringing back the Knowledge Dimension"

¹⁶⁹ Barkan J. 1995. "Elections in Agrarian societies" *Journal of Democracy* Vol. 6 No. 4:106-116

¹⁷⁰ Curtice J.1999. "Public Opinion and Local Government: The crisis of Local Democracy in Britain".

¹⁷¹ Kuenzi M and Lambright G.2005.

¹⁷² Fisher S.2001.

¹⁷³ Gidengil E, Blais A, Nevitte N, & Nadeau R.2000. "The correlates and consequences of anti-partyism in the 1997 Canadian elections." *Party Politics* 7 (4).

¹⁷⁴ Cover, O.2005. "Political Corruption and Citizens Behaviour". Oxford M.Phil Thesis.

politics, and Daniel et al¹⁷⁵ blame this and a distrust of politicians in general as possible reasons for declining turnout in South Africa.

2.3.3 Mobilisation

One reason why some people don't vote is that they were never asked. Social networks exert pressure on people to act as a group, creating "solidarity rewards". This is the foundation of the classic and convincing analysis of the role of 'opinion leaders' and 'peer groups' in fostering turnout in the United States by Campbell et al.¹⁷⁶ People accept mobilisation in order to be well esteemed,¹⁷⁷ and vote to gain social approval.¹⁷⁸ Durkheim argued in *Suicide* that people abide by social norms depending on their level of integration into social groups.¹⁷⁹ In line with this, those with strong links with social groups will be more easily mobilised and more likely to vote.¹⁸⁰ In Colombia, Kenya, Pakistan and Turkey individuals have been found to vote not to influence the outcome, but because they were told to do so.¹⁸¹ The rural poor in Turkey's eastern villages fear retribution if they don't vote¹⁸² and are mobilised by landlords via patron-client relationships.¹⁸³

The more easily mobilised vote more often. Berelson finds that the unionised and those with families who vote, vote more often in the US,¹⁸⁴ while Taylor and Johnston show that rural people are more difficult to mobilise and vote less.¹⁸⁵ Lodge argues that the low

¹⁷⁵ Daniel J, Southall R and Lutchman J (eds). 2005. *State of the Nation: South Africa 2004-2005*.

¹⁷⁶ Campbell et al. 1960. *The American Voter*.

¹⁷⁷ Rosenstone S and Hansen J. 1993; Abrams S, Iversen T and Soskice D. 2010. "Informal Social Networks and Rational Voting". *British Journal of Political Science* Vol. 41:229-257

¹⁷⁸ Taylor P and Johnston R. 1979. *Geography of Elections*. Croom Helm, London.

¹⁷⁹ Durkheim E. 1897. *Suicide*.

¹⁸⁰ Van Egmond M, De Graaf N and Van Der Eijk C. 1998.

¹⁸¹ Huntington S and Nelson J. 1976. *No Easy Choice: Political Participation in Developing Countries*.

¹⁸² Huntington S and Nelson J. 1976: 7.

¹⁸³ Huntington S and Nelson J. 1976: 54.

¹⁸⁴ Berelson B et al. 1954.

¹⁸⁵ Taylor P and Johnston R. 1979.

turnout of non-Belgian EU nationals living in Belgium in EU elections (only 3% voted in 1994) can be attributed in part to the lack of neighbourhood and mobilisation effects.¹⁸⁶

Brady, Verba and Schlozman¹⁸⁷ find that more than half of the variance in their model is explained by mobilisation and argue that the three most important factors that assist mobilisation are age, education and membership of social groups such as churches¹⁸⁸ as these facilitate canvassing. A field experiment of 472 people in two adjacent blocks of flats in a safe Labour seat in Dundee found that those canvassed had a 10% higher turnout than those not canvassed.¹⁸⁹ A similar experiment in New Haven found that personal canvassing increased turnout by 6%, confirming that it was particularly effective with unaffiliated voters.¹⁹⁰ This effect has been confirmed by recent studies and experiments in the US,¹⁹¹ and the decline in turnout in the US has been blamed on the decline of grassroots mobilisation.¹⁹² In spite of the finding that it is the group least likely to vote that is most likely to change their mind via canvassing, parties focus on their own declared constituents¹⁹³ as while canvassing increases turnout it doesn't necessarily result in individuals voting for the party they were canvassed by generating incentives not to canvass.¹⁹⁴ In seven randomised field experiments, Arceneaux and Nickerson find that the canvassing effect is contingent upon the electoral context. In low salience elections, it is only effective with those who already have a high propensity to vote, while in high salience elections the opposite is true.¹⁹⁵ Franklin contends

¹⁸⁶ Lodge J (ed).1996. *The 1994 Election to the European Parliament*.

¹⁸⁷ Brady H, Verba S, Schlozman K.1995.

¹⁸⁸ Berelson B et al.1954:336-7; Verba S et al.1993

¹⁸⁹ Bochel J and Denver T.1971. "Canvassing, Turnout and Party Support: An experiment." *British Journal of Political Science* 1(3)

¹⁹⁰ Gerber A and Green D.1999.

¹⁹¹ Gerber A and Green D.2000."The Effects of Personal Canvassing, Telephone Calls, and Direct Mail on Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment." *American Political Science Review* 94(3); Green D, Gerber A & Nickerson D.2003."Getting Out the Vote in Local Elections: Results from Six Door-to-Door Canvassing Experiments." *Journal of Politics* 65(4); Michelson M.2003."Getting Out the Latino Vote: How Door-to-Door Canvassing Influences Voter Turnout in Rural Central California." *Political Behavior*, 25(3)

¹⁹² Rosenstone S and Hansen J.1993.

¹⁹³ Berelson, B et al.1954:174-5

¹⁹⁴ Fisher S.2001.

¹⁹⁵ Arceneaux K and Nickerson D.2006. "Who is Mobilized? A Meta-Analysis of Seven Randomised Field Experiments".

that it is only the newly enfranchised who are really open to the effects of recruitment and mobilisation.¹⁹⁶

As parties are more likely to canvass party members and those that attend political events and projects, there is also a potential correlation between party membership, contacting a public representative, rally attendance and turnout. These factors also increase information and awareness.¹⁹⁷ Von Mettenheim¹⁹⁸ emphasises direct appeals and party machines in Brazil, while in Africa, both Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi¹⁹⁹ and Kuenzi and Lambright²⁰⁰ find an established tradition of mass mobilisation based on patronage and effective door to door campaigning which targets party members. They find that those who engage in “communing” activities such as rallies, meetings etc are motivated to vote as a result of collective action and political lobbying and that participatory acts are mutually reinforcing. Rallies, where attendance is often rewarded with food, money and entertainment, are attended by up to 44% of Africans²⁰¹ (though only 27% in our Durban sample)²⁰² and in Botswana rallies dominate the campaign strategy of almost all parties.²⁰³ Indeed, street protests, rural revolts, land occupations, boycotts, strikes and school riots have been common throughout Africa.²⁰⁴ Kuenzi and Lambright find that affiliating to a political party is one of the most important predictors of voting in Africa, with 82% of those close to a political party voting compared to only 62% of those who aren’t. Some South African scholars have blamed the decline in turnout amongst the youth on the decline of the ANC Youth League, whose poor organisation at a local level and membership decline are seen to be related to increased

¹⁹⁶ Franklin M.2004.Ch3

¹⁹⁷ Fisher S.2001

¹⁹⁸ Von Mettenheim K.1995.*The Brazilian Voter*.

¹⁹⁹ Bratton M, Mattes R and Gyimah-Boadi.2005

²⁰⁰ Kuenzi M and Lambright G.2005

²⁰¹ Bratton M, Mattes R and Gyimah-Bodi.2005

²⁰² See chapter seven for why this is the case.

²⁰³ Democracy Research Project (University of Botswana).2002.

²⁰⁴ Bayart J. 1989 (2010). *The state in Africa: The Politics of the Belly*: 249-51

youth apathy.²⁰⁵ Lodge claims a general stagnation of the ANC at grassroots level has led to a decline in active membership from one million in 1994 to 400,589 in 1999.²⁰⁶

2.3.4 Habit

Aldrich has claimed that voting is a low cost, low benefit activity which voters switch in and out of at will,²⁰⁷ but a great deal of evidence suggests that voting is habit forming, though voting in one type of election, say a local government election, may have only a limited effect on voting in an election at a different level.²⁰⁸ Gerber, Green and Shachar,²⁰⁹ Blais et al,²¹⁰ Brody and Sniderman,²¹¹ and Miller and Shanks²¹² argue that voting itself is habit forming. Blais et al²¹³ show that in Canada individuals who chose not to vote in the first election that they could vote in, usually did not vote later on. Blais finds that in the UK and Canada 63% of citizens were regular voters (they voted in both previous elections), 24% were irregular voters, and 14% were regular abstainers.²¹⁴ Gerber, Green and Shachar find that if a citizen votes in an election at time t , they are 47% more likely to vote in the next election than another citizen who did not vote at time t . Mattes and Southall argue that participation in past elections is likely to be the best predictor of future voting in South Africa.²¹⁵ Tilley finds that repeated participation in elections in the UK also strengthens partisanship.²¹⁶ His claim is not merely that individual differences in the propensity to vote persist over time, but rather that the propensity to vote changes once one has voted once. The very act of voting increases the likelihood that one will vote in the future; it is a self-

²⁰⁵ Marks M.2001.

²⁰⁶ Lodge T.2003.

²⁰⁷ Aldrich J.1993.

²⁰⁸ Yalch R.1976.“Pre-election Interview Effects on Voter Turnout” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 40:331-6

²⁰⁹ Gerber A, Green D and Shachar R.2003.

²¹⁰ Blais A, Gidengil E, Nevitte N and Nadeau R.2001.

²¹¹ Brody R and Sniderman P.1977.“From Life Space to Polling Place: The Relevance of Personal Concerns for Voting Behaviour” *British Journal of Political Science* 7:337-60

²¹² Miller and Shanks.1996.

²¹³ Blais A, Gidengil E, Nevitte N and Nadeau R.2001.

²¹⁴ Blais A.2000.

²¹⁵ Mattes R and Southall R.2004.

²¹⁶ Tilley J. 2003. “Party Identification in Britain: Does Length of Time in the Electorate Affect Strength of Partisanship?” in *British Journal of Political Science* Vol. 33 No. 2: 332-344

reinforcing act. Participation leaves a psychological imprint, producing an enduring civic obligation, resulting in voters seeing themselves as voters, and continually expressing this over a series of elections.²¹⁷

Denny and Doyle²¹⁸ observe that much of the criticism directed at the voting-being-habit forming thesis, such as that from Nickerson,²¹⁹ is about unobserved heterogeneity. Persistence in voting over time may be due to time-invariant individual characteristics such as psychological traits which do not vary, or the initial conditions problem whereby behaviour in a previous, unobserved period influences current voting behaviour. Denny and Doyle address the unobserved heterogeneity problem by including the means of all the time-varying variables in a method used typically in labour market data where it is unlikely that one will observe all individuals from the start of their labour market history. They track individuals from birth, controlling for cognitive ability, class at birth, health and a host of otherwise immediately unobservable factors while controlling for all the elections their respondents have ever participated in. They find that the effect of voting on one election on voting in the next election remains robust.

So why does voting appear to be habit forming? It may be due to the initially high transactions costs of registering.²²⁰ An alternative explanation is that once individuals have voted they are targeted by parties who seek out those that have voted before, while abstainers are not canvassed.²²¹ That said, this relationship persists even when mobilisation is controlled for,²²² something which is also the case with the explanation based on voting changing broad

²¹⁷ Green D and Shachar R.2000

²¹⁸ Denny K and Doyle O.2006.“Does voting history matter? : analysing persistence in turnout”.

²¹⁹ Nickerson, D. nd. “Just how Addictive is Voting”.

²²⁰ As is the case in the USA, the countries in the study generally leave the onus of registering to vote on the voter. Whilst there are voter registration days and campaigns, registration is still a time consuming activity.

²²¹ Gerber A, Green D and Shachar R.2003.

²²² Green D and Shachar R.2000.

political orientations such as duty.²²³ Other attitudes that could be changed by voting include “conative” attitudes, i.e. positive or negative feelings about the act of voting itself such as knowing where to go and how to vote. One learns by doing. If their first experience of voting is positive that becomes the attitude they develop about voting. Voting could also reinforce one’s image of oneself as civic minded, and become associated with positive feelings so that one can become “addicted to voting”.²²⁴

Franklin finds the most important explanatory factor is the "character of elections," consisting of the electoral system, the fractionalization of the party system, the time elapsed since the previous election, and the closeness of the outcome. While these are mostly institutional features, what makes his account relevant to this individual level explanation is that he finds that different features of the system affect different age groups differently. As voting is habitual, the key group to focus on are the young who have not yet developed any habits in this regard.²²⁵ In future then, we should focus on young adults in their first election as voting thereafter can become increasingly path dependant as there is more pressure to vote as one ages.

2.3.5 Individual Level Turnout in Africa

The question of the applicability of Western models in Africa remains to be resolved.²²⁶ Pereira²²⁷ cites Von Mettenheim’s analysis of problems with the use of models of voting from what he calls “old democracies”. That said, Moyo²²⁸ makes use of Western

²²³ Denny K and Doyle O.2006.

²²⁴ Nickerson D.2004.

²²⁵ Franklin M.2004.

²²⁶ Erdmann G. 2007. “Party Research: Western European bias and the African Labyrinth” *Votes, Money and Violence: Political Parties and Elections in Sub-Saharan Africa*.

²²⁷ Pereira A.1996. “The Brazilian Voter: Mass Politics in Democratic Transition, 1974-1986. Kurt von Mettenheim.” *The American Political Science Review*, 90(3):688-689.

²²⁸ Moyo J.1992. *Voting For Democracy; Electoral Politics in Zimbabwe*.

models in his study of Zimbabwe. Power and Roberts'²²⁹ study of Brazilian invalid votes finds that country specific variables influence the models, but also makes use of theories developed in the Australian context. Neimi and Barkan²³⁰ in their analysis of turnout in Kenya find the same relationships between age and voting, for example, as those that exist in developed electorates. What is needed is a greater testing of these models in contexts other than the Western world as there is very little current work on voter turnout outside the developed world.²³¹

In South Africa, relevant work includes Southall and Mattes'²³² who find that there is widespread dissatisfaction with the electoral system which could diminish turnout. Lodge and Ntuli²³³ find that parties play a fundamental role in South African politics, and are well institutionalised, with more than 54% of blacks in 1994 and 20% of all voters in 1999 having been canvassed. Booysen²³⁴ uses focus groups to study the reasons for abstention and identifies duty: a desire to elect the party of choice, accountability and delivery, and support for the opposition as reasons for why people vote; and confusion, lack of education, alienation, government corruption, and lack of delivery as reasons for why people don't vote. These findings are, however, not formally tested, and the first two are not direct studies of turnout.

Kimenyi and Gutierrez Romero perform what appears to be the only test of the Ferejohn and Fiorina Minimax-Regret model in Africa.²³⁵ Using Afrobarometer survey data from Kenya they find that closeness doesn't matter. The constituencies with the highest

²²⁹ Power T and Roberts T. 1995. "compulsory voting, Invalid Ballots and Abstention in Brazil" *Political Research Quarterly* 48(4).

²³⁰ Niemi R and Barkan J. 1987. "Age and Turnout in New Electorates and Peasant Societies." *The American Political Science Review* 81(2).

²³¹ Schraufnagel S and Sgouraki B. 2008. "Voter Turnout in Central and South America". *The Latin Americanist* 49(1): 39-69

²³² Southall R and Mattes R. 2002. *Popular Attitudes towards the South African Electoral System*. HSRC, Johannesburg.

²³³ Lodge T and Ntuli, S. 1999. *Party Presence and Voter Trust*.

²³⁴ Booysen S. 1999. *Election 1999, the Voters Speak*.

²³⁵ Ferejohn J and Fiorina M. 1974. "The paradox of not voting: a decision theoretic analysis". *American Political Science Review* 68:525-36; Ferejohn J and Fiorina M. 1975. "Closeness counts only in horseshoes and dancing" *The American Political Science Review* 69(3).

turnout in their study had high margins of victory. They argue that this is because the ethnic groups that had the most to gain or lose (the Kikuyu and Luo) voted at high rates whether or not the contest was close due to the high expected benefits of victory and test this by showing that those who had the most extreme answers to the question on whether or not their ethnic group was discriminated against by the incumbent regime voted at the highest rates.²³⁶

Two pivotal studies of individual level turnout in Africa have been published. Both use regression analysis and data from multiple African countries and over 17 000 individuals to study the phenomenon of turnout. Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Bodi²³⁷ spend very little time, only three pages in an otherwise very impressive book, looking at turnout. They identify youth and membership of a post-liberation generation as being the primary indicators that an individual will not vote, and also find that employment makes voting more likely, and that political parties play an important mobilising role. Kuenzi and Lambright's²³⁸ article contains the most extensive analysis of voter turnout in Africa to date. Using data for 10 countries and logit regression analysis they find that agents of mobilisation play an extremely important role in determining who votes in Africa, and that there is a strong positive relationship between party affiliation and voting in the countries studied. They also find that age, political interest and socio-economic context play an important role in determining turnout.

Neither of these studies pay much attention to area and country specific factors that may influence turnout. As Schaffer²³⁹ notes in his study of democracy in Senegal, people within different African countries do not share the same conceptions of what is meant by

²³⁶ Kimenyi M and Gutierrez Romero R. 2008. "Tribalism as Minimax-Regret Strategy: Evidence from Voting in the 2007 Kenyan Elections" *Afrobarometer* Working Paper No. 103.

²³⁷ Bratton M, Mattes R and Gyimah-Bodi. 2005. *Public Opinion, Democracy and Market Reform in Africa*.

²³⁸ Kuenzi M and Lambright G. 2005. "Who Votes in Africa? An Examination of Electoral Turnout in 10 African Countries." *Afrobarometer* Working paper 51.

²³⁹ Schaffer FC. 1998. *Democracy in Translation : understanding politics in an unfamiliar culture*.

terms such as “democracy”. Secondly, they ignore the literature on rational choice and make little or no attempt to incorporate variables such as the closeness of an election, treating the act of voting as totally alienated from the election itself. Thirdly, they pay no attention to the idea that voting may be habit forming, and while Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi find that generation is important, they do not show *how* it is important.

2.4 Cross National Variation in Turnout

Powell²⁴⁰ conducted the first major study of turnout across countries, looking at 29 Democratic countries from 1958-1976 and using the proportion of the voting age population as his dependent variable. He found that, most people (77%) vote in most elections in most countries. Powell found that the level of turnout in a country was primarily determined by the existence of mobilising voting laws such as government registration of voters and compulsory voting, and a strong party system which made it easier for voters to make a decision as the costs of voting were lower and which also enhanced the ability of parties to mobilise voters. He also found that economic development aids turnout as it sustains a strong party system, and that turnout is lower in presidential systems and majoritarian electoral systems as these have weaker party systems.

Crewe's²⁴¹ study of turnout in 27 countries from 1945-1980 used the proportion of registered voters as his dependent variable but found a similar average rate of turnout: 79%. His method was somewhat simplistic in that he only made use of bivariate correlations which casts some doubts on his results due to the absence of controls. He found four factors to be important: the legal setup, organisational factors, the electoral system and micropersonal

²⁴⁰ Powell G. 1982. *Contemporary Democracies: Participation, Stability and Violence*; Powell G. 1986. "American Voter Turnout in Comparative Perspective." *American Political Science Review* 80:17-43.

²⁴¹ Crewe I. 1981. "Electoral Participation." in Butler D, Penniman H and Ranney A (eds). *Democracy at the Polls: A Comparative Study of Competitive National Elections*.

factors. While he found that compulsory voting was an important legal factor in boosting turnout, proxy voting and postal voting were not. Of the organisational factors, a strong party system was found to be particularly important while PR was the electoral system which produced the best turnout figures. He found no evidence that socio-economic factors were important.

Jackman's²⁴² study looked at 19 countries in the 1960s and 1970s, and he used the percentage of the total population as his measure. Jackman found that compulsory voting, nationally competitive districts, electoral disproportionality, multipartyism, and unicameralism were all important determinants of turnout. With regards to multipartyism he found that turnout declines as the number of parties increases. He further argues that it is the decisiveness of the election and the government which matters. Turnout is lower in the upper house elections as there is less at stake. Supporters of minor parties in disproportional systems see no point in voting and abstain. When there are lots of political parties, voters have a less decisive role in government formation due to the possibility of coalitions after the election and thus abstain. To use the language of Tsebelis,²⁴³ voters vote in those elections where the most important veto players are to be elected, and they do so only when they feel that they can affect the outcome. Jackman and Miller's²⁴⁴ 1995 study adds more countries, Spain, Portugal and Greece, all newly democratised European nations. They find that, in spite of expectations to the contrary, cultural factors are not important, turnout is the same in new democracies as the institutional explanations would predict.

²⁴² Jackman R. 1987. "Political Institutions and Voter Turnout in the Industrial Democracies." *American Political Science Review* 81:405-423.

²⁴³ Tsebelis, G. 2002. *Veto Players: How Political Institutions work*

²⁴⁴ Jackman R and Miller R. 1995. "Voter Turnout in the Industrial Democracies during the 1980s" *Comparative Political Studies* 27(4): 467-492.

Blais and Carty²⁴⁵ produce a study of 20 countries, with 509 individual elections up to 1985. They find that average turnout is 78%, and that turnout is higher when there is compulsory voting, a small population, and proportional representation, which they find boosts turnout by 7% compared to plurality elections and 5% when compared to majoritarian elections. They can't, however, explain why this is the case, and the correlation between electoral systems and turnout disappears when they drop the dummy variables that they include for New Zealand, Switzerland, Sweden and Norway. Black's²⁴⁶ study of 18 countries in the 1980s also finds that compulsory voting is the most significant variable but finds no relationship between the electoral system, unicameralism or disproportionality and voting. Franklin²⁴⁷ looks at 29 countries from 1960-95 and finds that turnout increases with proportionality, compulsory voting, Sunday voting and postal voting, but declines with the number of voting days.

Two things are immediately apparent from our initial cursory look at the cross national turnout literature. The first is that there are very few robust findings except for the fact that compulsory voting increases turnout,²⁴⁸ which seems both unsurprising and somewhat unnecessary of much extensive investigation. The second is that almost all research has focussed on the developed world, and European countries and the United States in particular. There are a few recent exceptions.

Perez-Linian²⁴⁹ finds that the state and political parties are key to fostering turnout in emerging democracies as they are uniquely placed to structure the rules of the game in order

²⁴⁵ Blais A and Carty R. 1990. "Does Proportional Representation foster Voter Turnout?" in *European Journal of Political Research* 18(2): 167-181.

²⁴⁶ Black J. 1991. "Reforming the context of the voting process in Canada: Lessons from other democracies" Bakvis H (ed.) *Voter turnout in Canada*.

²⁴⁷ Franklin M. 1996. "Electoral Participation" in LeDuc L, Niemi R and Norris P (eds) *Elections and Voting in Global Perspective*.

²⁴⁸ Blais A. 2000.

²⁴⁹ Perez-Linian. 2001.

to increase turnout. She looks at 17 Latin American countries in the 1980s and finds that the effectiveness of the registration process, compulsory voting and party competition are the most important determinants of turnout. Schraufnagel and Sgouraki B²⁵⁰ look at 67 elections in 16 countries across South America and find that compulsory voting, union membership and urbanisation are the most important determinants of turnout on that continent. Fornos, Power and Garand²⁵¹ look at voter turnout in South America from 1980 to 2000 in 18 countries. They find that the determinants of voter turnout in Latin America are primarily institutional (such as unicameralism, compulsory voting, and concurrent legislative and executive elections) and political (i.e., founding elections and political freedoms). They find that socioeconomic variables, which are important in the West, are not important in South America at all.

The first and at this point only study of cross-national turnout in Africa is by Kuenzi and Lambright.²⁵² This study looks at those multiparty regimes which have had two consecutive elections since the democratic transition period of the 1990s, which leave them with a very small number of cases which vary from 15-32. They find that two institutional variables – electoral formula and concurrent presidential and legislative elections have significant effects on turnout. They also find that media exposure is significant and positive, as are the number of elections that have been held in the country since independence.

There are a number of problems with their study however. First, they only look at legislative elections. This is problematic given the preponderance of the presidential system in Africa and the fact that this is where real power lies.²⁵³ Most of the institutions on the

²⁵⁰ Schraufnagel S and Sgouraki B. 2008. "Voter Turnout in Central and South America". *The Latin Americanist*. 49 (1): 39-69.

²⁵¹ Power and Garand. 2004.

²⁵² Kuenzi and Lambright. 2007.

²⁵³ Gertz. 1984. "Dissent and Authority in the Zambian one party state 1973-1980" in Getzel CJ, Baylies CL, Szeftel M (eds). *The Dynamics of the one party state in Zambia*: 80-106; Zolberg A. 1966. *Creating Political Order: The one party states of West Africa*; Ake

African continent remain firmly in the hands of Presidents, and a study of only legislative elections may seriously underestimate turnout levels in Africa as well as looking at ignoring potential turnout determinants. Moreover, legislative elections are fundamentally different in presidential as opposed to parliamentary systems, and not accounting for this fact is a serious limitation of their study.

Kuenzi and Lambright also have a very small set of cases to look at, and as such their results cannot be seen to be particularly conclusive. They also make no attempt to look at the prevailing system in Africa which has more in common with what some have called “Electoral Authoritarian regimes” than with the forms of democratic government familiar in Europe, North America, and Australasia.²⁵⁴ As such, they fail to control for variables associated with this type of regime, and, moreover paint a picture of Africa which has little in common with its history or current experience.

From these and other studies we can derive three theoretical frameworks that are usually found to be important in cross-national studies of turnout: socio-economic, political, and institutional,²⁵⁵ and each of these will now be looked at in turn.

2.4.1 Socioeconomic Determinants of Turnout

The first theoretical framework to be considered is the theory that socio-economic factors are the principle determinants of turnout variation across countries. Most of these theorists focus on just how costly an individual will find it to participate in an election, and this literature assumes that those costs vary between states. In his review of aggregate level

C. 2000. *The Feasibility of Democracy in Africa*; Englund H (ed). 2002. *A democracy of chameleons: politics and culture in the new Malawi*:11-25.

²⁵⁴ Schleiter, A (ed). 2006. *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*.

²⁵⁵ Geys B. 2006. “Explaining voter turnout: A review of aggregate level research”. *Electoral Studies*. 25:638.

research on voter turnout Geys finds that population size is significant across most studies of turnout.²⁵⁶ Amongst the studies that have used population size as a key variable are those of Filer and Kenny,²⁵⁷ Hansen,²⁵⁸ Blais and Dobrzynska,²⁵⁹ and Allers.²⁶⁰ The general argument is that the importance of population size can be explained by the rational choice model via the *P* term: the probability of casting a decisive vote. The larger the community in which one lives and votes, the smaller the chance that one vote, your vote, makes a difference, and thus the smaller the incentive to vote.²⁶¹ We would expect this relationship to hold in the African case.

The second variable is population concentration, or population density. Hoffman-Marinot argues that this variable is a proxy for the difference between rural and urban constituencies. He argues that urbanisation weakens “interpersonal bonds, primary social structures and consensus norms.”²⁶² In cities, there is less pressure from the local community to vote as the bonds between individuals are weaker. In low density areas politics is more personal, individuals are more likely to have regular face-to-face contact with other members of their community and, moreover, have a greater chance of having actually met the candidates standing for election, lowering the information costs of elections.²⁶³ This theory also fits into the expanded rational choice model, building on the idea of voting as a civic duty. When one doesn’t vote one faces loss of social prestige in the community,²⁶⁴ and in small, integrated societies the chance that a) your neighbours will know whether you have voted, and b) you will care what your neighbours think is much. Geys notes that the

²⁵⁶ Geys, B. 2006.

²⁵⁷ Filer J and Kenny L. 1980. “Voter Turnout and the benefits of voting” *Public Choice* 35:575-585.

²⁵⁸ Hansen T. 1994. Local Elections and Local Government Performance.” *Scandinavian Political Studies* 17(1):1-30.

²⁵⁹ Blais and Dobrzynska A. 1998. Turnout in electoral democracies. *European Journal of Political Research* 33:239-261.

²⁶⁰ Allers M. 2000. “Het relatieve belang van de Eigen belastinginkomsten en de opkomst bij gemeenteraadsverkiezingen”. In Allers, *Het decentrale belastinggebied, de kwaliteit van de lokale afweging en die politieke participatie*.

²⁶¹ Owen G and Grofman B. 1984. “To vote or not to vote: the paradox of non-voting”. *Public Choice*. 42:311-325.

²⁶² Hoffman-Marinot, 1994. “Voter Turnout in French Municipal Elections” In Lopez-Nieto L (ed) *Local Elections in Europe*. Institut de sciences politiques I sociales, Barcelona 13-42; Wirth I. 1938. “Urbanism as a way of life.” *American Journal of Sociology*. 44:3-24.

²⁶³ Blank. 1974.

²⁶⁴ Riker and Ordeshook. 1968; Overbye E. 1995. “Making a Case for the Rational Self-regarding “Ethical” Voter ... and Solving the “Paradox of Not Voting” in the Process” *European Journal of Political Research* Vol. 27:369-96.

statistical analysis of this variable generally finds a much weaker relationship than between population size and turnout,²⁶⁵ and indeed Blais finds the opposite relationship.²⁶⁶

This could be because there is another countervailing factor at play here. While it may be the case in some settings that interpersonal bonds and social structures are weakened in urban areas this is by no means always the case. While Coleman²⁶⁷ claims that urbanisation loosened kinship ties and along with Christianity, weakened familial ties, it has been widely noted in the study of urbanisation in Africa that African people do not always lose the close kinship, ethnic and social bonds that exist in the rural areas when they become urbanised.²⁶⁸ Many of these networks are formed or are replicated in the city, and ethnic groups often settle in separate neighbourhoods, replicating the traditional pattern of life in the town and forming tribal associations based along ethnic lines.²⁶⁹ Mamdani²⁷⁰ points to the way in which clientelism continued to serve as a link between the urban and rural populations. Indeed, as urbanisation began, and then when competitive elections were introduced, in some aspects of their lives, individuals identified more markedly with ethnic identities. Moreover, closely packed populations may be easier to target and mobilise by governments and elites simply because they live closely together, unlike the small, dispersed populations of rural areas who may be exposed to less group pressure to vote.²⁷¹ In cities political middlemen may also find it a great deal easier to provide patronage to clients. Urban populations also tend to be more educated and knowledgeable about the political situation and system.²⁷² On top of this we have the fact that the costs of getting to a voting station are lower in an urban area. Rural

²⁶⁵ Geys B. 2006.

²⁶⁶ Blais A. 2000.

²⁶⁷ Coleman J. 1994. *Nationalism and Development in Africa, Selected Essays*.

²⁶⁸ Mamdani M. 1996. *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*.; Hodgkin T. 1956. *Nationalism in colonial Africa*.

²⁶⁹ Hodgkin T. 1956.

²⁷⁰ Mamdani M. 1996.

²⁷¹ Lipset. 1959. *Political Man*.

²⁷² Coleman J. 1994.

voting stations may be widely dispersed and difficult to get to, as is generally the case in Mali.²⁷³

Cohen argues that population homogeneity also increases turnout, for much the same reasons that population density does, in that it increases group solidarity.²⁷⁴ Zimmer²⁷⁵ contests this, arguing that heterogeneity increases turnout, as when governments redistribute wealth and allocate public services they assign most benefits to the largest group or to the group that supported their entry into office. Thus, in heterogeneous societies there is an incentive to vote in order to increase the power of one's group. This is an argument that we would expect to be borne out on the African continent. Lonsdale²⁷⁶ has pointed to the ethnic nature of African elections, and the way that ethnicity is a key tool for mobilisation and even nation building. Overall, Geys shows that the data on this factor is inconsistent, and weak.²⁷⁷ Various variables, including income inequality, ethnic fractionalisation and religious diversity have been used as measures.

Religion is an under researched potential determinant of turnout, which may have effects not covered by religious diversity. When it comes to religious membership Vinger finds two groups of religions, "aggressive sects" and "avoidance sects". 'Avoidance sects, the Jehovah's Witnesses for example, which may reject the legitimacy of the state altogether, have strong influence over their members and can effectively remove them from politics.'²⁷⁸ In Africa it is only in Uganda (Protestant, Muslim, and especially Catholic) and in northern Malawi (Muslim) that religious affiliation has been the most important influence in

²⁷³ Tattersall N. 29 April 2007. "Mali vote for President". Reuters.

²⁷⁴ Cohen G. 1982. "Community cohesion and space planning." in Frankenberg R (ed). *Custom and Conflict in British Society*.

²⁷⁵ Zimmer T. 1976. "Urbanization, Social Diversity, Voter Turnout, and Political Competition in U.S. Elections: Analysis of Congressional Districts for 1972." *Social Science Quarterly* 56 (4): 689-697.

²⁷⁶ Lonsdale J. 1996. "Moral Ethnicity and Political Tribalism", in Kaarsholm P and Hultin J (eds), *Inventions and Boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism*.

²⁷⁷ Geys, B. 2006.

²⁷⁸ Vinger M. 1971. *The Scientific Study of Religion*.

determining voters' choices. 'Outright anti-state 'rejectionists' have been significant historically but few in number.²⁷⁹ That said, we do find that political participation has generally been lower in Muslim countries, though Fish argues that this has more to do with their suppression of women's rights.²⁸⁰

Economic growth (whether the economy is currently growing or not) may be important as a determinant of turnout. Rosenstone²⁸¹ argues that economic adversity lowers turnout as it makes people withdraw from politics to focus on personal concerns. Radcliff²⁸² finds that economic performance increases turnout in both industrial and developing nations. Posner and Simon²⁸³ find that in Zambia worsening economic circumstances result in decreased turnout rather than a vote for the opposition, leading us to believe that poor growth may well be linked to low turnout. Moreover, Clark²⁸⁴ finds that low economic growth is linked to an increased chance of military coups in Africa due to declining governmental legitimacy, which may also lower turnout. That said, Blais and Dobrzynska²⁸⁵ point out that it is an equally plausible argument that low economic growth may increase turnout as it can cause public grievances to be mobilised.

Economic development (being at an advanced stage of economic development) is also often found to influence turnout positively and has been widely linked to democratisation.²⁸⁶ Blais and Dobrzynska²⁸⁷ argue that more economic development makes

²⁷⁹ Hodges T. 1985. *Jehovah's Witnesses in Africa*; Haynes J. 1996. *Religion and Politics in Africa*; Marshall R. 1991. "Power in the Name of Jesus" *Review of African Political Economy* Vol. 52: 21-37; Marshall R. 1995. "God is Not a Democrat: Pentecostalism and Democratization in Nigeria," in Gifford P (ed) *The Christian Churches and the Democratisation of Africa*.

²⁸⁰ Fish, M. S. 2002. Islam and authoritarianism. *World Politics*, 55: 4-37.

²⁸¹ Rosenstone 1982. "Economic adversity and voter turnout."

²⁸² Radcliff. 1992.

²⁸³ Posner and Smith. 2002.

²⁸⁴ Clark. 2006. Armed Arbiters: When does the military step into the electoral arena? in Schleder, A (ed) *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*.

²⁸⁵ Blais A and Dobrzynska. 1998.

²⁸⁶ Bollen K., and Jackman R. 1985; Burkhart R., and Lewis-Beck M. 1994. "Comparative democracy: the economic development thesis" *American Political Science Review* 88: 903-10; Gasiorowski M. 1995. "Economic crisis and political regime change: an event history analysis." *American Political Science Review* 89: 882-97; Barro R. 1996. "Determinants of democracy." *Journal of Political Economy* 107: S158-S183; Przeworski, A., and Limongi F. 1997. "Modernization: theories and facts." *World Politics*, 49: 155-83.

citizens more informed and engaged. They also have more resources and more information. Blais, Massicotte and Dobrzynska²⁸⁸ further argue that economic development produces a population with a heterogeneous set of interests, which they argue amplifies turnout. That said, just because a country moves to a higher stage of economic development it cannot necessarily be assumed that it will become more democratic, it may be that this correlation simply reveals that countries that are currently economically developed also happen to be democratic

An alternate measure of this, used by Blais,²⁸⁹ is life expectancy. He argues that it is possible that the most important condition for people to get engaged in political life is that their basic needs be met. In Africa life expectancy is increasingly a measure of the prevalence HIV/AIDS infection rather than the stage of economic development. Many African countries find it difficult to promptly update the voters roll when voters die, and the increased death rates may contribute to the apparent decline in turnout. This factor may be, in part, responsible for the situation in Malawi in 2004 when there were one million extra voters on the voters' roll compared to the number predicted by the census.²⁹⁰ HIV/AIDS also increases costs of voting as individuals become ill and are unable to travel.²⁹¹ The added stigma of being infected also means that many individuals don't attend mobilising events, such as rallies and meetings which tend to increase participation rates.²⁹²

Another factor linked to economic development is education, measured by the literacy rate.²⁹³ A minimal level of literacy may well be required to register and participate in the

²⁸⁷ Blais and Dobrzynska. 1998.

²⁸⁸ Blais, Massicotte and Dobrzynska. 2003.

²⁸⁹ Blais A. 2000.

²⁹⁰ Chirambo K. 2008. "The Political Cost of AIDS in Africa" in Chirambo K (ed) *The Political Cost of AIDS in Africa*.

²⁹¹ Chirambo K. 2008. "Introduction" in Chirambo K (ed) *The Political Cost of AIDS in Africa*.

²⁹² Chirambo K. 2008:43

²⁹³ Verba, Schlozman and Brady. 1995.

voting process. That said, we may well not expect to find this relationship in the African context. Blaydes²⁹⁴ finds that the least literate people in Egypt are precisely those most likely to vote as they are most vulnerable to intimidation by state authorities, and their votes tend to be cheaper to purchase. Interestingly, Sinnott and Whelan²⁹⁵ find an inverse relationship between education and turnout in elections to the European parliament in Dublin in 1984 and 1989, but cannot explain why this is the case.

2.4.2 Institutional Setting

Institutions structure politics as they define who is allowed to participate, they shape political strategies, and they influence what actors believe to be possible and desirable.²⁹⁶ They are also seen to be able to influence norms, beliefs and actions and therefore shape outcomes. These are the basic assumptions of the neo-institutionalist school, one which has been particularly influential in the turnout literature. One major problem with neo-institutionalist theory is that institutions are assumed to be endogenous, with their form and functioning depending on the conditions under which they emerge and endure. If this is the case then it isn't institutions which matter as they are not autonomous but merely the product of the conditions which shape them. We can't know what individuals would do if the institutions didn't exist, as so we might expect the socioeconomic conditions which shape them, and which we mentioned earlier, to be more important.²⁹⁷

That said, institutional characteristics have regularly been found to be the most important determinants of cross-national turnout variation in advanced industrial

²⁹⁴ Blaydes, L. 2006. "Who votes in Authoritarian elections and why? Determinants of voter turnout in contemporary Egypt". Paper prepared for the 2006 APSA annual meeting, August 31-September 3 2006, Philadelphia PA.

²⁹⁵ Sinnott R and Whelan B. 1991. "Turnout in European Elections – A comparison of the 1984 and 1989 elections in Dublin." *Working Papers on European Economic and Public Affairs*, Paper No.2.

²⁹⁶ Steinmo S. 2001. "The New Institutionalism" in Clark B and Foweraker J (eds) *The Encyclopedia of Democratic Thought*.

²⁹⁷ Przeworski A. 2004. "Institutions matter?". Government and Opposition / Leonard Schapiro Lecture, delivered to the British Political Science Association, Lincoln, England, 8 April 2004.

democracies.²⁹⁸ Jackman²⁹⁹ argues that institutions are the only meaningful differences between countries when it comes to turnout. As voting is an institutionalised form of political behaviour it will respond to the laws and procedures which regulate it. Some neo-institutionalists focus on institutions as “arenas”,³⁰⁰ rules and procedures which structure choices. Others prefer to look at how some kinds of institutions, like political organisations, may have their own goals and strategies.³⁰¹ Both of these approaches are present in the turnout literature. The first group focus on the idea that turnout is higher where institutional conditions enlarge the marginal impact of ones vote. The second group looks at institutions as strategic actors. They emphasise factors like political mobilisation or the number of parties. This may be particularly important in new democracies and electoral authoritarian regimes as citizens face uncertainty as to the “true” effect of their vote, and the importance of the state and political parties giving them some ancillary benefit when they vote may be critical. These theorists focus on things like compulsory voting and registration, which the state can use to change the costs of voting,³⁰² but ignore the fact that African states have other less legitimate means at its disposal to affect turnout.

Let us now turn to the specific institutions seen to influence turnout. First amongst these is the electoral system. Ladner and Miller³⁰³ find that turnout is higher when proportional representation is used, as does Blais³⁰⁴ who finds that it is on average 3 percentage points higher when PR is used. Kostadinova finds that turnout is over 7 percentage points higher in PR than in single member districts in Eastern Europe.³⁰⁵ In a

²⁹⁸ Jackman. 1987; Jackman and Miller. 1995; Powell. 1986.

²⁹⁹ Jackman. 1987

³⁰⁰ Tsebelis G.1992

³⁰¹ See Skocpol (1985) on how the state acts as a self interested agent, and Sartori (1976), Katz (1980) and Cox and McCubbins (1993) for the application of this theory to political parties.

³⁰² Perez-Linan A. 2001. ‘Neoinstitutional accounts of voter turnout: moving beyond industrial democracies’, *Electoral Studies* 20(2):281-297.

³⁰³ Ladner and Miller. 1999.

³⁰⁴ Blais A. 2000.

³⁰⁵ Kostadinova T. 2003. “Voter turnout dynamics in post-Communist Europe” *European Journal of Political Research* 42: 741–759

study of 116 elections in Africa Lindberg also finds that the more majoritarian the system the lower the rates of participation.³⁰⁶ Geys notes that this is true across most studies of turnout.³⁰⁷ Blais and Carty³⁰⁸ point to three reasons as to why this may be the case. First, PR is seen as fairer and people are thus less alienated from the political system and more inclined to vote. Fewer votes are “wasted”³⁰⁹ and thus the probability that one’s vote will be decisive in the election of one’s party or candidate is higher than in majoritarian or plurality systems. Second, as proportional systems generally produce more parties, there are more options for voters and electoral alienation is reduced.³¹⁰ Finally, PR makes elections more competitive. As there are less non-competitive districts parties have an incentive to campaign everywhere, not just in swing seats, creating a greater mobilisation effect and more powerful group-party linkages, which in turn aides turnout. That said, PR systems are not as easy to understand as majoritarian ones, and, moreover, are more likely to increase the chances of a coalition after the election, which lowers the decisiveness of an electors vote in determining the government.

Blais and Aarts³¹¹ argue that in order to understand this variable we need to separate out the number of parties and PR in order to disaggregate the effects of either factor. They find that the variable works not through number of parties but rather elite mobilisation and more competitive seats. Another argument is that it is not the system of PR per se which matters, but rather the degree of disproportionality (the difference between the proportion of votes garnered and seats obtained) that the system produces which matters as PR systems diverge widely when it comes to this feature. Blais³¹² finds that when used separately, both

³⁰⁶ Lindberg S. 2005. "Consequences of electoral systems in Africa: a preliminary inquiry" *Electoral Studies* Vol. 24: 41-64

³⁰⁷ Geys, B. 2006.

³⁰⁸ Blais and Carty. 1990.

³⁰⁹ Blais and Dobrzynska. 1998.

³¹⁰ Blais and Aarts. 2006.

³¹¹ Blais and Aarts. 2006.

³¹² Blais. 2000.

disproportionality and PR are significant, and when he combines the electoral system and the degree of disproportionality he finds that this factor is important when differentiating within the set of PR electoral systems, and the greater the disproportionality of PR systems, the lower the turnout. He finds, however, that disproportionality only has an effect when comparing PR systems to one another, and that this factor on its own does not affect turnout in non-PR systems. This is perhaps to be expected as disproportionality in these systems is likely to depend more on the vote distribution than on electoral law.

Unsurprisingly the most important determinant of cross national turnout variation in the literature is compulsory voting.³¹³ Blais,³¹⁴ for example, finds that compulsory voting increases turnout by 11 points. As there is no African country with enforced compulsory voting laws,³¹⁵ this variable will not be considered in our analysis.

Concurrent or simultaneous elections may also raise turnout as more races may create more media attention,³¹⁶ both stimulating interest in the election and lowering the costs of information accrual. Costs are also lowered in that the costs of voting associated with physically getting to the polls are fixed across all the elections occurring on that day. Once one has entered the polling booth there is no significant increase in costs when it comes to voting in more than one election. This spreading of costs³¹⁷ and the potential for increased benefit from the multiple elections that are taking place can help alter the rational choice equation in favour of voting in all the elections, and in favour of voting at all. This variable

³¹³ Jackman. 1987; Powell. 1980.

³¹⁴ Blais. 2000.

³¹⁵ IDEA. "compulsory voting".

³¹⁶ Cox and Munger. 1989.

³¹⁷ Carter. 1984.

has been found to be significant in a majority of the turnout studies which have been undertaken.³¹⁸

As most studies look at either presidential or legislative elections they cannot assess the importance of the type of election in determining turnout levels. One exception to this is Gary and Caul's³¹⁹ study. They find that presidential elections do increase turnout, when all other factors are controlled for.³²⁰ This might be due to the increased attention paid to these races, the fact that far more information is available on candidates in presidential elections than in parliamentary elections, thus lowering the costs of voting, or due to the fact that the stakes are higher for the parties as these are zero-sum elections, thus increasing the incentives of parties to campaign.³²¹ This factor may also be linked to the decisiveness of elections, which Blais³²² believes is crucial. In systems with an elected President, parliamentary turnout is generally lower as voters focus on the election where most power is conferred.³²³ This is a feature that we would expect to be repeated in Africa. Most African states have been characterised since independence by the presence of strong presidents and weak, obliging parliaments.³²⁴ The neopatrimonial nature of these regimes which centralises resources distribution in the office of the President is likely to increase the relative importance of these elections.³²⁵ As power is concentrated in the presidency we would expect to see higher rates of turnout in these elections.

Whether the system is presidential or parliamentary should also be important in this respect as parliamentary systems generally have only one national election, making this

³¹⁸ Geys, B. 2006.

³¹⁹ Gary and Caul. 2008.

³²⁰ Gary and Caul. 2008:1119.

³²¹ Liphart, 1999. "Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries.

³²² Blais A. 2000.

³²³ Jackman. 1987.

³²⁴ Gertzel. 1984. "Dissent and Authority in the Zambian one party state 1973-1980" in Getzel CJ, Baylies CL, Szeftel M (eds). *The Dynamics of the one party state in Zambia*, 80-106.

³²⁵ Bartton and van de Walle. 1997.

election more decisive than either of the separate election in presidential systems, leading us to believe that in general we should see higher turnout in parliamentary than in presidential systems. In a study of 294 elections in countries with non-hereditary heads of state since the Second World War, Tavits³²⁶ finds that voter turnout tends to be seven percentage points lower in all elections when citizens are asked to vote in presidential elections in addition to parliamentary elections. Adding more elections is a burden, and the increased costs of voting lower turnout, as well as the reduced decisiveness of each vote (as there is now more than one relevant elected decision maker) diminishes the importance of both elections.

One of the less studied, but particularly significant variables that have been found to be associated with turnout is the voting age. Franklin finds that the decrease in the voting age has been associated with the decline in turnout across the Western world.³²⁷ While this variable, and the association between age and voting will be studied in more depth in subsequent chapters, it is worth noting now that young people are usually found to be the citizens least likely to participate due to their unstable ties to particular communities, the unstable nature of their lives at age 18, and the significant costs associated with first registration and the accumulation of information about the voting system, parties and their preferences.³²⁸ We would expect this relationship to hold in the African case.

African elections are unlike the elections held in much of the developed world where most of the studies of turnout have been undertaken in that there are often autocratic institutions which have an effect on the outcome of election, and of turnout, even in those cases where the system has “democratised”. In this study I am purposefully including both autocratic and democratic elections, which presents some theoretical and empirical problems.

³²⁶ Tavits M. 2009. *Presidents with Prime Ministers*: 232.

³²⁷ Franklin M. 2004.

³²⁸ Wolfinger R and Rosenstone S. 1980.

First, autocratic elections often involve significant vote manipulation and inflation of voter turnout figures. Second, these elections may be driven by factors other than those associated with mobilisation in developed countries, such as fear of reprisals,³²⁹ (which we will return to later). The importance of this factor is hinted at in a study by Erdmann, who finds that even in democracies, those countries that had “partly free” elections had higher turnout than those who had less “free and fair” elections.³³⁰

2.4.3 The Party system, Political Variables and factors linked to specific elections.

As voters are asked to make a choice about the various candidates and parties on offer we would expect to find that turnout will depend to some degree on the nature of the choices on offer and, as Blais³³¹ notes, this choice is to a large degree dependant on the party system. Political fragmentation is a key variable here, but there is little consensus as to whether it increases or decreases turnout. A number of studies, including those of Seidle and Miller,³³² Blais and Carty³³³ and Hansen³³⁴ argue that the greater the number of parties, the more choice there is in the system. Dittrich and Johansen³³⁵ further claim that the more parties there are, the greater the competitiveness of the election and thus the benefits accrued to the voter as he is able to select a party much closer to his/her policy position than he would otherwise be able to. On the other hand, Jackman³³⁶ and De Winter et al³³⁷ note that the more parties there are the greater the need for coalitions, which decreases the direct influence voters have over who governs them. The increased complexity of choosing between large numbers of parties also increases information costs.³³⁸ This variable is somewhat difficult to analyse, as noted

³²⁹ Schleder, A (ed). 2006.

³³⁰ Erdmann G. 2007. “Party Research: Western European bias and the African Labyrinth” *Votes, Money and Violence: Political Parties and Elections in Sub-Saharan Africa*.

³³¹ Blais A. 2000

³³² Seidle and Miller. 1976.

³³³ Blais and Carty.1990.

³³⁴ Hansen. 1994.

³³⁵ Dittrich and Johansen. 1983.

³³⁶ Jackman.1987.

³³⁷ De Winter et al. 1991.

³³⁸ Kuenzi and Lambright. 2007; Blais and Dobrzynska A. 1998.

earlier, because it may be that the impact of political fragmentation differs depending on which electoral system is used. A vote for a small party may be wasted in a majoritarian system, but this is not necessarily the case in PR. Brockington³³⁹ has argued that once the likelihood of coalitions forming is controlled for, then multipartyism does increase turnout, but the link between coalition governments and low turnout is not found to be significant by Blais and Carty³⁴⁰ who find no link between one-party majority governments and high turnout. Black³⁴¹ finds no link whatsoever between the number of parties and turnout. In the African case, the sheer number of parties may tell us very little about the political system at all. African governments have in the past encouraged the splintering of opposition parties. If anything, the exceptionally divided nature of many African opposition movements,³⁴² often a result of the governing party stoking tensions within the opposition movements,³⁴³ may lead voters to be more disinclined to vote when there are a large number of parties as this decreases the chances of an opposition victory. As such we might expect African elections to share a relationship with those studies that find that more parties lead to lower turnout.³⁴⁴ On the other hand, a large number of parties is potentially a sign that opposition parties haven't boycotted the elections,³⁴⁵ meaning that they will mobilise their supporters and thereby may increase turnout.

That said, although political parties are weak in Africa,³⁴⁶ they may still be effective mobilisation agents. As Kuenzi and Lambright³⁴⁷ point out, parties in Africa often supply direct material benefits to voters who vote, such as small amounts of money or food, and the

³³⁹ Brockington. 2004.

³⁴⁰ Blais and Carty.1990.

³⁴¹ Black. 1991.

³⁴² Szeftel 1999. "Political Crisis and Democratic Renewal in Africa" in *Voting for Democracy*.

³⁴³ Aalen L and Tronvoll K. 2008. "Briefing: The 2008 Ethiopian Local Elections: The Return of Electoral Authoritarianism". *African Affairs* 108/430: 111.

³⁴⁴ Jackman. 1987; Blais and Dobrzynska. 1998; Gray and Caul. 2000.

³⁴⁵ Lindberg S. 2006. "Tragic Protest: Why do Opposition parties boycott elections?" in Schleder, A (ed) *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*.

³⁴⁶ Bratton and van de Walle. 1997.

³⁴⁷ Kuenzi and Lambright. 2007.

more parties there are, the greater the incentive to provide these goods. They find that the number of parties does generally increase turnout in African elections, they provide greater linkages with various identity groups.

Another key feature is closeness. The closer and more competitive an election, the greater the probability that your vote counts and that yours may be the vote that decides the election. Alternatively, an indirect relationship may be at work here, as close elections may provoke more political elite mobilisation, causing higher turnout.³⁴⁸ In most case the measure that is used is the percentage vote gap between the winner and the runner up in an election, and in most of the literature it is found to be significant, Geys³⁴⁹ finds that closeness is significant in 69% of the studies surveyed. Unfortunately data availability issues mean that it is often difficult to study closeness at the level that it might be most significant, at the constituency level. Linked to this is the importance of constituency size and the number of polling stations. In India closeness matters at the district level and bigger states have lower turnout.³⁵⁰ In the one party states of Kenya and Tanzania, Bienen³⁵¹ finds that the key difference between the low turnout in Kenya in 1969 of 47% and the much higher rate of 72% in Tanzania in 1970 was that Tanzania had eight times as many polling stations as Kenya.³⁵²

Three final factors that are often found to be significant are the time between elections, as a greater space between elections may well reduce voter fatigue,³⁵³ previous turnout, or habit which has a strong statistical relationship with turnout, but is not found in

³⁴⁸ Cox and Munger. 1989 ; Kirchgassner and Schulz. 2004 ; Key. 1957 ; Denever and Hands. 1974.

³⁴⁹ Geys. 2006.

³⁵⁰ Diwakar R. 2008. "Voter Turnout in the Indian states: An empirical analysis". *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Political Parties* Vol. 18 No. 1:75-100.

³⁵¹ Bienen H. 1974. *Kenya, the Politics of Participation and Control*: 94-5.

³⁵² The number of polling stations is something that we just cannot study in this thesis. For the national level study we just don't have the data and despite all attempts could not create a dataset that included this variable.

³⁵³ Franklin M. 2004.

very many studies,³⁵⁴ and the differences in turnout between national and sub-national elections. Blais finds, on average, a 17% difference between national and local elections though this varies considerably from 34% in the UK to 11% in Japan where turnout in local elections is higher than in national elections.³⁵⁵

2.5 Conclusion

What is striking about all of these explanations, and not only in the African context, is the thin evidential bases for most of these claims, the cited cases of age, economic growth and compulsory voting being partially excepted. Almost all of the explanations are contested and little if any effort has been made to go beyond the general and try to situate these accounts within the lived experiences of African people in particular. Moreover, another “elephant in the room” that dominates this literature is the extent to which any of these factors are *causal* rather than merely correlative. Verba, Nie and Kim³⁵⁶ and Topf³⁵⁷ show for example that though education is meant to correspond positively with turnout, and has increased across the Western world over the past 50 years, this has not resulted in substantial increases in turnout. Franklin³⁵⁸ explains that many factors that appear to be important when cross-national studies are done, like weekend voting, which is seen to have a positive effect on turnout, do not alter turnout when introduced into countries that had not possessed them before.

The next chapter begins the process of deriving an African model of voter turnout by expanding the set of variables discussed in this chapter to include the factors that have been found to be important in African politics in general, most notably; ethnicity, clientelism and

³⁵⁴ Geys, B. 2006. “Explaining voter turnout: A review of aggregate level research”. *Electoral Studies*. 25:646.

³⁵⁵ Blais, A. 2000.

³⁵⁶ Verba, S., Nie N and Kim J. 1978. *Participation and Political Equality*. Cambridge University Press, New York.

³⁵⁷ Topf, R. 1995. “Electoral participation” in Klingemann H and Fuchs D (eds) *Citizens and the state*. Oxford

³⁵⁸ Franklin M. 2004.

regime type. By looking at the underlying explanations of political activity in Africa and by paying particular attention to studying turnout at all levels, from the individual to the national, we can start to delve deeper into causal, rather than just correlative, relationships.

Chapter 3: Turnout in Africa; Theory and Hypotheses

3.1 Introduction

So far we have seen that the literature is overwhelmingly situated within the context of the Western European paradigm. This chapter begins to look at what might make turnout in Africa different from turnout in other regions of this world. By looking at clientelism, ethnicity, and regime types we are able to account for the importance of the local, locating this thesis firmly within the study of African politics. Given the importance of these three institutions in Africa we expect them to play a key role in determining whether or not someone chooses to vote. The chapter then moves on to identify the key hypotheses to be tested in each chapter.

3.2 Ethnicity

One of the partly intended, partly unexpected consequences of the colonial project was that different ethnic groups had unequal access to the modernisation and the goods that it provided. These benefits included differential access to education and skills, wealth and positional goods, and these scarce elements of modernity became and remain the basis for competition. Modernisation was and is a spatial phenomenon. Those closest to the nodes of modernisation, such as the Kikuyu near Nairobi in Kenya, and the Yoruba near Lagos in Nigeria became the most educated, those closest to groundnuts in Senegal or cocoa in Ghana reaped the most economic rewards.³⁵⁹ Income from export crops could be invested in education, as in Buganda or in Ashanti. Racial stereotypes meant that groups such as the Tutsi in Rwanda and Burundi were favoured by the German and Belgian administrations. This situation could only lead to continuing problems as the more favoured sought to protect their own relative advantages and disadvantaged resented and envied the groups that benefited.³⁶⁰

³⁵⁹ Bates, R. H. 1974 'Ethnic competition and modernisation in contemporary Africa', *Comparative Political Studies* 6(4).

³⁶⁰ Bates, R. H. 1974.

When the colonial state passed authority to its successors, the post-colonial state became the instrument of political authority, of spending on 'development' and of access to material goods. Politics therefore turned on access to state power, the benefits it could confer or from which it could exclude.

'Tribes' are not only useful for material benefits, but also as sources of identity construction and socialisation. Nnoli³⁶¹ argues that ethnicity defines the totality of an individual's existence in Africa, and when attacked, generates a powerful response because its symbolic dimensions make it so powerful. It provides a sense of belonging, which is particularly important in unstable times. African ethnic groups have often been particularly successful at recreating ceremonies and traditions that provide for the rituals of life, such as births, marriages, deaths and initiations. Thus in South Africa, the Zulu celebration of Shaka day (invented by Inkatha, the Zulu cultural movement, in the 1970s) has been a powerful celebration of the Zulu male, and commemorations of Ishlandwana and Ulundi are full of references to "hallowed ground" and other pseudo-religious images in the context of grand ceremonials.³⁶² Amongst the Swazi, the Reed Dance is a rite of passage which almost all girls go through, and most Xhosa boys go through circumcision initiation. Thus by providing the rituals of both public life and private development, tribes maintain their relevance to African people.

In the study of African politics the importance of ethnicity is one of the oldest and most widely accepted theoretical premises.³⁶³ Ethnicity was seen as a cleavage which structured voting patterns as voters simply supported co-ethnics as an expression of identity

³⁶¹ Nnoli O. 1998 *Ethnic conflicts in Africa*.

³⁶² Waetjen, T. 1999 'The 'home' in Homeland: gender, national space, and Inkatha's politics of ethnicity', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22(4).

³⁶³ Young, D. 2009. "Support you can count on? Ethnicity, Partisanship and Retrospective Voting in Africa." *Afrobarometer* Working Paper No. 115.

rather than choosing between candidates on merit. Elections were seen as nothing more than an "ethnic census"³⁶⁴ and the question was how to design institutions to reduce ethnic conflict.³⁶⁵ Given the centrality of ethnicity in the study of African politics and African political activity since at least the 1960s³⁶⁶ it is surprising that its effects on turnout have not been vigorously studied. Even Baker who produces the best available summary on political participation in Africa³⁶⁷ fails to even mention the possibility that there might be an ethnic dimension to participation in elections.

There is, however, an ongoing debate about whether African citizens choose who to vote for on the basis of ethnicity. Recently a more nuanced approach has emerged with Posner seeing ethnicity as a cleavage which is structured by institutions with some dimensions of ethnicity taking on more relevance depending on the context.³⁶⁸ Ethnicity is fluid and situation bound, and is instrumental, it is used when it is useful for acquiring political and economic goods.³⁶⁹ Keefer argues that ethnicity isn't a particularly important part of partisan preference formation. He argues that members of clustered ethnic groups exhibit high rates of partisan disinterest and are only slightly more likely to be partisan. Partisan preferences are more affected by factors such as gift giving and clientelistic politics, and parties in Africa do not facilitate collective organisation very well.³⁷⁰ Eifert, Miguel and Posner on the other hand, use 22 surveys from 10 countries in Afrobarometer Rounds 1, 1.5 and 2 to show that for every month closer to a presidential election, respondents are 1.8 percentage points more likely to identify in ethnic terms. In other words, as the election nears

³⁶⁴ Horowitz D. 1993. "Democracy in divided societies." *Journal of Democracy* 4(4): 18–38; Johnson R and Schlemmer L (eds). 1996. *Launching Democracy in South Africa: The First Open Election, April 1994*.

³⁶⁵ Liphart, A. 1991. "Constitutional Choices for New Democracies." *Journal of Democracy* 2(1): 72–84; Horowitz, D. 1993. "Democracy in divided societies." *Journal of Democracy* 4(4): 18–38; Reilly, B. 2001. *Democracy in Divided Societies: Electoral Engineering for Conflict Management*.

³⁶⁶ Spiro H. 1964. *Politics in Africa: Prospects South of the Sahara*.

³⁶⁷ Baker B. 2000. *Escape from Domination in Africa*.

³⁶⁸ Posner D. 2005. *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*.

³⁶⁹ Posner D. 2005:10–12.

³⁷⁰ Keefer P. 2010. "The Ethnicity Distraction? Political Credibility and Partisan Preferences in Africa." *Afrobarometer Working paper* 118.

there is a reduction in the salience of occupational and class identities and an increase in ethnic salience providing further evidence for the argument that ethnicity matters for instrumental reasons: because it is useful in the competition for political power.³⁷¹

In the strongest available empirical work, Bratton and Bhavnani, using Afrobarometer data from the third round of surveys, find that being a member of an ethnic group which is in power is a consistently significant predictor of intention to vote for the ruling party.³⁷² Norris and Mattes also find that ethnicity plays a key role in determining support for ruling parties but that it isn't always a primary cleavage.³⁷³ Young, using data from presidential regimes, also finds that voters tend to support a co-ethnic president, but that support is not inevitable; party identification is the strongest base of voting choice, but there are also a lot of swing voters who choose the President on merit.³⁷⁴ Whilst co-ethnics can and do at times support incumbents, the strongest supporters are those who are members of the same party as the President, whatever their ethnicity.

Young does look at the propensity to cast a vote in passing but rather oddly looks at the *intention* to cast a vote for the President rather than the reporting of past vote which is available for both rounds. This is problematic in that it is based on a question that actually asks which candidate the respondent would vote for and then uses those who say that they would not vote at all as non-voters. Given the framing of the question it is unsurprising that only 9% of respondents said that they would not vote. The study is further weakened by the use of pooled logistic regression. A multilevel model would have been more appropriate given the use of cross national survey data. He finds only a weak relationship between

³⁷¹ Eifert B, Miguel E and Posner D. "Political Competition and Ethnic Identification in Africa" *American Journal of Political Science* Vol. 54 No. 2: 494-510.

³⁷² Bratton M and Bhavnani R. 2009. "Voting in Africa: Ethnic, Economic, or Strategic."

³⁷³ Norris P and Mattes R. 2003. "Does Ethnicity Determine Support for the Ruling Party?" *Afrobarometer* Working Paper 25.

³⁷⁴ Young, D. 2009. "Support you can count on? Ethnicity, Partisanship and Retrospective Voting in Africa." *Afrobarometer* Working Paper 115.

partisanship and intention to vote, with partisans three percentage points more likely than non-partisans to say that they will vote. There is no relationship between co-ethnicity and intention to vote and the only substantive effect is that those who approve strongly of the Presidents performance are 18 percentage points more likely to vote than those who strongly disapprove, providing a clear benefit to incumbents.³⁷⁵

3.2.1 Ethnicity and Institutions: the electoral system

Institutions shape whether ethnicity is used as a political tool or not by determining the cards that political actors can potentially hold.³⁷⁶ There are two broad schools in the debate over the relationship between electoral systems and democratic satisfaction which are relevant to the question of the relationship between ethnicity and turnout. The first, advocated by Anderson and Guillory is that more consensual systems increase satisfaction with democracy.³⁷⁷ Proportional systems give citizens in divided societies a voice³⁷⁸ and provide a mechanism for small parties to gain representation.³⁷⁹ An example of how majoritarian systems can increase ethnic polarisation is provided by the case of Malawi. Here we find a clear example of ethnically based regional polarisation.³⁸⁰ The three major parties each dominate their own region with the Alliance for Democracy (AFORD) in the Northern region, the Malawian Congress Party (MCP) in the Central region, and the United Democratic Front (UDF) in the Southern region. All these parties regularly fail to attract votes outside their home base, and as such due to their smaller size the Northern and Central regions face permanent exclusion from politics.³⁸¹ We would expect these factors to lower

³⁷⁵ Young D. 2009.

³⁷⁶ Posner D. 2005. *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*: 1-9

³⁷⁷ Anderson C and Guillory C. 1997. "Political Institutions and Satisfaction with Democracy: A Cross-National Analysis of Consensus and Majoritarian Systems" *American Political Science Review* Vol. 91 No. 1:66-81

³⁷⁸ Lijphart A. 1999. *Patterns of Democracy*; Reynolds A. 1998. "Election in Southern Africa: The Case for Proportionality, A Rebutal." In Sisk T and Reynolds A (eds). *Elections and Conflict Management in Africa*; Reynolds, A. 1999. *Electoral Systems and Democratization in Southern Africa*; Powell G 2000. *Election as Instruments of Democracy*.

³⁷⁹ Reynolds A. 1998.

³⁸⁰ Englund H (Ed). 2002. *A Democracy of Chameleons: Politics and Culture in the New Malawi*; Posner D. 1995. "Malawi's New Dawn." *Journal of Democracy* Vol. 6: 131-145; Reynolds A. 1999.

³⁸¹ Cho, W. 2007. "Ethnic Fractionalization, Electoral Institutions and Africans' Political Attitudes." *Afrobarometer* Working paper 66.

turnout in majoritarian systems, especially in those regions dominated by minority ethnic groups.

The second school of thought advocated by Norris argues that people who live in majoritarian regimes express higher levels of institutional confidence.³⁸² This is because proportional systems can increase tensions by allowing representation of extreme parties,³⁸³ whereas majoritarian systems lead to more moderate parties by forcing parties to organise across ethnic boundaries and perform an integrative function via MPs close links to their constituencies.³⁸⁴ A counter example is seen in Namibia where proportional representation has fostered the development of very small opposition parties in parliament organised along ethnic lines who would otherwise not be represented in parliament. Despite its problems, PR was decided on in South Africa to facilitate representation of multiple groups and limit the overwhelming electoral dominance of the ANC.

Cho argues that the truth lies somewhere in the middle of this divide. At low levels of ethnic fractionalisation, majoritarian electoral systems boost popular support for the political system, whilst at higher levels, a more proportional system is better.³⁸⁵ If this is the case we would expect that as the number of politically relevant ethnic groups increases majoritarian system should be replaced by proportional systems when it comes to generating levels of democratic satisfaction, and as a result should expect to find higher levels of turnout in majoritarian systems with low ethnic fractionalisation and PR systems with higher levels of ethnic fractionalisation.

³⁸² Norris P. (ed). 1999. *Critical Citizen: Global Support for Democratic Governance*.

³⁸³ Horowitz D. 1991. *A Democratic South Africa?*

³⁸⁴ Barkan J. 1998. "Rethinking the Applicability of Proportional Representation for Africa." In Sisk T and Reynolds A (eds). *Elections and Conflict Management in Africa*.

³⁸⁵ Cho W. 2007.

3.2.2 Ethnicity and Institutions: Political Regimes

Another area of debate concerns the way in which regime change affects the importance of ethnic cleavages. If, as mentioned earlier, ethnicity is seen in instrumentalist terms where individuals “vote their ethnic groups” to maximize their access to resources, then the change from one party to multiparty regimes creates incentives to emphasise different kinds of ethnic identities.³⁸⁶ Whereas in one party systems the outcome of presidential elections is predetermined and the emphasis of political competition is firmly placed at the local level where ethnic claims are most effective, in multiparty regimes appeals to larger group identities like language, region and religion have to be used. Posner finds a great deal of qualitative support for this claim by looking at Kenya and Zambia in 1991 and 1992.³⁸⁷ He finds that in Zambia in the multiparty era a much smaller percentage of potential MPs come from the dominant ethnic group in a constituency.³⁸⁸ Given this, we might expect to find that in less free and fair elections, or elections with parties that have hegemonic control so that national outcomes are largely predetermined, ethnicity might be more salient in influencing voter turn out than in more uncertain and more fair elections.

3.2.3 Ethnicity: fractionalisation and polarisation

One of the biggest obstacles to studying ethnicity in a robust statistical manner in Africa has been the lack of well constructed measures. Posner aids the study of ethnicity greatly with the construction of the *Politically Relevant Ethnic Groups (PREG)* variable, which improves upon the commonly used ELF measure of ethnic diversity. ELF³⁸⁹, whilst a great step forward itself, is based upon suspect ethnographic data which assumes that ethnic groups are primordially fixed, takes into account all ethnic groups rather than those that are

³⁸⁶ Posner D. 2007. "Regime Change and Ethnic Cleavages in Africa" in *Comparative Political Studies* Vol. 40 No. 11: 1302-1327.

³⁸⁷ Posner D. 2007.

³⁸⁸ Posner D. 2005. *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*. Ch 7.

³⁸⁹ As used and described in Easterly W and Levine R. 1997. "Africa's Growth Tragedy: Policies and Ethnic Divisions." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 112:1203–50.

politically relevant, and also does not take into account the depth of division between ethnic groups.³⁹⁰ It has no effect on party system structure, which is rather worrying given that we know that ethnic cleavages are important in some African countries.³⁹¹ Posner builds on the same base as the ELF measure using data from the *Atlas Narodov Mira* but eliminates groups that are politically irrelevant for economic policymaking. Its major flaws are that it doesn't include all ethno-political cleavages or geographic concentration,³⁹² which we have already hypothesised has a role in the structuring of the party system in, at least, majoritarian electoral systems.

Cheeseman and Ford build on this work further by constructing two measures of ethnic voting based on the class voting literature, "ethnic polarisation" and "ethnic diversity". The first looks at the importance of ethnicity in determining party support levels and the second captures variations in the ethnic diversity of the support base of different parties.³⁹³ Using the first three rounds of the Afrobarometer (excluding Tanzania, Madagascar, Cape Verde, Lesotho and Benin) they find that in Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa there is a steep decline in ethnic polarisation, which they claim shows a maturing of democracy, whilst in Kenya, Zambia and Zimbabwe there is an increase. They find further that in general support for governing parties is less ethnically polarised than for opposition parties. Over time ruling parties are becoming less ethnically polarised whilst support for opposition parties is increasingly ethnically polarised. They also argue that there are in fact very few "ethnic parties" (which they categorise as parties where over 85% of support comes from one ethnic group) and that the number of ethnic parties is declining. They argue that this is because, in the face of strong ruling parties, the dominant strategy for

³⁹⁰ Posner D. 2004 "Measuring Ethnic Fractionalization in Africa." *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 48 No. 4: 849–863.

³⁹¹ Mozaffar S, Scarritt J and Galaich G. 2003. "Electoral Institutions, Ethno-political Cleavages, and Party Systems in Africa's Emerging Democracies" *American Political Science Review* Vol. 97 No. 3: 379–390.

³⁹² Mozaffar S, Scarritt J and Galaich G. 2003.

³⁹³ Cheeseman N and Ford R. 2007. "Ethnicity as a Political Cleavage" *Afrobarometer Working Paper* 83.

opposition parties is to fall back on their ethnic base and not to compete with the ruling party. In cases where the ruling party is able to create a coalition of a small number of ethnic groups it is more likely that multi-ethnic opposition coalitions will form against it.

Two measures are particularly useful for our study of turnout. By using the scores for Ethnic Polarisation of the Government and Opposition parties we can test whether variance in the importance of ethnicity in determining party support levels affects turnout. We hypothesise that when ethnicity is a driving forces in determining party support levels for government parties, turnout should be higher as space is opened up for opposition parties to secure higher levels of support and mobilise greater numbers of people per the theory outlined above. We would expect the opposite relationship to hold for countries with highly ethnically polarised opposition parties. Secondly, Cheeseman and Ford provide a useful classification of African political parties by their support base. *Non-Ethnic Parties* are classified as parties that obtain no more than 0.0 - 33.3% of their support from one ethnic group; *Multi-Ethnic Parties: No Majority Ethnic Group* are parties that generate 33.4 - 50.0% of their support from one group; *Multi-Ethnic Parties: Majority Ethnic Group* get 50.1 - 66.0% of their votes from one ethnic group; *Potentially Ethnic Parties* get 66.6 - 84.9% and *Ethnic Parties* 85 - 100%. Using this classification we can test which types of parties, if any, are best at mobilising their supporters. This can help us to understand the importance of ethnicity in patterns of mobilisation, and at second hand, in measures of turnout.

3.2.4 Ethnicity and performance evaluations

Set against the claim that ethnicity matters as voters attach themselves to prospective winners, voting for parties that they think will channel rewards and prevent the incumbent getting angry or violent, especially in dominant party regimes, is the argument that it is

actually economics which drives voting in Africa. Voters will vote for the incumbent if the economy is good and vote against him if it is doing badly.³⁹⁴ Pacek, in a cross national study of 52 elections in eight countries (including Botswana) finds that economic recession boosts turnout as voters punish governments for poor economic performance but don't reward success. He finds that economic conditions are more important in developing countries than the West when times are bad.³⁹⁵

Bratton and Bhavnani argue that both of these things happen in Africa.³⁹⁶ Voters kick out representatives that fail to deliver.³⁹⁷ Using data from round 3 of the Afrobarometer and a large battery of variables to test various aspects of ethnicity and economic performance evaluations they conduct a multilevel analysis and find that voters vote strategically, attaching themselves to winners, and will vote for the ruling party even if they don't think it is doing a good job. They will, however, vote for another party if the economy is performing badly and there are a large number of other parties available to vote for at a national level.³⁹⁸ If these punishment theories are true than we would expect to see higher turnout at times of poor economic performance when citizens turn out to punish incumbents at the polls. We would also expect to see a negative relationship between the interaction of presidential performance and support for a party as those setting out to punish the president and who also have a rival party to vote for will be more likely to vote.

³⁹⁴ Key, V.O. 1964. *Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups*; Tuftes E.R. 1978. *Political Control of the Economy*; Lewis-Beck M and Stegmaier M. 2000. "Economic Determinants of Electoral Outcomes." *Annual Review of Political Science* 3: 183-219.

³⁹⁵ Pacek A and Radcliff B. 1995. "The Political Economy of Competitive Elections in the Developing World," *American Journal of Political Science*, 39, 3: 745-59.

³⁹⁶ Bratton, Michael, and Ravi Bhavnani. 2009.

³⁹⁷ Hyden G and Leys C. 1972. "Elections and Politics in Single-Party Systems: The Case of Kenya and Tanzania." *British Journal of Political Science* 2:389-420; Barkan J. 1984. "Legislators, Elections and Political Linkage," in Barkan (ed.), *Politics and Public Policy in Kenya and Tanzania*: 71-101.

³⁹⁸ Bratton M and Bhavnani R. 2009.

3.3 Clientelism

Along with ethnicity, clientelism is the dominant defining feature of African elections in the literature.³⁹⁹ Clientelism is "a more or less personalised relationship between actors, or sets of actors, commanding unequal wealth, status or influence based on conditional loyalties and involving mutually beneficial transactions."⁴⁰⁰ It is "dependent on non-public particularistic, often individualized, exchanges of private goods in return for political loyalty".⁴⁰¹ In short, it is a way of doing politics dependant on voters valuing materialistic rewards more than ideological commitments, a very similar calculus to the cost-benefit calculation of the rational choice School.

Clientelism remains in place for two reasons. First because the parties and players involved have very little that separates them from one another apart from ethnicity and access to resources. African elections are struggles over access to the resources controlled by that state, which are the biggest (sometimes only) prize in society. With such high stakes, politicians resort to a variety of means to attain public office. Outside of clientelistic networks the pledges of politicians commonly lack credibility,⁴⁰² are virtually identical across contending parties,⁴⁰³ or quickly dissolve into personal attacks.⁴⁰⁴ Voters with limited information use ethnicity as a proxy. In Cameroon President Paul Biya gained the support of the Beti and Balu, but was opposed by the rest of the ethnic groups. In Ghana, Jerry Rawlings got 93% of the Ewe vote but less than a third of the vote in Asante.⁴⁰⁵ In order to sustain this,

³⁹⁹ Bates R. 1982. *Markets and states in Tropical Africa*.; Bratton M and van de Walle N. 1994. "Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa." *World Politics* Vol. 46.

⁴⁰⁰ Lemarchand, R. 1972. "Political Clientelism and Ethnicity in Tropical Africa: Competing Solidarities in Nation-Building." *American Political Science Review* Vol. 66 No. 1: 69.

⁴⁰¹ Lindberg S and Morrison M. 2008. "Are African Voters Really Ethnic or Clientelistic? Survey Evidence from Ghana." *Political Science Quarterly* Vol. 123 No. 1: 101.

⁴⁰² Keefer P. 2004. "Clientelism, Credibility and Democracy." The World Bank, Development Research Group, Washington D.C..

⁴⁰³ Salih M and Nordlund P. 2007. *Political Parties in Africa: Challenges for Sustained Multiparty Democracy*.

⁴⁰⁴ van de Walle N. 2003. "Presidentialism and Clientelism in Africa's Emerging Party Systems," *Journal of Modern African Studies* Vol. 41 No. 2: 297-319.

⁴⁰⁵ It is worth noting that even in Ashanti, Rawlings got 33% of the vote, and more elsewhere. Ewe voters could not win an election without a more extensive coalition and the inability to form one kept the UGCC/ UP out of power as they were too dependent on their base in Ashanti from 1951 to 2000

however, these parties must continue to support their own ethnic supporters with disproportionately large amounts of investment. They may also need to turn to open bribery. In Benin, Houngbedji, the Prime Minister, distributed money, cloth and even motorcycles at rallies. Other Ministers in the 1992 Government openly used their positions to provide for their supporters and parties. All of this results in less accountability to the general public in that public officials can do pretty much what they like as long as the right people are bribed. Furthermore, the access that ministers and government officials have to state coffers means that opposition groups are unable to compete with them on an equal footing. Voters thus choose among candidates based on the candidates' assumed trustworthiness and reliability as prospective patrons,⁴⁰⁶ though many have little expectation of actually receiving rewards in the future. In extreme forms, unconventional modes of electoral practice are manifest in explicit acts of vote buying⁴⁰⁷ and electoral violence.⁴⁰⁸

The second reason why clientelism remains is because the people in government haven't changed. The culture of clientelism, endemic to the one party state, remains embedded in the consciousness of the "new" leaders, most of whom were at some point part of the old regime. In Kenya the former ruling party simply remained in power, bringing all its baggage along with it. In Zambia, most of the members of the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) had only one thing in common, they had at some point been ejected from or had to leave the United National Independence Party (UNIP). Levy Mwanawasa of the MMD had, for example, been in one of Kenneth Kaunda's cabinets when he was leader of UNIP and President, and a large number of the MPs and Ministers in Frederick Chiluba's

⁴⁰⁶ Kitschelt H and Wilkinson S (eds.). 2007. *Patrons, Clients and Policies: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition*; Bratton M and Lewis P. 2007. "The Durability of Political Goods? Evidence from Nigeria's New Democracy," *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* Vol. 45 No. 1: 1-33; Bratton M. 2007. "Formal versus Informal Institutions in Africa," *Journal of Democracy* Vol. 18 No. 3: 96-110; Bratton M. 2008. "Vote Buying and Violence in Nigerian Election Campaigns" *Afrobarometer Working Paper* No. 99.

⁴⁰⁷ Schaffer F (ed.). 2007. *Elections for Sale: The Causes and Consequences of Vote Buying*; Lindberg S. 2003. "'It's Our Time to Chop': Do Elections in Africa Feed Neopatrimonialism rather than Counteract It?" *Democratization* Vol. 10 No. 2: 121-40.

⁴⁰⁸ LeBas A. 2006. "Polarization as Craft: Explaining Party Formation and state Violence in Zimbabwe," *Comparative Politics*. Vol. 38 No. 4; Wilkinson S. 2004. *Votes and Violence: Electoral Competition and Ethnic Riots in India*.

cabinet had similarly once been in UNIP. As such, they brought many of the ideas and ways of doing things that had characterised UNIP, and a conception of politics that was all about gaining access to state resources. In Kenya, as well as in Ivory Coast and Gabon, the ruling party used the multi-party democracy framework to legitimise the regime while using all the resources at their disposal to manipulate the outcome of said elections.

Some authors have argued that there is a problem separating ethnicity and clientelism as concepts as they are very similar processes. If ethnicity is ultimately a matter of self definition and is subjective,⁴⁰⁹ the same can be said of clientelism.⁴¹⁰ What from one angle looks like clientelism may look like ethnic relationships from another. Indeed, clientelistic networks and ethnic networks are often overlapping, with some actors acting as links to the higher reaches of the clientelistic pyramid. That said they are analytically distinct. clientelism offers a wider scope for integration, crossing ethnic boundaries.⁴¹¹ It may extend to create a national system of reciprocity or operate within the context of machine politics and a particular national party, such as the PDCI in the Ivory Coast in the 1960s and 1970s,⁴¹² but can only rarely survive as an entirely ethnic institution.

Clientelistic practices are also not the same as corruption, though they are often interlinked. Clientelistic corruption is not aimed entirely at self-enrichment, but rather at the acquisition of resources to distribute so that elites can maintain power. Ruling parties have often relied on corrupt practices, such as the early use of Marketing Boards, to fill their coffers and stay in power. In the Gold Coast as independence approached, the officials of the

⁴⁰⁹ Zolberg A. 1966. "Ethnicity and National Integration." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Bloomington, Indiana.

⁴¹⁰ Lemarchand, R. 1972. "Political Clientelism and Ethnicity in Tropical Africa: Competing Solidarities in Nation-Building." *American Political Science Review* Vol. 66 No. 1: 69,

⁴¹¹ Smith M. 1960. *Government in Zazzau*.

⁴¹² Lemarchand, R. 1972. "Political Clientelism and Ethnicity in Tropical Africa: Competing Solidarities in Nation-Building." *American Political Science Review* Vol. 66 No. 1: 70.

Convention People's Party were siphoning off considerable revenues to bolster campaign funds and distribute as patronage.⁴¹³ Once in power the CPP in Ghana moved quickly to acquire the financial resources of government to reinforce its position,⁴¹⁴ and UNIP in Zambia pushed funds towards groups that support it.⁴¹⁵

The examples are legion. In the Congo,⁴¹⁶ Malawi,⁴¹⁷ Mozambique,⁴¹⁸ South Africa,⁴¹⁹ Zambia,⁴²⁰ and Uganda,⁴²¹ even in Botswana where the awarding of public contracts and allocation of housing are routinely used as forms of patronage,⁴²² corrupt practices to maintain support are on the rise in the multiparty era.⁴²³ In Senegal the Socialist Party (PS) reduced the traffic fines of unlicensed bike owners to attempt to gain their votes, a practice repeated by the Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS) when it won.⁴²⁴ In Cameroon, President Biya sought electoral support of business people by providing fiscal exoneration and competed with the opposition in the provision of "electoral banquets".⁴²⁵ In Mozambique, the Liberation Front of Mozambique (FREELIMO) manipulated property transactions, the repurchase of denationalised companies and the allocation of commercial licences to secure support.⁴²⁶ In Mali, the appropriation of urban property for supporters,⁴²⁷ the privatisation of

⁴¹³ Williams R. 1987. *Political Corruption in Africa*: 40-41.

⁴¹⁴ Williams R. 1987: 82.

⁴¹⁵ Williams R. 1987: 87.

⁴¹⁶ Blancq B. 1994. "Congo: corruption et resistance au changement" in Noire C. *L'Afrique politique*.

⁴¹⁷ Anders G. 2004. "Like Chameleons, Civil servants and corruption in Malawi" *Bulletin de l'APAD* 23-4:43-67; Khembo N. 2004. "The Multiparty promise betrayed: The Failure of Neo-Liberalism in Malawi" *African Development* Vol. 29 No. 2:80-105.

⁴¹⁸ Bertrand J. 2003. "Le 'cas' Cardoso au Mozambique. La Violence et la corruption en proces" *Lusotopie* 10:453-63.

⁴¹⁹ Lodge T. 2002. "Political Corruption in South Africa: From Apartheid to Multiracial state" in Heidenheimer A and Johnston M (eds) *Political Corruption: Concepts and Context*: 403-24.

⁴²⁰ Chikulo B. 2000. "Corruption and Accumulation in Zambia" in Hope K and Chikulo B (eds) *Corruption and Development in Africa. Lessons from Country Case Studies*: 161-182.

⁴²¹ Flanary R and Watt D. 1999. "The state of Corruption: A case study of Uganda" *Third World Quarterly* Vol. 20 No. 3: 515-36.

⁴²² Good K. 1994. "Corruption and Mismanagement in Botswana: A Best-Case Example" *Journal of Modern African Studies* Vol. 32 No. 3: 499-521; Theobald R and Williams R. 1999. "Combating corruption in Botswana: Regional Role Model or deviant case?" *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* Vol.37 No.3.

⁴²³ Frimpong K and Jacques G (eds).1999. *Corruption, Democracy and Good Governance in Africa*; Blundo G and Olivier de Sardin JP. 2006. *Everyday Corruption and the state: Citizens and Public Officials in Africa*.

⁴²⁴ Arifari N. " 'We don't eat the papers': corruption in transport, customs and the civil forces" in Blundo G and Olivier de Sardin JP. 2006. *Everyday Corruption and the state: Citizens and Public Officials in Africa*.

⁴²⁵ Socpa A. 2000. "Les dons dans le jeu electoral au Cameroun" *Cahiers d'etudes africaines* Vol. 40 No. 1: 91-108.

⁴²⁶ Harrison G. 1999. "Corruption as 'Boundary Politics': The state, Democratisation and Mozambique's Unstable Liberalisation" *Third World Quarterly* Vol. 20 No. 3: 357-50.

⁴²⁷ Bouju J.2000. "Clientelisme, corruption et gouvemace locale a Mopti (Mali)" *Autrepart* 14:143-63.

national land⁴²⁸ and fiscal disobedience have been similarly used.⁴²⁹ In Nigeria, corruption is seen as a way to convert external wealth into local clients, the clientelistic allocation of jobs, generous expenses and embezzlement are rife.⁴³⁰ In Zambia, blatant vote buying started in full force in the 1996 elections when President Chiluba started to use public funds to buy votes, dispensing over Kwacha 20 million to churches, orphanages and schools and selling council houses at very low prices during the election campaign. Widespread gift giving was rife at the constituency level and Zambian Independent Monitoring Team noted the rampant buying of food, beer and clothes for supporters.⁴³¹ In Cameroon the allocation of resources for votes is extensive in poor rural areas, and key in the marginal northern constituencies, which have swung their support away from the National Union for Democracy and Progress (UNDP) to the ruling Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM).⁴³² Corruption is a "way of life."⁴³³ There are ambiguous demands that emerge from the citizenry. In Burkina Faso, Mali, and Senegal in the 1990's strong civic movements called and protested for an end to corruption, but also demanded more access to the fruits of predation.⁴³⁴

So how do citizens respond? Does clientelism enhance electoral turnout? When offered an incentive for their vote, citizens can refuse defect or comply. He or she can refuse by declining to enter into an agreement to trade her vote, or can seek to avoid violence by publicly shaming the perpetrator or exiting the electoral arena. They can enter a vote buying

⁴²⁸ Klopp J.2000. "Pilfering the Public: The Problem of Land Grabbing in contemporary Kenya" *Africa Today* Vol. 47 No. 1: 7-26.

⁴²⁹ Fjeldstad O.2003. "Fighting Fiscal Corruption : Lessons from the Tanzania Revenue Authority" *Public Administration and Development* 23:165-175.

⁴³⁰ Smith DJ. 2003. "Patronage, per diems and the 'Workshop Mentality': the practice of family planning programs in Southeastern Nigeria" *World Development* Vol. 31 No. 4: 703-15.

⁴³¹ Chikulo B. 2000. "Corruption and Accumulation in Zambia" in Hope K and Chikulo B (eds) *Corruption and Development in Africa. Lessons from Country Case Studies*: 161-182.

⁴³² Fombad. C. "Endemic Corruption in Cameroon: Insights on Consequences and Control" in Hope K and Chikulo B (eds) *Corruption and Development in Africa. Lessons from Country Case Studies*:234-259.

⁴³³ Frimpong K and Jacques G (eds).1999.

⁴³⁴ G and Olivier de Sardin JP. 2006. *Everyday Corruption and the state: Citizens and Public Officials in Africa* :54.

agreement but defect by failing to vote at all or by voting as she pleases. Finally, they can comply by turning out to vote and voting the “right” way.⁴³⁵

We can hypothesise that compliance is highest when the voters actions can be directly observed, such as in the queue system in one party Kenya. Even in less extreme situations, vote buying will be more effective the more deeply inserted the party is into social networks and so we expect it to be more effective in small towns and cities as these are easier to monitor.⁴³⁶ Alternatively, in situations where norms of reciprocity and high levels of trust are in evidence⁴³⁷ we might expect voters to vote the right way to show gratitude.⁴³⁸ Third, if voters value current satisfaction more than future satisfaction we might expect them to be more conducive to such offers.⁴³⁹ Finally if, as often suggested, African parties lack the capacity to enforce compliance,⁴⁴⁰ vote buying may enable candidates to send a signal about their post election performance and willingness to distribute resources to supporters.⁴⁴¹ People offered money, or not, may believe that the politicians offering money are more credible and likely to continue to supply these rewards if elected.⁴⁴²

The empirical evidence on the course of action chosen appears to be somewhat mixed. Bratton finds that in Nigeria, whilst the poorest and most vulnerable members have little choice except to comply, vote buying and political intimidation are ineffective campaign practices and rates of defection are high. Violence was also found to reduce turnout.⁴⁴³ Young

⁴³⁵ Bratton M. 2008. "Vote Buying and Violence in Nigerian Election Campaigns" *Afrobarometer* Working Paper No. 99.

⁴³⁶ Brusco V, Nazareno M and Stokes S. 2004. "Vote Buying in Argentina" *Latin American Research Review* Vol. 39 No. 2:66-88.

⁴³⁷ Brusco V, Nazareno M and Stokes S. 2004.

⁴³⁸ Auyero J. 2000. *Poor People's Politics: Peronist Survival Networks and the Legacy of Evita*.

⁴³⁹ Scott JC. 1969. "Corruption, Machine Politics and Political Change" *American Political Science Review* Vol. 63 No. 4: 1142-58;
Wantchekon L. 2003. "Clientelism and Voting Behaviour: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Benin" *World Politics* Vol. 55 No. 3: 399-422; Kitschelt H. 2000. "Linkages between Citizens and Politicians in Democratic Politics" *Comparative Political Studies* Vol. 33 No's. 6-7:845-79.

⁴⁴⁰ Van de Walle N. 2003. "Meet the New Boss, Same as the Old Boss? The Evolution of Political Clientelism in Africa".

⁴⁴¹ Robinson J and Verdier T. 2002. "The Political Economy of Clientelism" *CEPR Discussion Paper* No. 3205; Engelbert P. 2002. *state legitimacy and development in Africa*.

⁴⁴² Kramon E. 2009. "Vote-Buying and Political Behaviour: Estimating and Explaining Vote-Buying's effect on Turnout in Kenya". *Afrobarometer* Working Paper 114.

⁴⁴³ Bratton M. 2008.

finds that in Kenya and Zambia neither being offered a gift nor being in direct contact with an MP make a voter more likely to vote for their MP.⁴⁴⁴ Using round 3 Afrobarometer data Kramon finds that poor male voters and swing voters in competitive districts were most likely to be targeted,⁴⁴⁵ contrary to idea that vote buyers target their core supporters,⁴⁴⁶ and that it only happens when strong political machines can monitor compliance,⁴⁴⁷ or that parties buy turnout not votes and so target areas with the most unmobilised support.⁴⁴⁸ He finds that those approached by a vote buyer were 14 percentage points more likely to vote,⁴⁴⁹ and that Kenyan parties systematically monitored turnout and also made use of "assisted voting."⁴⁵⁰ In a field experiment in Benin in 2001 where randomly assigned constituencies were allocated either clientelistic or public policy campaigns, Wantchekon found that incumbent patronage providers were indeed more effective as they were seen as being more able to prove that they could deliver.⁴⁵¹ In cross national studies lower income individuals seem to be more sensitive to clientelistic transfers⁴⁵² maybe because providing patronage to high income earners provides decreasing returns to scale.⁴⁵³

Parties also seem to follow different distributive strategies depending on the constituency.⁴⁵⁴ In Argentina Brusso et al find that voters view future benefit flows as

⁴⁴⁴ Young, D. 2009. "Is Clientelism at work in African elections? A study of voting behaviour in Kenya and Zambia" *Afrobarometer Working Paper* No. 106.

⁴⁴⁵ Kramon E. 2009.

⁴⁴⁶ Cox G and McCubbins M. 1986. "Electoral Politics as a redistributive game". *Journal of Politics* Vol. 48:370-89.

⁴⁴⁷ Stokes S. 2005. "Perverse Accountability: A Formal Model of machine politics with evidence from Argentina" *American Political Science Review* Vol. 99 No. 3: 315-25.

⁴⁴⁸ Nichter S. 2008. "Vote-buying or Turnout-buying? Machine Politics and the secret ballot" *American Political Science Review* Vol. 102 No. 1: 19-31.

⁴⁴⁹ Kramon E. 2009.

⁴⁵⁰ Kramon E. 2009.

⁴⁵¹ Wantchekon L. 2003. "Clientelism and Voting Behaviour: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Benin" *World Politics* Vol. 55 No. 3: 402.

⁴⁵² Calvo E and Murillo MV. 2004. "Who Delivers? Partisan Clients in the Argentine Electoral Market" *American Journal of Political Science* Vol. 48 No.4: 742-57; Brusco V, Nazareno M and Stokes S. 2002. "Selective Incentives and Electoral Mobilization" Presented at the Conference on Political Parties and Legislative Organisation in Parliamentary and Presidential Regimes, Yale University; Brusco V, Nazareno M and Stokes S. 2004; Diaz-Cayeros A, Estevez F, Magaloni B. 2001. "Private versus Public Goods as Electoral Investments: A Portfolio Diversification Model of Policy Choice" Prepared for the workshop Citizen-Politician Linkages in Democratic Politics, Duke University; Stokes S and Medina L. 2004. "Monopoly and Monitoring: An approach to Political Clientelism" Unpublished. University of Chicago, Department of Political Science.

⁴⁵³ Calvo E and Murillo MV. 2004.

⁴⁵⁴ Alesina A, Danninger S, Rostagno M. 2001. "Redistribution through Public Employment: The case of Italy" IMF Staff Papers 48(3); Boix C. 2001. "Democracy, Development and the Public Sector" *American Journal of Political Science* Vol. 45 No. 1: 1-17; Moene K and Wallerstein M. 2001. "Inequality, Social Insurance and Redistribution" *American Political Science Review* Vol. 95 No. 4: 859-74;

contingent on supporting a clientelistic party,⁴⁵⁵ and Stokes argues that voters comply as parties view elections as iterated games where voters are monitored and punished for non-voting or defection in subsequent time periods.⁴⁵⁶ One rather interesting case is seen in Ghana where the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) elevated 15 Chiefs in Brong-AHAFO to paramount status in 1988, increasing their personal powers and income, following an example set by Nkrumah who had done this to separate the Brong chiefs from their allegiance to the Asantahene.⁴⁵⁷ This area then registered the highest percentage of adults in the country, but also had the lowest rate of turnout in the subsequent election.⁴⁵⁸

3.4 Political Regimes

In most cases, with the exception of some Francophone countries like Benin, African states skipped the “conference stage” when transitioning to multi-party democracy. As a result, there was no fundamental rewriting of the rules of the game in a situation of uncertainty before elections took place. In Benin in 1989, civil and human rights, the rule of law, a semi-presidential system and list PR elections were constitutionalised before any election occurred. This was possible because all parties involved were risk-averse, and wanted to ensure that they would have some role to play, some access to resources in the new dispensation. As such the government was designed to be as inclusive and proportional as possible, the powers of the state were limited and accountability was increased. In Zambia however, this did not take place. Instead, the MMD under Chiluba defeated Kaunda and UNIP in 1991 and inherited the entire apparatus of the former regime. There had been no agreement beforehand on a constitution, the role of the president or the nature of the

Iversen T and Wren A. 1998. "Equality, Employment and Budgetary Restraint: The Trilemma of the Service Economy" *World Politics* Vol. 50 July:507-46.

⁴⁵⁵ Brusco V, Nazareno M and Stokes S. 2004.

⁴⁵⁶ Stokes S. 2005. "Perverse Accountability: A Formal Model of Machine Politics with Evidence from Argentina" *American Political Science Review* Vol. 99 No. 3: 315-325.

⁴⁵⁷ Rathbone R. 2000. *Nkrumah and the Chiefs: The Politics of Chieftaincy in Ghana 1950-60*.

⁴⁵⁸ Haynes J. 1995. "Ghana: From personalist to democratic rule" in Wiseman J (ed). *Democracy and Political Change in Sub-Saharan Africa*.

government. Chiluba had no incentive to give away any of the power that he had inherited from Kaunda, and the MMD used the state apparatus to secure their position.

The failure to change the institutions of one party rule to those which are better suited to multi-party rule is best evidenced by the failure to check the power of the Presidency. Under the centralised bureaucracy system, the Executive President ruled more through the bureaucracy than parliament or even the party. Once in power the party was able to blur the lines between itself and the state to such an extent that in the medium term at least it was able to perpetuate the idea that the party and the state were synonymous, reducing popular dissent.

⁴⁵⁹ As such control of the Presidency meant control of all spheres of government, in many cases including the judiciary. Whether Bakili Muluzi in Malawi or Frederick Chiluba in Zambia, the inheritors of the enormous power vested in those offices soon exploited their positions. Patrimonialism remained the best descriptor of these Presidencies, and Gould argues that in Zambia it worsened between 1991 and 1996. The winners of the Presidency gained virtual total control of the state and the losers were systematically excluded from further participation. In this way, politics in Africa remains a zero sum game, even in multiparty democracies. The prize remains access to positions and power, and most importantly access to the means by which a party can sustain a system of clientelism.

Whatever the reasons, it is clear from the evidence that, once in power, most parties have attempted to create single party governments as a result of multiparty elections. In Benin, in spite of the existence of the necessary features for formal democracy, the government soon became less tolerant of the free press and of the opposition, using violence to suppress them at times.⁴⁶⁰ In Zambia, the MMD was accused of presidential

⁴⁵⁹ Hodgkin, T. L. 1956 *Nationalism in colonial Africa*.

⁴⁶⁰ Allen. 1992.

authoritarianism within months of taking power in 1991, and Chiluba soon began to use his authority to advance a system of patronage.⁴⁶¹ Between the 1991 and 1996 elections the MMD managed to manipulate the constitution and the electoral rules to prevent Kaunda from running for office, made the President the sole legal authority over the judiciary and legislature and initiated a campaign of intimidation against UNIP.⁴⁶² In Malawi, Muluzi attempted to eliminate the MCP and ran an effective one-party, UDF government. He attempted to “poach” MCP politicians, and was accused of patrimonialism and clientelism.⁴⁶³ In Ghana, Aubynn⁴⁶⁴ shows that the elections of the 1990s were characterised by attempts to buy votes, pork barrelling by government, and a lack of any clear policy documents.

3.4.1 Electoral Authoritarianism

One entirely neglected area in the turnout literature is that all countries with free and fair elections are not necessarily playing the same participation game. In particular, a group of countries, which we will refer to as Electoral Authoritarian,⁴⁶⁵ are usually lumped together with liberal and procedural democracies but are a very different type of regime. These countries have the institutional facades of democracy, including regular multiparty elections, but use them to conceal and reproduce authoritarian governance.⁴⁶⁶ They play the multiparty game but violate key liberal-democratic principles of freedom and fairness so profoundly that elections become instruments of authoritarian rule.⁴⁶⁷ Overall, the contests are so subject to manipulation that they cannot count as entirely democratic.⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶¹ Baylies and Szeftel. 1992.

⁴⁶² Gould J. 2002. "Contesting Democracy: The 1996 Zambian Elections." In Cowen and Laakso (eds) *Multi-party elections in Africa*.

⁴⁶³ Eglund H. 2002. *A Democracy of Chameleons: politics and culture in the new Malawi*.

⁴⁶⁴ Aubynn A. 1997. Beyond the Transparent Ballot Box: Reading the Wave of Democratization and the Significance of the 1996 Elections in Ghana.

⁴⁶⁵ Schleder A (ed). 2006. *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*.

⁴⁶⁶ Schleder A. 2006. "The Logic of Electoral Authoritarianism" in Schleder A (ed). 2006. *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*.

⁴⁶⁷ Powell B. 2000. *Elections of Instruments of Democracy: Majoritarian and Proportional Visions*.

⁴⁶⁸ Schleder A. 2006. "The Logic of Electoral Authoritarianism".

Within the democratisation literature scholars have tried to account for these regimes in three conceptual ways. First, they have sought to explain them as being "defective democracies" or "democracies with adjectives"⁴⁶⁹ but given that they fail to comply with minimum norms of fairness the notion of a "diminished subtype" seems to lose validity. This also suffers from a democratising bias⁴⁷⁰ when they may actually be at an effective end point. Second, they have talked about Hybrid Regimes. Here we need to be careful of conceptual stretching.⁴⁷¹ Are they a genuine middle type? Hybrid regimes?⁴⁷² Semi-democracies?⁴⁷³ Or semi-dictatorships?⁴⁷⁴ Finally, they can be seen as "democracy as deception"⁴⁷⁵ a group of countries with the trappings of democracy.⁴⁷⁶ Our concept of Electoral Authoritarianism falls into this camp.

Given that Electoral Authoritarian governments are willing and able to play the game of "democracy" in a way which violates liberal-democratic principles of freedom and fairness so profoundly that elections can become instruments of authoritarian rule,⁴⁷⁷ turnout patterns should be fundamentally different. So why don't we simply exclude these cases from our analysis? First, these are not autocratic or rigged elections. The elections are broadly inclusive (they are held under universal suffrage), minimally pluralistic (opposition parties are allowed to run), minimally competitive (opposition parties are allowed to win seats even if not the election) and minimally open (opposition parties are not subject to massive repression, though they may experience repressive treatment). Crucially, the actual results are not rigged, international observers are present, elections are rigorously fought⁴⁷⁸ and

⁴⁶⁹ Collier D and Levitsky S. 1997. "Democracy with Adjectives: Conceptual Innovation in Comparative Research" *World Politics* Vol. 49 No. 3: 430-51.

⁴⁷⁰ Levitsky A and Way L. 2002. "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism" in *Journal Of Democracy* Vol. 13 No. 2: 51-65.

⁴⁷¹ Sartori, G. 1984. "Guidelines for Concept Analysis" in Sartori G (ed) *Social Science Concepts*.

⁴⁷² Diamond L. 2002. "Elections without Democracy: Thinking about Hybrid Regimes" *Journal of Democracy* Vol. 13 No.2: 21-35.

⁴⁷³ Smith P. 2005. *Democracy in Latin America: Political Change in Comparative Perspective*.

⁴⁷⁴ Brooker P. 2000. *Non-Democratic Regimes: Theory, Government and Politics*.

⁴⁷⁵ Joseph R. 1998. "Is Ethiopia democratic? Oldspeak vs. Newspeak" *Journal of Democracy* Vol. 9 No. 4: 55-61.

⁴⁷⁶ Marshall and Jaggers. 2002.

⁴⁷⁷ Powell B. 2000. *Elections of Instruments of Democracy: Majoritarian and Proportional Visions*.

⁴⁷⁸ Levitsky A and Way L. 2002. "The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism" in *Journal Of Democracy* Vol. 13 No. 2: 51-65.

opposition parties can and do win elections. Examples of the election of opposition parties to government in Electoral-Authoritarian governments include Benin in 1991 and 1996, Cape Verde in 1991 and 2001, Ghana in 2000, Kenya in 2002, Madagascar in 1992, 1996 and 2001, Mali in 1992, Malawi in 1994 and Zambia in 1991.⁴⁷⁹ Moreover, Electoral Authoritarian regimes establish the primacy of democratic legitimacy and in so doing open up elections as a realm of protest for citizens. They legitimate the principle of political opposition and allow for opposition parties who, whilst not meant to win, are provided with space to grow. Whilst they create opportunities for patronage distribution by and legitimation of the ruling party, they also mobilise dissent.⁴⁸⁰

3.5 Cross National Variables

There are three further factors not usually included in the analysis of turnout which I hypothesise will be particularly important in explaining turnout in Africa. These are, whether the election is the first democratic election being held or not, whether there is a change in government following the election, and whether the incumbent or previous dictator is still involved in the political process.⁴⁸¹

Incumbents have important incentives to remain in power including the need to stay clear of potential criminal prosecution, a desire to continue making use of the economic benefits of power and in the case of very personal dictatorships, the chance that losing power now will mean that it can never be regained in the future.⁴⁸² As such, they have an especial incentive to ensure the maximum mobilisation of their supporters, and maximum intimidation

⁴⁷⁹ Van De Walle N. 2006. "Tipping Games: When do Opposition Parties Coalesce" in Schleder A (ed), *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*: 79.

⁴⁸⁰ Lindberg S. 2006. "Tragic Protest: Why do Opposition Parties Boycott Elections?" in Schleder A (ed), 2006, *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*.

⁴⁸¹ Lindberg S. 2006. *Democracy and elections in Africa*.

⁴⁸² Thompson M and Kuntz P. 2006. "After Defeat: When do Rulers steal elections?" in Schleder, A (ed) *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*.

of potential opposition supporters. Their effectiveness at remaining in power even after democratic elections have been introduced is demonstrated by the fact that by 1997 almost half of the 48 autocrats from pre-1990 Africa were still in power as a result of some sort of election.⁴⁸³

First elections are major events in newly democratised nations, and the images of enormous queues of voters waiting to vote for three days in South Africa's first democratic election in 1994 are ingrained in our minds. Indeed, turnout in that election was over 87% (though there was no voter registration beforehand, so we can never be sure).⁴⁸⁴ Intuitively, we would expect to see similarly high turnout rates in first election in other new democracies. Kostadinova⁴⁸⁵ finds that in Eastern Europe the highest rates of turnout were found in the first democratic elections and that turnout declined thereafter. Erdmann finds that turnout is 6 percentage points higher in first elections than in second elections.⁴⁸⁶ First elections are often the most democratic in Africa as with each succeeding election leaders become more adept at using undemocratic practices to augment their power and incapacitate their opponents, such as in Zimbabwe.⁴⁸⁷ That said, it may equally be the case that the lack of a "habit" of voting which was mentioned earlier may mean that this election has a lower rate of turnout than had otherwise been observed. Both Rustow,⁴⁸⁸ and Gerber, Green and Schachar⁴⁸⁹ argue that voting requires a habituation phase, and as such we would expect turnout to be lower in first elections. Moreover, Erdmann and others who make this claim fail to control for other factors when looking at first elections, and generally only compare them to the election that immediately follows the first election.

⁴⁸³ Lindberg S. 2006. *Democracy and elections in Africa*: 13.

⁴⁸⁴ Nohlen, Dieter, Bernard Thibaut, and Michael Krennerich. 1999. *Elections in Africa - A Data Handbook*.

⁴⁸⁵ Kostadinova, T. 2003. "Voter turnout dynamics in post-Communist Europe" *European Journal of Political Research* 42: 741-759.

⁴⁸⁶ Erdmann G. 2007. "Party Research: Western European bias and the African Labyrinth" in *Votes, Money and Violence: Political Parties and Elections in Sub-Saharan Africa*.

⁴⁸⁷ Ake C. 2000. *The Feasibility of Democracy in Africa*: 186.

⁴⁸⁸ Rustow. 1970.

⁴⁸⁹ Gerber, Green and Schachar. 2003.

More dangerously, there is another factor which I believe is crucial to understanding African turnout which is captured in all three of these variables, fear. Fear has been a feature of African elections since before independence, with political parties, governments and colonial authorities all making use of tactics of intimidation and violence. Many Africans have found it wiser to obey than to risk being beaten up or killed.⁴⁹⁰ First elections and elections where turnover occur are often particularly dangerous and unstable times.⁴⁹¹ Actors on all sides, both opposition and government, are uncertain as to the possible outcome and even as to who their potential supporters are likely to be. This factor may be important enough to discourage extensive mobilisation.

One reason for why voters may choose not to vote in these elections can be linked to the severity of potential consequences in a first election, or an election where the incumbent is still around, of an opposition victory.⁴⁹² These elections take place under a great deal of uncertainty and risk. There is no guarantee that the current government will respect the election results and peacefully hand over power. As such, should the opposition win, those who voted may well be targeted for punishment. This is particularly the case in individual constituencies where the government lost, and this was a feature of the aftermath of the 2008 Zimbabwean elections where ZANU-PF had control of the lists of people who had voted, and targeted those specific individuals in the specific constituencies where they had lost.⁴⁹³ Alternatively, an opposition win might result in the government simply not accepting the result, such as in Nigeria in 1993 when General Babangida annulled the poll which had elected a candidate which he did not favour.⁴⁹⁴ This was also the case in Madagascar in 2002 where Didier Ratsiraka, the acting President, claimed that a runoff was needed while his

⁴⁹⁰ East Africa and Rhodesia. 1962. "Intimidation in Central Africa".

⁴⁹¹ See the violence that surrounded the 2008 Kenyan elections when turnover occurred, or the use of violence by the Moi regime in Kenya's first "democratic" election under Moi.

⁴⁹² Obisesan A. 20 April 2008. "We're at War – MDC".

⁴⁹³ New York Times. 21 April 2008. "Human wave flees Zimbabwe".

⁴⁹⁴ Lewis, P. 1994. "Endgame in Nigeria? The politics of a failed democratic Transition" *African Affairs* 93: 323-340.

challenger, Mark Ravolomanana claimed that he had won the first round. After Ravolomanana proclaimed himself President, Ratsiraka blockaded the capital and weeks of fighting ensued in which dozens of people died and the economy was devastated.⁴⁹⁵ Voters may want to distance themselves from being seen as potential creators of the violence that is likely to follow such an election and may choose not to vote for this reason.⁴⁹⁶ Indeed, even when governments accept the results of “turnover” elections to the parliament or in referenda, they may well then react by redoubling their efforts to cement their position for the forthcoming presidential elections, as was the case in Zimbabwe following Mugabe’s defeat in the 2000 Referendum where violence and intimidation were used extensively against those suspected of voting no,⁴⁹⁷ and where alternate mobilising groups like NGO’s were heavily cracked down upon.⁴⁹⁸

It may also be the case that incumbents, aware of their unpopularity, deliberately depress turnout in areas where they believe that they might lose, such as in areas where rival ethnic groups dominate. This was a feature of the first democratic elections in Kenya, where Daniel Arap Moi used his position as President to depress turnout in rival areas.⁴⁹⁹ Evidence from South America suggests that authoritarian regimes also attempt to boost turnout by specifically targeting their strong supporters.⁵⁰⁰

Fear may also boost turnout. An example of this is Ethiopia. In 2005 the Opposition had shown themselves as able to mobilise large numbers of their supporters, while the

⁴⁹⁵ Thompson M and Kuntz P. 2006.

⁴⁹⁶ It is worth noting that opposition groups do occasionally win elections even under severe constraints and that ruling elites do occasionally accept these transfers of power. In Kenya in 2002, for example, Daniel arap Moi’s handpicked successor lost the election and Moi did not attempt to reverse the result at all, perhaps hoping that by doing so he would not be tried for past abuses. (Thompson M and Kuntz P. 2006: 124) There are also examples of where long term authoritarian incumbents have been defeated in spite of organising genuinely unfair elections. This was the case in the Presidential and parliamentary elections in Cote d’Ivoire in 2000, the parliamentary elections in Malawi in 1999 and the parliamentary elections in Namibia in 1989. As Lindberg notes, trying to cheat is one thing, doing it with success is sometimes quite another. (Lindberg S. 2006. *Democracy and elections in Africa*.)

⁴⁹⁷ Thompson M and Kuntz P. 2006.

⁴⁹⁸ Dorman, S. 2001. *Inclusion and Exclusion: NGOs and Politics in Zimbabwe*. D.Phil thesis, Oxford.

⁴⁹⁹ Lindberg S. 2006. *Democracy and elections in Africa*:80.

⁵⁰⁰ Nichter S. 2008.

governing Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) had performed relatively badly. In the 2008 election the government introduced a range of measures designed to both decrease the ability of the opposition to participate and to also increase turnout. Massive government intimidation forced many opposition groups to withdraw, while many potential candidates were prevented from registering as candidates.⁵⁰¹ The EPRDF also actively tried to boost turnout. A carrot and stick approach was used to get people to join the ruling party. Intimidation and threats of violence were accompanied by offers of jobs, and positions as city councillors. This continued use of patronage politics was made possible by the government increasing the number of Council seats so dramatically that in many rural areas over a third of the population was on a local council. This had a double effect as the weak and fragmented opposition were entirely unable to field even a fraction of the candidates to fill the available seats. As a result of these measures, party membership rose from 760 000 in 2005 to 4 million in 2008,⁵⁰² and registration was higher in these non-competitive polls than it had been in the competitive polls of 2005. Turnout was 93%.⁵⁰³ In cases like these Harbaugh may be right: voters may vote because they want to be known as voters, not because they want to vote.⁵⁰⁴

I have been unable to find any literature that investigates the effects of crime and violence on individual level turnout, reflecting the fact that there are very few studies on the impact of crime and violence on democracy.⁵⁰⁵ This is surprising as crime is important. It is frequently cited as one of the most important issues facing a nation,⁵⁰⁶ public opinion

⁵⁰¹ Aalen L and Tronvoll K. 2008. "Briefing: The 2008 Ethiopian Local Elections: The Return of Electoral Authoritarianism". *African Affairs* 108/430: 111.

⁵⁰² Aalen L and Tronvoll K. 2008.

⁵⁰³ Aalen L and Tronvoll K. 2008:117.

⁵⁰⁴ Harbaugh W. 1996. "If people vote because they want to, then why do so many of them lie?" *Public Choice* 89:63-76.

⁵⁰⁵ Beime P. 1997. *Issues in Comparative Criminology*; Howard G, Newman G and Pridemore W. 2000. "Theory, Method and Data in Comparative Criminology" in Duffee D (ed) *Criminal Justice 2000, Vol 4: Measurement and Analysis of Crime and Justice*; Powdthavee N. 2005. "Unhappiness and Crime: Evidence from South Africa" *Economica* Vol. 72 (3): 531-47; Fernandez K and Kuenzi M. 2010. "Crime and Support for Democracy in Africa and Latin America". *Political Studies* Vol. 58:450-71

⁵⁰⁶ Garland D. 1990. *The Culture of Control: Crime and Social Order in Contemporary Society*. Chicago.

research shows that people around the world are very concerned about crime,⁵⁰⁷ and many newly democratising countries have experienced high crime rates.⁵⁰⁸ Fernandez and Kuenzi, using data from the Afrobarometer and Latinobarometer find that citizens' perception of public safety have a significant effect on support for democracy, more important in fact than economic performance.⁵⁰⁹ Individuals need to believe that democracy makes life better, and high crime rates lead to less satisfaction with democracy.⁵¹⁰ As such we expect that individuals who are victims of crime and violence may well be less likely to take part in politics.⁵¹¹ Crime and violence can substantially increase the costs of participation by making it dangerous to participate in the mobilising activities that we think drive turnout.

3.6 Lying

This thesis is quantitative. It uses the responses to surveys conducted by the Afrobarometer and the author as well as data on over 700 national elections across Africa collected and collated by the author. In any such study the question of data validity is a crucial one. The precise measures taken to ensure the quality of the data used are discussed at length later in this chapter and within the relevant chapters, but the problem of lying needs to be addressed straight away. In the Afrobarometer data used there appears to be a high degree of overreporting of voting. Whereas the average official turnout of registered voters across all the parliamentary elections covered by the survey is 61%, the average reported turnout of

⁵⁰⁷ Quann N and Hang K. 2002. "Victimization Experience and the Fear of Crime: A Cross National Study" in Nieuwbeerta P (ed) *Crime Victimization in Comparative Perspective*.

⁵⁰⁸ Bergman M. 2006. "Review Essay: Crime and Citizen Security in Latin America" *Latin American Research Review* Vol. 41: 213-27

⁵⁰⁹ Fernandez K and Kuenzi M. 2010.

⁵¹⁰ Karstedt S and LaFree G. 2006. "Democracy, Crime and Justice" *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 605 (1): 6-23; Moraski B and Reisinger W. 2003. "Explaining Competition across Russia's Regions" *Slavic Review* 62 (2): 278-301; Caldiera T and Holston J. 1999. "Democracy and Violence in Brazil" *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 41(4): 691-729; Seligson M, Macias R and Cruz J. 2000. *Autoria de la Democracia, El Salvador 1999*; Diamond L. 1999. *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*; Hiskey J and Bowler S. 2005. "Local context and democratisation in Mexico" *American Journal of Political Science* 49:57-71; Lagos M. 2001. "Between Stability and Crisis in Latin America" *Journal of Democracy* 12 (1): 137-45; Norris P. 1999. *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Government*; Lipset SM. 1959. "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy" *American Political Science Review* 53: 69-105.

⁵¹¹ Fernandez K and Kuenzi M. 2010.

registered voters is 87% (a 26 percentage point difference) and the average reported turnout of eligible voters is 74%.

This is a problem with voting surveys around the world. Bratton et al⁵¹² find an average difference of 13 percentage points in the round 1 Afrobarometer data but this appears to be a comparison of the reported turnout of *eligible* voters and official figures of *registered* turnout. Comparing like with like increases this difference to 26 percentage points. Bratton, Chu and Lagos⁵¹³ find wide discrepancies between self reported and official turnout in the globalbarometer surveys conducted between 1999 and 2002 with an average 10 percentage point greater self reported vote than official figures would suggest (as a proportion of the voting age population). In the US the gap between National Election Survey and official estimates of presidential election turnout has more than doubled from 11 points in 1952 to 24 points in 1996.⁵¹⁴

It is difficult to estimate what portion of the overestimate is due to such things as lying, faulty recall, and misunderstandings.⁵¹⁵ The desire to observe and present oneself in a desirable light often affects what aspects of the past are remembered and the reconstructive inferences regarding what had happened.⁵¹⁶ Burden argues that overreporting in the US is the result mostly of declining response rates rather than instrumentation, question wording changes, or other factors. As more peripheral voters have eluded interviewers in recent years,

⁵¹² Bratton M, Mattes R and Gyimah-Bodi. 2005. *Public Opinion, Democracy and Market Reform in Africa*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

⁵¹³ Bratton M, Chu Y and Lagos M. 2010. "Who votes? Implications for New Democracies".

⁵¹⁴ Burden B. 2000. "Voter Turnout and the National Election Studies" *Political Analysis* Vol. 8 No. 4.

⁵¹⁵ Brehm, John. 2000. "Alternative Corrections for Sample Truncation: Application to the 1988, 1990, and 1992 Senate Election Studies." *Political Analysis* 8:183–200.

⁵¹⁶ Belli R, Traugott M, Young M and McGonagle K. 1999. "Reducing Vote Overreporting in Surveys: Social Desirability, Memory Failure, and Source Monitoring" *Public Opinion Quarterly* 63(1): 90-108 .

the sample became more saturated with self-reported voters, thus inflating reported turnout.⁵¹⁷

In terms of the effects of overreporting on regression results, Katosh and Traugott⁵¹⁸ found that overreporting did not substantially affect conclusions in several models of voting behaviour. Sigelman⁵¹⁹ reached a similar conclusion, with the exception that race (not included in the Katosh and Traugott models) appeared to have a somewhat greater impact on voting when validated data were used than when self-reports were used. That said, those who are under the most pressure to vote are the ones most likely to misrepresent their behaviour when they fail to do so,⁵²⁰ and so there must be some effects that we cannot discount.

In spite of these problems we can and should still use self reported turnout when it is available. All of the studies of individual level turnout that precede this thesis face this problem to some extent, and the problem is not as great as might be initially felt. We are trying to find *correlates* of voting behaviour, not precise estimates of turnout levels. If overreporting is randomly distributed then the causes and consequences will be much the same for self reported or official statistics.⁵²¹ If it isn't then we should find major discrepancies between the determinants of voting using official statistics (in chapter four) and self reported statistics (in chapters five through seven). The fact that we do not find them is an important justification of the approach taken. In addition, a major component of this thesis is a survey conducted by the author in South Africa where much lower rates of overreporting were found.

⁵¹⁷ Burden B. 2000. "Voter Turnout and the National Election Studies" *Political Analysis* Vol. 8 No. 4.

⁵¹⁸ Katosh J and Traugott M. 1981. "The Consequences of Validated and Self-Reported Voting Measures." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 45:519–535.

⁵¹⁹ Sigelman L. 1982. "The Nonvoting Voter in Voting Research." *American Journal of Political Science* 26:47–56.

⁵²⁰ Bemstein R, Chadha A and Montjoy R. 2001. "Overreporting Voting: Why it happens and why it matters" *Public Opinion Quarterly* Volume 65:22–44.

⁵²¹ Bratton M, Chu Y and Lagos M. 2010. "Who votes? Implications for New Democracies".

3.7 Thesis Outline and Hypotheses

The next chapter aims to answer the question: What are the determinants of the level of turnout at a country level in Africa? The hypothesis is that the determinants of turnout in Africa will be different to those in Europe and the West. Fornos, Power and Garand (2004) find that the determinants of voter turnout in Latin America are primarily institutional (such as unicameralism, compulsory voting, and concurrent legislative and executive elections) and political variables (i.e., founding elections and political freedoms). They find that socioeconomic variables, which are important in the West, are not important in Europe. Kuenzi and Lambright (2007) find that in their regressions on Africa two institutional variables—type of electoral formula and concurrency of presidential and legislative elections—have significant effects on electoral turnout. Media exposure has a significant positive relationship with voter turnout. The number of elections a polity has had also appears to affect levels of voter turnout. I thus hypothesise that institutional variables will be the most important determinants of cross national turnout. Linear regression analysis will be used to study the effects of the variables identified earlier in this and the previous chapter.

Chapter Five looks below the country level to ask: What are the determinants of the level of turnout at an individual level in Africa? Thus far only two papers have been published on individual level turnout in Africa and this work will thus help to add to the available literature. The method used will be to run logistic regressions using the data from the Afrobarometer studies.

Chapter Six extends the analysis in Chapter Five to take account of Africa specific explanations, looking at the effects of ethnicity, regime type, clientelism and age and generation. We hypothesise that these are the variables that will provide the deepest level of

explanation. The chapter will use multilevel regression based on data from the previous two chapters and I hypothesise that Individuals socialised into different regimes will vote at different rates and will have different determinants of voting / non-voting. “New” voters will be most volatile.

Chapter Seven then looks at politics at the local level, a neglected area. Using data that I collected in a survey in Durban in 2005, this chapter asks: Why do people in Durban, South Africa Vote? How much explanation can a survey developed primarily to test rational choice variables (the first of its kind) provide? And does the model for the continent as a whole work well in a local context? A single city approach was chosen in light of two facts. First, there is an established tradition of using country city studies for exploratory research. General examples include Dahl’s study of New Haven and Berelson’s study of Elmira in New York.⁵²² Within the turnout literature Blais⁵²³ uses a survey of voting patterns of students at a Canadian university to test his rational choice models of turnout,⁵²⁴ Sinnott and Whelan look at turnout in Dublin in order to test their hypotheses on turnout in EU elections,⁵²⁵ and Franklin tests his model of turnout in Germany.⁵²⁶ These studies allow for a contextualised observation of factors that might be obscured in a national sample. Second, they are easier to administer, important when data are scarce, and reveal distinctive aspects of individual cities whilst generating hypotheses about general patterns. As many of the factors associated with turnout are contextual,⁵²⁷ we need to situate ourselves at a fairly low level to understand them.⁵²⁸ The chapter begins by using logistic regressions to see whether rational choice models, including the simple Downsian, Riker and Ordeshoek and minimax-regret variants,

⁵²² Berelson, B et al. 1954. *Voting*.

⁵²³ Blais, A. 2000. *To vote or not to vote: the merits and limits of rational choice theory*: 62, 85.

⁵²⁴ This study improves on that approach by surveying a more representative sample.

⁵²⁵ Sinnott R and Whelan B. 1991. “Turnout in European Elections – A comparison of the 1984 and 1989 elections in Dublin.” *Working Papers on European Economic and Public Affairs*, Paper No.2.

⁵²⁶ Franklin, M. 2004. *Voter Turnout and the Dynamics of Electoral Competition in Established Democracies since 1945*: 153.

⁵²⁷ Leighley and Nagler 1992. “Individual and Systemic Influences on Turnout: Who Votes? 1984” *The Journal of Politics* (3):718-40.

⁵²⁸ Gronlund, K. nd. “Knowledge and Turnout – A Comparative Analysis”. Paper prepared for the 2nd ECPR General Conference.

provide any explanation for abstention. It then moves on to look at how demographic factors, attitudes, mobilisation and resources affect turnout. We shall test whether voting is habit forming, and whether different generations and races have different determinants of abstention.

Table 3.1 summarises the specific hypotheses about particular variables that will be tested in each chapter.

Table 3.1: Summary of Hypotheses by Chapter

Variable / Theory	Chapter 4	Chapter 5	Chapter 6	Chapter 7
P - Closeness/ Decisiveness of Vote	- The closer the election at the National Level the higher the turnout. - National level closeness is more important in presidential than parliamentary elections. - Countries with Proportional systems and low populations and lots of parties will have higher turnout as individual votes will be more decisive. - The less reflective the seat distribution is when compared to the vote distribution the lower the turnout.	- The closer the election at the constituency level the higher the turnout. (Tested in Lesotho and Botswana) - proportional representation boosts turnout. - In multilevel models, further proof that closeness is important will be that variation between elections will be more important than variation between countries at the second level.	- Closeness will be most important for new voters.	- Closeness will be most important for new voters. - Closeness will be more important in the Mixed electoral system used at a Local level than in the PR system used for national election in South Africa.
B - Benefits	- presidential elections will have higher rates of turnout. - When life expectancy and gross national income are high, turnout will be lower as the benefits of voting decline	- The poor, rural, unemployed, uneducated will vote most.	- Clientelistic practices like offering bribes and gifts will boost turnout. - As these practices work best in small communities, clientelistic practices will be most effective in small, rural communities. - When the economy is doing badly turnout will be higher as voters vote to punish the incumbent. - When a President is performing badly turnout will be higher as voters vote to punish him.	- When voters feel that they are getting a substantial benefit from their candidate winning they will have a greater predicted probability of voting.
C - Costs, structural obstacles.	- The lower the population and the population density the higher the turnout. - The longer the time between elections, the higher the turnout.	- The poor, rural, unemployed, uneducated will vote least.		- The higher the perceived costs of voting, the lower the predicted probability of voting.
D - Duty		- Those who prefer other systems of government, who don't have a duty to the current system, will vote least.		- The higher the perceived Duty to vote the higher the predicted probability of voting.
Regime Types	- More autocratic regimes will have higher turnout due to increased vote rigging. - Uncertainty will lower turnout. - As such, the presence of the incumbent or former leader in the election will boost turnout. - A turnover of leaders will reduce turnout. - Turnout will be lower in first elections.		- Electoral Authoritarian Regimes will have citizens with the highest predicted probabilities of voting.	
Culture	- Muslims vote at lower rates than other religions.	- Religious people will vote more.		

Variable / Theory	Chapter 4	Chapter 5	Chapter 6	Chapter 7
Mobilisation	- When it is easier to mobilise people turnout will be higher. So, highly literate, small countries will have higher turnout.	- Those who have most access to the media, who are close to parties, who contact politicians and who attend political events will vote more.	- The effects of mobilisation variables will be felt most by new voters.	- Those who have most access to the media, who are close to parties, who contact politicians and who attend political events will vote more.
Groups versus Individuals			- Those who feel that their ethnic group is discriminated against vote at lower rates than those who never feel discriminated against. - Those ethnic groups with the most to win or lose vote most. - Co-ethnics of the President are more likely to vote - People living in countries with high numbers of politically relevant ethnic groups will vote more if the electoral system is Proportional.	- Different races in South Africa will vote at different rates and for different reasons.
Age. Generation. Habit.			- Young people will vote least and will be most affected by all other independent variables. - Growing up in colonial, postcolonial and multiparty generations will result in different patterns of voting today.	- Those who vote in the first election after apartheid will vote more consistently thereafter than those who could but didn't.

Part B

Chapter 4: Cross National Turnout in African Elections

4.1 Introduction

This chapter identifies the determinants of cross-national turnout variation in African elections. This question is important for a number of reasons. First, by looking at cross-country variation the effect of variables, such as different executive structures, can be determined. Second, these institutional variables tend to be things which can be changed or altered more easily than individual level determinants of turnout like duty. They are thus crucial for those who seek to find ways to increase turnout and participation in politics. Third, country level variables can reveal important differences between the populations of different countries and give us greater insight into the national characteristics of different countries. Finally, national turnout levels are important for new African democracies as they can reveal important signs of the possibility of democratic reversal.

After describing the method used and the operationalisation of variables three sets of regressions will be run. First, a model of turnout in African elections will be derived using turnout figures from 358 elections in post independence sub-Saharan Africa. This model makes use of the full universe of available cases, and provides a unique picture of turnout on the continent. Second, the elections will be analysed in two separate categories: democratic countries and authoritarian regimes. Whilst, as mentioned from the outset, these categories suffer from numerous theoretical and empirical problems this thesis will attempt to address this over the course of the next three chapters by using three different measures of democracy, testing them against one another and, in the process sharpening our understanding of turnout across political systems. Finally, the determinants of turnout in presidential and parliamentary elections as well as referenda will each be looked at in turn. This is important

as different institutions may well operate in different ways depending on the type of election.⁵²⁹

By using these three methods we can triple check our findings, building on the literature to test four different theories of turnout. First, the rational choice models *P*, *B* and *C* terms can be indirectly tested. Looking at the closeness of elections at the national level is a key part of understanding whether the decisiveness of an election is of crucial importance or not. Looking at the electoral system, the degree of disproportionality between votes obtained and seats in parliament and population size all further add to our understanding of this concept. The *B* and *C* terms are more difficult to assess. Life expectancy is a weak proxy for the importance of the election, and costs are indirectly measured by looking at the time between elections and population density. A stronger measure of *C* would be to look at the number of polling stations or the average constituency size, but data were not available for even a quarter of the cases in the data set. The latter is tested in chapter six where data on average constituency size for all the cases under consideration is available. Whilst later chapters test the rational choice model more rigorously, this chapter begins the process and is of particular importance when it comes to the closeness variable.

This chapter also tests the mobilisation thesis by looking at national level variables associated with easier targeting and identification of potential voters. Socioeconomic determinants are also assessed to begin to work out "who votes", but the most important contribution made by this chapter is to help to answer the questions of whether institutions matter when it comes to the level of turnout in a country.

⁵²⁹ See chapters two and three.

4.2 Data and Methodology

The cross national data consists of 766 cases covering every available election in Africa since records of elections began on the continent. Data collection was attempted for over 100 variables. Unfortunately there is a significant dearth of socioeconomic data on any elections before 1978, and as such, most of our analysis on cross-national turnout is confined to the period from 1978-2008. This leaves us with 358 cases. This number compares favourably with other studies of elections such as those of Franklin⁵³⁰ (356 cases) and Lindberg⁵³¹ (232 cases). Within the period from 1978-2008, while there remain some missing values which, in spite of a great deal of work consulting primary sources, academics, and original documents could not be found, the missing variables are randomly distributed and introduce no bias in the sample.

The data collection was exceptionally difficult due to a paucity of collated data. The other major issues facing the collection and collation of the cross national data related to questions of reliability, namely source bias and coding bias, and an active attempt was made to limit these at all stages. While the author was able to rely to some extent on data obtained from Lindberg's seminal study of African elections,⁵³² Lindberg covers only 232 cases and does not have data on many of the variables necessary for our purposes. As such, the author made use of all available media sources, academic articles, government documents and the opinions of various country experts. All of the data were coded and collected by the author from a variety of sources over the period October 2007 to November 2008. All of the data were double checked by the author for accuracy using the same method as Lindberg,⁵³³ and the reliability of all sources was actively questioned with academic sources seen as the most

⁵³⁰ Franklin M.2004.

⁵³¹ Lindberg. 2006. *Democracy and Elections in Africa*.

⁵³² Lindberg. 2006.

⁵³³ See Lindberg. 2006:46. Multiple sources were used for each data point whenever possible and information was cross checked for accuracy. The independence of each source was evaluated and untrustworthy sources were eliminated.

reliable. While this took a long time, the advantage was that consistency of coding was maintained. Most of the indicators used do not require very much subjective interpretation, and when they did the author relied on as many source as possible. All data processing was done in Microsoft Excel and all regressions were run in Stata. This process of data collation has resulted in what is, as far as I am aware, the most comprehensive data set on elections in Africa post-independence and will provide the basis of a great deal of future research.

As is the case with the Lindberg data, each election is treated as a case, even if the presidential and parliamentary elections occurred on the same day.⁵³⁴ This avoids the potential bias of giving countries which hold elections on separate days double representation which would bias the sample. In addition, as Lindberg⁵³⁵ notes, there are often different results for variables such as whether there was a turnover in government between elections which happen on the same day in the same country. Different elections are subject to different determinants.⁵³⁶

A major issue throughout this chapter will be the question of source validity. Whilst all data were checked thoroughly there is a problem that some of the turnout figures may have simply been made up by authoritarian regimes. Three things need to be said in response to this. First, for elections that have taken place in the past twenty years we have seen that even flawed elections no longer have massively inflated turnout figures as more assertive opposition parties and international observers have made it harder to fake them.⁵³⁷ Lindberg makes use of this data as well, and both he and I exclude elections that were universally derided as being made up. Second, this thesis controls for authoritarian regimes. This cannot

⁵³⁴ One potential criticism of this approach is that it might overemphasise countries that have runoff elections as opposed to those which do not, effectively "double-counting" some countries. As such all the models were run with only the first round election results. No significant differences were found and in the interests of maximising sample size the approach detailed above was maintained.

⁵³⁵ Lindberg, 2006.

⁵³⁶ Curtice J. 2002. "The state of election studies" in Franklin M and Wlezien C. 2002. *The Future of Election Studies*.

⁵³⁷ Lindberg S. 2005. "Consequences of electoral systems in Africa: a preliminary inquiry" *Electoral Studies* Vol. 24: 41-64

entirely account for the possibility of made up data as some countries that are counted as free and fair by the Freedom House scores that we use may well have some poor elections, but it does go a long way in that direction. Finally, I find that the seemingly imperfect elections are relatively randomly distributed. Indeed, the results that we find throughout this chapter add a great deal of strength to the decision to include all the countries in the data set as they show up *whether or not* we exclude elections that have very high turnout rates. Including these cases not only means that we have more variables, it also means that we have a much stronger model. Moreover, it places some doubt on the theory that all of the turnout figures for authoritarian elections were entirely made up. On the contrary, many of them have rates of turnout that, given the high levels of control by ruling parties and leaders and the institutional setup, are predicted by the models that we create which exclude those countries.

As was mentioned in the introduction, most of the current literature focuses on elections to the lower house, which is problematic for the reasons outlined earlier. As such, both presidential and legislative elections will be included, with a control variable for the type of election, as was previously done by Gray and Caul.⁵³⁸ The introduction to this thesis discussed the reasons for including both authoritarian and democratic regimes in the analysis. In this chapter the Polity IV index definition of democracy will be used. The idea behind this measure is that democracy reflects three basic elements: The presence of institutions and procedures through which citizens can express preferences about alternative policies and leaders, the existence of institutional constraints on the executive, and guaranteed civil liberties for all citizens. This measure assesses the competitiveness of participation, the regulation of participation, the competitiveness of executive recruitment, the openness of executive recruitment and the constraints placed on the executive.

⁵³⁸ Gray and Caul. 2008.

4.3 Operationalisation⁵³⁹

4.3.1 The Dependent variable

Throughout this chapter the dependant variable will be the proportion of registered voters who voted. Of the 83 studies that Geys⁵⁴⁰ surveys 23 make use of the percentage of registered voters, 36 use the voting age population and 13 use the actual number of eligible voters. This thesis follows a number of other influential studies and uses the percentage of registered voters as the dependent variable.⁵⁴¹ Individuals who aren't registered cannot vote at all and are thus unaffected by the variables under consideration when it comes to choosing to vote.

Even if we thought that using the proportion of the entire voting age population was a good measure of turnout, this would be very difficult in the African case. Data on voting age populations is largely unavailable in Africa, and when it is, is generally quite unreliable due to the infrequent number, and generally poor quality, of censuses,⁵⁴² a problem also found in Europe.⁵⁴³ Moreover those studies that use the voting age population⁵⁴⁴ face the problem of including non-citizens in their measure of turnout as most census data does not differentiate well between citizens and non-citizens.

4.3.2 Socioeconomic Determinants of Turnout

The first variable is *Population Size*. Most of the literature uses the log of population due to wide variations in size.⁵⁴⁵ In this study the population data were neither linear nor

⁵³⁹ Data on radio ownership (mentioned in the introduction) is only available from 1989 and we are thus unable to include it in our analysis. That said, when included in the models run for only the 1990s and 2000s it was not found to be significant when all other variables were controlled for.

⁵⁴⁰ Geys, B. 2006. "Explaining voter turnout: A review of aggregate level research". *Electoral Studies*. 25:639

⁵⁴¹ Crewe 1981, Blais and Carty 1990, Black 1991, Franklin 1996

⁵⁴² Kuenzi and Lambright 2007

⁵⁴³ Kohler U and Rose R. 2008. "Under what conditions can voters non-voters affect an elections outcome?" *Studies in Public Policy* No 438

⁵⁴⁴ Powell. 1980, 1982, 1986; Jackman.1987

⁵⁴⁵ Filer J & Kenny L. 1980. "Voter Turnout and the benefits of voting" *Public Choice* 35:575-585; Hansen T. 1994. Local Elections and Local Government Performance." *Scandinavian Political Studies* 17(1):1-30; Blais and Dobrzynska A. 1998. Turnout in electoral

normally distributed, and a few important outliers (especially Nigeria) would significantly skew the results if the log of population were not used. Using the log of population also more accurately represents the type of relationship we would expect to find between population and turnout. Data were obtained from the World Bank and the smallest population recorded was 58,466 in the Seychelles and the largest 140 million in Nigeria.

The second variable is population concentration, or population density. Two measures, population density and urbanisation have been used to operationalise this variable. This study used *Population Density*, calculated by dividing the population by the surface area of the relevant country; both variables were obtained from World Bank data. The mean population density was 53 people per km², with the minimum being 0.67 and the maximum 609. Urbanisation was not used due to a lack of available data and because mean urbanisation levels might obscure internal variations in urbanisation.⁵⁴⁶

In order to measure the effects of Religion the variable used was the percentage of the population that is Muslim. Data were obtained from the World Christian Database and were available for 1900, 1970, 2000 and 2005. The intervening years were obtained by smoothing the changes over time. The mean was 32%, and the highest recorded percentage was 99% in Mauritania while the lowest was 0% in Cape Verde.

The variable used to reflect Economic Development and the wealth of the population in this study was *Gross National Income per capita*. The method of calculating GNI Per capita used was the "Atlas" method developed by the World Bank, from whence the data are also obtained. The Atlas method uses a three year average of exchange rates to smooth the

democracies. *European Journal of Political Research* 33:239-261; Allers, M. 2000; Ansolabehere S. 2005. "The Introduction of Voter registration and its effect on Turnout". *Political Analysis* 14(1).

⁵⁴⁶Urbanisation will be tested in chapter six.

effects of transitory changes in the exchange rate. Data are in current US Dollars and reflect the sum of the value added by local producers plus product taxes minus subsidies. The highest GNI per capita recorded was \$8870 and the lowest was \$40 with an average of \$753. In order to measure the economic conjuncture at the time of the election *GDP growth* was used. This measure was also obtained from the World Bank and is recorded as a percentage change in gross GDP from year to year. The mean was 4%.

Life Expectancy was measured in predicted years at birth and the data were obtained from the World Development Indicators and ranges from a minimum life expectancy of 32 years to a maximum of 73 with a mean life expectancy of 50 years. *Illiteracy* was obtained from UNESCO and covers the period from 1980 to 2003. For 1978 and 1979, the 1980 rates were used and for dates after 2003 the 2003 rates were used. Given that illiteracy rates do not vary greatly over short periods of time this was assumed to be a satisfactory method. The mean rate of literacy was 48%, with the minimum recorded rate being 8% and the maximum 90%. While Blais and Dobrzynska⁵⁴⁷ and Blais⁵⁴⁸ use illiteracy squared, this study uses the simple percentage also used by Endersby and Kriekhaus.⁵⁴⁹ This is because illiteracy rates are skewed and squaring the rate causes outlying observations to become even further outliers.

4.3.3 Institutional Setting

For the *electoral system*, a variable which ranged from 0 to 2 was created, where 0 was a plurality or majoritarian system, 1 was a mixed system and 2 was proportional representation. Of the elections covered 402 were plurality or majoritarian, 66 were mixed and 138 were proportional. The data were obtained predominantly from Lindberg⁵⁵⁰ but a

⁵⁴⁷ Dobrzynska. 1998.

⁵⁴⁸ Blais A.2000.

⁵⁴⁹ Endersby and Kriekhaus. 2008.

⁵⁵⁰ Lindberg S. 2006.

number of other sources were also consulted to expand the dataset. “*Number of Parties*” records the number of parties or candidates or options involved in the election. The mean was 6, with a maximum of 62 and a minimum of 1. This is the same variable used by Blais.⁵⁵¹ Whenever no data were available for the number of parties in the election I used the number of parties in parliament instead.⁵⁵² In order to study the effects of disproportionality in parliamentary elections the variable “*Disproportionality*” is used. This variable is defined as the difference in percentage points between the percentage of votes gained by the party winning the most votes and the percentage of seats gained by that party. “*Simultaneous Elections*” is a binary variable, where 1 is when more than one election is being held at the same time, and 0 is that only one election was held on the date under consideration.

A dummy variable *Parliamentary System* is used for whether a regime is presidential or Parliamentary, where 0 is presidential and 1 is Parliamentary. There are 610 elections in presidential systems and 126 in parliamentary systems. The predominant data source for this information is Lindberg⁵⁵³ but other sources were also consulted. In systems that have presidential elections, “*Presidential Election*” takes on the value of 1 for a presidential election and 0 for all others (whether they occurred in presidential or parliamentary systems). There are 252 presidential elections and 510 other elections. For “*Referendum*”, 1 is that the election was a Referendum and 0 is that it wasn't. There are 106 Referenda in the data set.

⁵⁵¹ Blais A. 2000.

⁵⁵² While in some ways it would've been more theoretically correct to use the number of effective parties or just the number of parties in parliament this was not done for the following reasons. First, data on the number of effective parties was not as available as the number of parties. Second, when we ran the models with the smaller number of cases that we had data for the number of effective parties for, no significant differences were found to the results obtained in this chapter. Third, we are interested not only in elections to parliament, but elections to the Presidency as well. As such measures of the number of parties in parliament obviously cannot be used in these elections. Last, even though it is possible that to some extent using the number of parties in the election as a measure means that some parties that only exist on paper are included, and whilst it may be thought that this measure is one of the ease of party registration rather than the competitiveness of the election, this is not borne out in the statistical data. In countries using the same registration laws over time, the number of parties often varies widely in the dataset. This measure thus has an important role to play in assessing the *inclusivity* of the regime, an important component of the competitiveness of elections.

⁵⁵³ Lindberg S. 2006.

The *voting age* is the voting age at the time of the election in years. The mean voting age is 19, with a minimum recorded voting age of 15 and a maximum of 23.

A dichotomous variable representing whether a country is autocratic is included, and we would expect this to be strongly positive. In order to assess the level of democracy at the time of the election the Polity IV measure is used as described above. A major advantage of this method is that it covers all countries from 1800 to 2007, while the Freedom House measure covers only the more recent past. The index divides countries into the following 14 groups: multiparty, dominant party, military multiparty, military traditional, rebel regime, military no party, military one party, one party, traditional monarchy, no party monarchy, civil war, transition, other, and democracy. The index defines a “mature and internally coherent democracy...operationally ... as one in which (a) political participation is unrestricted, open, and fully competitive; (b) executive recruitment is elective, and (c) constraints on the chief executive are substantial. “*Autocracy*” was defined as any of the elections that were not classified as democratic, transitional, multiparty or dominant party. Including countries labelled as “dominant party” would exclude countries like Botswana which, while they have not experienced a peaceful transition from government to opposition, and have a very strong ruling party, still have many of the other features of a democratic regime. Of the elections covered, 241 were labelled as autocratic and 320 as not autocratic. This variable should also help to control for some of the more rigged elections with questionable turnout figures.

4.3.4 The Party system, Political Variables and factors linked to elections

“*Closeness*” was calculated by subtracting the proportion of the votes garnered by the runner up of the election under consideration from those of the winner to ascertain the margin of victory. When no data were available for the number of votes obtained, the difference in

seats in parliament was used for parliamentary elections. There were no cases included where no data were available for Presidential election closeness. Data were obtained from Nohlen, Thibaut and Krennerich,⁵⁵⁴ the African Elections database⁵⁵⁵ and from the Inter-Parliamentary Union. Of the 635 available data points, the mean closeness was 56 percentage points, and the standard deviation was 36 percentage points.⁵⁵⁶ This is a very large average margin of victory, it decreases to 37 percentage points for the countries that are not in any way autocratic, and rises to 89 percentage points for countries that are. In some ways this isn't a very good measure, and may act more as a further control for autocratic systems in the general models. That said, in both cases there is significant variance, ranging from 0 to nearly 100 in both sets of cases, indicating that there is evidence of competition in both sets of regimes.

"Time since the last election" is the time, in years, since the previous parliamentary or presidential election or referendum. Precise dates were not available for all elections, and dates that were available were often contradictory. As such, the year of the election was used, not the month or date, to calculate the time since the last election. While this does mean that there is some variation within data points, especially when elections are held in November and then January for instance, and are coded as 1, as opposed to January and November which is coded as 0, the lack of data means that this is the only coding option available. Moreover, when the regression was run with a more limited sample that only included the

⁵⁵⁴ Nohlen, Dieter, Bernard Thibaut, and Michael Krennerich. 1999.

⁵⁵⁵ http://africanelectionstripod.com/bj.html#2006_Presidential_Election

⁵⁵⁶ There are a few methodological questions about the variable. The first is the question of which measure of closeness to use, Ex post which measures the actual result, or Ex ante which uses individuals subjective estimates of the closeness of the race via the use of opinion polls. Mueller (2003) argues that it is problematic to use ex post measures as they assume that agents have rational expectations of the outcome of the race. Kostadinova (2003) notes that in Eastern Europe voters do in fact find it very difficult to estimate how close an election will be. Ex post closeness is also in some sense a function of the dependant variable and is thus a biased estimate (Schachar and Nalebuff. 1999). Overall, ex ante measures are more successful at predicting turnout, but are also very hard to find in the African context where opinion polling is a relatively new phenomenon (Cheeseman and Branch. 2005.) This study cannot make use of ex-ante measures as they simply do not exist for most of the elections under consideration. Another methodological issue is that the variable covers up differences in the closeness of various sub-national races, such as those for individual seats, and as such the true impact of closeness may well be over or underestimated. Finally, these and other measures of closeness, such as nationally competitive elections may be problematic in contexts where results are often distorted by rigging or violence (Perez-Linan A. 2001) We also can't use frequency of government changes like Powell does as in many cases we simply do not have enough elections (Powell 1986). Due to these methodological and contextual factors we may well not find closeness to be significant.

data where precise dates were available, and where months instead of years were used, no significant changes from the reported regressions were found.

4.3.5 Africa Specific Explanations

“First Democratic Election” is coded 1 when the election was the first democratic election after a period of autocratic rule post independence in that country, and 0 when it wasn't. *“Turnover”* and *“Incumbent”* are predominantly derived from Lindberg, but missing values were obtained from sources listed in the appendix. *“Turnover”* is coded 2 when there is a complete change in power following the election, 1 when there is a change but the new ruler was in the previous government, and 0 when there is no change. *“Incumbent”* is coded 2 for when the previous dictator or authoritarian leader is still around in a democratic election, 1 when his/her party or government ministers are, and 0 when they aren't. When, in either case, where there has been no change in the presidency, but a change in the legislature (as happened in the 2004 Malawi elections) we code this as 0.5 points.)⁵⁵⁷

4.3.6 Decline over time

Much of the literature on voter turnout in the West has sought to explain the decline in turnout over time, and many of the variables that are seen to affect turnout

Table 4.1 Turnout Decline over Time

Variable	B	s.e.
Year	-0.34***	0.05
Constant	738.93***	94.93
R ²	0.07	
Adjusted R ²	0.07	
N of cases	676	
Degrees Of Freedom	1	

may in fact be influenced by this trend.⁵⁵⁸ A cross national study in Latin America and Eastern Europe finds that turnout drops sharply after founding elections and continues to fall until the fourth election cycle.⁵⁵⁹ A simple regression of the turnout data for Africa in Table

⁵⁵⁷ Cho W and Logan C. 2009.

⁵⁵⁸ Franklin M. 2004.

⁵⁵⁹ Kostadinova T and Power T. 2007. "Does Democratization Depress Participation? Voter Turnout in the Latin American and Eastern European Transitional Democracies" *Political Research Quarterly* Vol. 60 No. 3: 363-377.

4.1 shows that it too has faced a decline in turnout in the years since independence. As such a variable taking into account this trend, *year*, will be included. If significant it will indicate that there are factors not accounted for in the model which may have an influence on turnout and its decline.

4.4 Preliminary overview of Turnout

Table 4.2 summarises the turnout data collected. Average turnout varies widely between African countries, a surprising feature of turnout in developing countries found in other studies. In Latin America Fornos, Power and Garand⁵⁶⁰ find that turnout varies between 35.8% and 95.7%, while in post-communist Europe Kostandinova⁵⁶¹ records turnout rates that vary between 43.2% and 96.8% with an average of 73%. In this study the average turnout in 638 observations is 71%, which is approximately 7% lower than the rates found in most studies of turnout in the developed world. It ranges from a low of 47% in Nigeria, to a high of 94% in Rwanda. When we separate out democratic and autocratic regimes we find that turnout averages 63% when we measure democracies via the Polity IV index (185 cases) and 62% when using the Freedom House measure (89 cases). Autocracies on the other hand record an average turnout rate of 76% using the Polity IV index (282 cases) and 69% using the Freedom House measure (425 cases).

⁵⁶⁰ Fornos, Power, Garand. 2004.

⁵⁶¹ Kostandinova. 2003.

Table 4.2: Average Turnout in African Elections⁵⁶²

Code	Country	No. of Elections	Years	Average
0	Angola	2	1992	91.3
1	Benin	26	1958, 1959, 1960, 1964, 1964, 1968, 1968, 1970, 1979, 1984, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1991, 1991, 1995, 1996, 1996, 1999, 2001, 2001, 2003, 2006, 2006, 2007	69.7
2	Botswana	12	1965, 1969, 1974, 1979, 1984, 1987, 1989, 1994, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2004	53.3
3	Burkina Faso	18	1959, 1959, 1965, 1965, 1970, 1970, 1977, 1978, 1978, 1978, 1991, 1991, 1992, 1997, 1998, 2002, 2005, 2007	56.3
4	Burundi	11	1961, 1965, 1981, 1982, 1984, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1993, 2005, 2005	91.5
5	Cameroon	21	1960, 1964, 1965, 1970, 1970, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1978, 1980, 1983, 1984, 1988, 1988, 1992, 1992, 1997, 1997, 2002, 2004, 2007	86.7
6	Cape Verde	12	1975, 1980, 1985, 1991, 1991, 1995, 1996, 2001, 2001, 2001, 2006, 2006	63.3
7	C.A.R	18	1959, 1964, 1964, 1981, 1981, 1986, 1987, 1993, 1993, 1993, 1993, 1994, 1998, 1999, 2004, 2005, 2005, 2005	68.9
8	Chad	16	1959, 1962, 1963, 1969, 1969, 1989, 1990, 1996, 1996, 1996, 1997, 1997, 2001, 2002, 2005, 2006	67.9
9	Comoros	21	1972, 1974, 1978, 1978, 1978, 1987, 1989, 1990, 1990, 1992, 1992, 1996, 1996, 1996, 2001, 2002, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2006	70.6
10	Congo Brazzaville	17	1959, 1961, 1963, 1963, 1973, 1973, 1979, 1979, 1984, 1989, 1992, 1992, 1992, 1992, 2002, 2002, 2002	80.7
11	Congo, DR	13	1960, 1964, 1965, 1967, 1970, 1970, 1977, 1977, 1984, 2005, 2006, 2006, 2006	81.9
12	Cote D'Ivoire	20	1959, 1960, 1960, 1965, 1965, 1970, 1970, 1975, 1975, 1980, 1980, 1985, 1985, 1990, 1990, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2000, 2000	74.4
13	Djibouti	14	1967, 1973, 1977, 1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, 1992, 1993, 1997, 1999, 2003, 2005, 2008	71.7
14	Equatorial Guinea	10	1968, 1968, 1982, 1982, 1993, 1996, 1999, 2002, 2004	83.9
15	Eritrea	1	1993	98.5
16	Ethiopia	7	1987, 1987, 1992, 1994, 1995, 2000, 2005	88.8
17	Gabon	19	1957, 1958, 1961, 1961, 1964, 1964, 1967, 1967, 1973, 1973, 1980, 1985, 1986, 1993, 1995, 1998, 2001, 2005, 2006	79.1
18	Gambia	17	1965, 1966, 1970, 1972, 1977, 1982, 1982, 1987, 1987, 1992, 1992, 1996, 1997, 2001, 2002, 2006, 2007	71
19	Ghana	18	1956, 1960, 1960, 1969, 1978, 1979, 1979, 1992, 1992, 1992, 1996, 1996, 2000, 2000, 2000, 2004, 2004	55.3
20	Guinea	13	1957, 1958, 1961, 1968, 1974, 1982, 1990, 1993, 1995, 1998, 2001, 2002, 2003	84.1
21	Guinea-Bissau	11	1972, 1989, 1994, 1994, 1994, 1999, 1999, 2000, 2004, 2005, 2005	79.2
22	Kenya	19	1963, 1963, 1966, 1966, 1969, 1974, 1979, 1983, 1988, 1988, 1992, 1992, 1997, 1997, 2002, 2002, 2005, 2007, 2007	54.1
23	Lesotho	5	1965, 1970, 1993, 2002, 2007	62
24	Liberia	8	1984, 1985, 1985, 1997, 1997, 2005, 2005, 2005	71.7
25	Madagascar	23	1960, 1965, 1970, 1972, 1975, 1982, 1983, 1989, 1989, 1992, 1992, 1993, 1993, 1995, 1996, 1996, 1998, 1998, 2001, 2002, 2006, 2007, 2007	68.9
26	Malawi	9	1961, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1994, 1999, 1999, 2004, 2004	72.8
27	Mali	17	1957, 1958, 1959, 1964, 1979, 1979, 1982, 1988, 1992, 1992, 1992, 1992, 1997, 1997, 2002, 2002, 2007	50.2
28	Mauritania	19	1959, 1961, 1965, 1966, 1971, 1971, 1975, 1976, 1991, 1992, 1992, 1996, 1997, 2001, 2003, 2006, 2006, 2007, 2007	76.2
29	Mauritius	9	1967, 1976, 1982, 1983, 1987, 1991, 1995, 2000, 2005	84.3
30	Mozambique	6	1994, 1994, 1999, 1999, 2004, 2004	64.4
31	Namibia	7	1989, 1994, 1994, 1999, 1999, 2004, 2004	77.7
32	Niger	22	1965, 1965, 1970, 1970, 1987, 1989, 1989, 1992, 1993, 1993, 1993, 1995, 1996, 1996, 1996, 1999, 1999, 1999, 1999, 2004, 2004, 2004	59.3
33	Nigeria	16	1959, 1964, 1979, 1979, 1983, 1983, 1992, 1993, 1998, 1999, 1999, 2003, 2003, 2007, 2007	46.8
34	Rwanda	8	1961, 1961, 1961, 1965, 1969, 2003, 2003, 2003	93.4
35	Sao Tome et Principe	11	1990, 1991, 1991, 1994, 1996, 1996, 1998, 2001, 2002, 2006, 2006	68.9
36	Senegal	25	1958, 1959, 1963, 1963, 1963, 1968, 1968, 1970, 1973, 1973, 1978, 1978, 1983, 1983, 1988, 1988, 1993, 1993, 1998, 2000, 2000, 2001, 2001, 2007, 2007	70.2
37	Seychelles	14	1974, 1979, 1983, 1987, 1989, 1992, 1993, 1993, 1998, 1998, 2001, 2002, 2006, 2007	80.5
38	Sierra Leone	18	1957, 1962, 1967, 1973, 1977, 1978, 1982, 1985, 1986, 1991, 1996, 1996, 1996, 2002, 2002, 2007, 2007, 2007	65.2
40	South Africa	29	1915, 1920, 1921, 1924, 1929, 1933, 1938, 1943, 1948, 1953, 1958, 1960, 1961, 1966, 1970, 1974, 1977, 1981, 1983, 1984, 1984, 1987, 1989, 1989, 1989, 1992, 1994, 1999, 2004	64.1
41	Sudan	8	1965, 1968, 1971, 1977, 1986, 1996, 1996, 1998	75.7
42	Swaziland	5	1967, 1972, 1978, 1993, 1998	66
43	Tanzania	18	1965, 1965, 1970, 1970, 1975, 1975, 1980, 1980, 1985, 1985, 1990, 1990, 1995, 1995, 2000, 2000, 2005, 2005	76.6
48	Tanganyika ⁵⁶³	2	1958, 1960	38.8
49	Zanzibar	4	1957, 1961, 1961, 1963	95.8
44	Togo	21	1958, 1961, 1961, 1961, 1963, 1963, 1963, 1972, 1979, 1979, 1979, 1985, 1986, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2005, 2007	82
45	Uganda	13	1961, 1962, 1962, 1980, 1994, 1996, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2001, 2005, 2006, 2006	70.5
46	Zambia	18	1964, 1968, 1968, 1969, 1973, 1978, 1978, 1983, 1983, 1988, 1991, 1991, 1996, 1996, 2001, 2001, 2006, 2006	65.8
47	Zimbabwe	12	1979, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1990, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2000, 2002, 2005, 2005	50.4

⁵⁶² No turnout data were available for Somalia.

⁵⁶³ Tanganyika united with Zanzibar to form the United Republic of Tanzania in 1964

4.5 Results

4.5.1 The General Model

Table 4.3: The General Model⁵⁶⁴

Variable	<i>Model 1A</i>		<i>Model 1B</i>		<i>Model 1C</i>		<i>Model 1D</i>		<i>Model 1E</i>	
	<i>Socioeconomic</i>		<i>Religion</i>		<i>Institutional Setting</i>		<i>Party System</i>		<i>Election</i>	
	B	s.e.	B	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	B	s.e.
Illiteracy Rate	-0.14**	0.06	0.07	0.08	-0.11	0.09	-0.12	0.09	-0.06	0.09
Life Expectancy	-0.33	0.21	-0.20	0.21	0.05	0.20	0.03	0.20	-0.22	0.19
Log of Population	-7.01***	2.00	-7.70***	1.96	-7.77***	2.11	-9.02***	2.02	-10.00***	1.92
Population Density	0.04***	0.01	0.04***	0.01	0.03**	0.01	0.03**	0.01	0.03**	0.01
Log GNI per capita	-6.99*	4.13	-5.83	4.05	-12.76***	4.60	-12.58***	5.11	-6.27	4.18
Growth of GNP	0.19*	0.11	0.16	0.11	0.14	0.10	0.07	0.10	-0.01	0.10
Year	-0.39***	0.15	-0.15	0.16	0.02	0.17	0.03	0.18	0.17	0.17
Percent Muslim			-0.16***	0.04	-0.07*	0.05	-0.08*	0.05	-0.09**	0.04
Voting Age					2.47**	1.01	2.28**	1.02	1.26	0.95
Parliamentary System					10.99***	3.97	11.48***	4.34	12.37***	4.64
Electoral System (3)					3.98***	1.142	4.01***	1.43	2.02	1.37
Autocracy					13.77***	2.43	13.29***	2.81	9.37***	2.64
presidential Election					2.49	2.04	3.54*	2.10	5.89***	1.96
Closeness of Election							0.08**	0.04	0.02	0.04
Number Of Parties							0.35**	0.16	0.36**	0.15
Time Since Last Election									1.27***	0.30
First Democratic Election									-4.70**	2.17
Turnover									-1.79	1.39
Incumbent									-8.47***	1.58
Constant	923.07***	304.12	434.49	322.44	62.39	353.84	50.13	368.47	-208.32	355.24
R ²	0.11		0.14		0.26		0.29		0.42	
Adjusted R ²	0.09		0.13		0.24		0.26		0.38	
N of cases	358		358		342		329		315	
Degrees Of Freedom	7		8		13		15		19	

*** = p < 0.01; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.1

⁵⁶⁴ The models were all run with the same number of cases (315) and no significant variations to the results reported in the table above were found.

Model 1A includes only socioeconomic variables all of which are significant except for life expectancy. The largest and most significant effect is population size. Were a country to have the maximum population recorded in the sample, its turnout would be 35 percentage points lower, *ceteris paribus*, than the country with the smallest population. This effect *increases* in strength as more variables are added and reveals the significant difficulties in mobilising large populations, as well as the enormous disincentive to vote due to the exceptionally low chance that one's vote will be decisive.

Population density is significant statistically and substantively, and remains so as other variables are added to the model. Countries with the highest recorded population densities have, on average, 24 percentage point higher rates of turnout than those with the lowest recorded population densities. This finding, which contradicts the general relationship between density and turnout in the West and appears to contradict the findings of Kuenzi and Lambright⁵⁶⁵ is consistent with the idea that politics in Africa is to some degree about mobilisation and the costs of voting. Kuenzi and Lambright⁵⁶⁶ find a very weak and inconsistent relationship between population density and turnout, but argue that rural voters are more inclined to vote as they face a greater likelihood of both sanction and reward. The variable that they use to measure populations density is, however, the rate of urbanisation, which is not the same as population density. The results from our study indicate that *countries* with dispersed populations have lower turnout. We shall look at urbanisation within countries in the next chapter when we consider the determinants of individual participation.

The GNP growth rate is positive and weakly statistically significant in the first model, but once other features about the election are added it becomes insignificant and the final

⁵⁶⁵ Kunezi and Lambright. 2007.

⁵⁶⁶ Kunezi and Lambright. 2007.

model records a very weakly negative correlation between GNP growth and turnout, suggesting that this variable is not a major indicator of turnout. The initial sign indicates that there is some evidence to suggest that African people vote more when times are getting better, and less when there is significant economic decline. These impacts may be as a result of the fact that by far the lowest rates of growth are recorded during periods of instability, such as civil war, famine and general unrest. As such, the idea that citizens may focus on other concerns seems more than plausible. Moreover, during these periods the costs of voting are very high, both in terms of the opportunity costs of alternative work foregone, but also due to the dangerous nature of travel. This is borne out by the way that *GNP growth* changes sign when *turnover* and *First Democratic Election*, our indicators of instability are added.

On the other hand, the data suggest that once we account for growth, poorer African countries have higher turnout than richer ones. This is in direct contrast to the generally established resource model of voter turnout in the West, but confirms the findings of other studies of turnout in developing countries.⁵⁶⁷ Poorer people may indeed have much more to gain in Africa than their richer counterparts (the *B* term of the rational choice equation is larger), as poorer countries rely far more on government support than do richer ones. Moreover, the financial incentives that parties may offer their supporters may be more important in these cases. This is backed up by the strong negative relationship between *life expectancy* and turnout which emerges as significant in models D and E. The populations of countries with low life expectancies have more to gain from voting in terms of the potential health, education and welfare provision of governments, which is particularly important when

⁵⁶⁷ Claire B  nit-Gbaffou and St  phanie Tawa Lama-Rewal, "Urban governance, participation and the voice of the poor in Indian and South African cities: a research agenda for comparison", forthcoming in *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 2008; Christine Fauvelle-Aymar, 2008. "Electoral *turnout* in Johannesburg: socio-economic and political determinants." *Transformation* 66/67, 142-167; Lodge, 2003.

one is malnourished, very poor or when these services aren't currently provided by the government.

The other two variables, *illiteracy* and *year*, are both not consistently significant. The positive relationship between literacy and turnout disappears when the variable representing Islamic population is added, but does reappear later, though it isn't significant. With regards time, the negative correlation between time and turnout disappears when Institutional features and religion are added. In this case it appears that the effects of time are largely accounted for by the lowering of the voting age across Africa, confirming Franklin's analysis of the reasons for turnout decline in Western Europe. As for literacy, it may be that the exceptionally high rates of illiteracy in Africa at independence (only 15% of the inhabitants of the former French Colonies could read when the franchise became universal, and only 3% of those in outlying villages could read)⁵⁶⁸ meant that parties had to make special efforts to target illiterate voters as a matter of course, adopting mobilising behaviour not based on written texts and ensuring that methods of voting did not require literacy in order to take part. These methods include the drum and barrel system used in Gambia⁵⁶⁹ and coloured disks in Botswana.⁵⁷⁰ Methods of voting and mobilisation techniques which don't discriminate against illiterate voters may be why the conventionally observed relationship between literacy and turnout doesn't appear to exist in Africa.

Model 1B adds religion. Having a large Muslim population significantly lowers turnout. Those countries with near 100% Islamic populations have turnout levels 16 percentage points lower than countries with negligible Islamic populations. This is one of the most significant and stable correlations observed. There are three possible factors at work

⁵⁶⁸ Morgenthau. 1964.

⁵⁶⁹ BBC. 22 Sept 2006. "Gambians vote with their marbles" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/5369966.stm>

⁵⁷⁰ BBC. 17 October 1999. "Botswana governing party wins" <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/477501.stm>

here. The first is that the countries with majority Muslim populations tend to be more autocratic, as revealed by the fact that the size of the effect halves when we add controls for democracy. Secondly though, a significant effect remains even when this factor is controlled for. It looks like alternate laws of behaviour and rival power structures may make elections less important for many African Muslims. Third, as noted in the introduction, it may be that the lower voting rates have something to do with the lower status of women in many Muslim states. These factors will have to be more fully explored in future studies.

Model 1C adds institutional variables and of these the voting age starts out as the most substantive and significant. In countries with the lowest voting age recorded on the continent, turnout rates are 22 percentage points lower than in countries with the highest recorded voting age, and there is a difference of 7.5 percentage points between elections where the voting age is 18 and those where the voting age is 21. Franklin's findings with regards the voting age in western countries appear to have some basis in Africa, even when we control for time. It doesn't appear to be the case that voting age is correlated with turnout simply because it has declined over time and mapped a downward trend in turnout. Even when we control for time by including the year of the election, voting age remains substantively and statistically significant. That said, when we add other features about the election in Model 1E, the variable becomes substantively weaker and statistically insignificant. It is unclear why this is the case but it may be because the full impact of a change in the voting age is not immediately apparent in the election when the voting age is changed. These effects may only become apparent when those who have only voted in a system where the voting age is eighteen begin to become the majority.

When it comes to the executive system used, parliamentary regimes have turnout rates eleven points higher *ceteris paribus* than those in presidential regimes. The increased chance of having access to power in parliamentary regimes may stimulate greater mobilisation by parties. Voters who are inclined to vote for opposition groups or who have close ethnic links with opposition parties have a greater incentive to vote as both the *P* and *B* terms of the rational choice equation are larger. They have a greater chance of influencing the outcome of the election that matters when that election is to elect a member of parliament in a parliamentary regime than they do when the important election is that of the President in a presidential regime. The potential benefit accrued to them is much greater as well as their candidate will have greater access to the goods required to fulfil the patron-client relationship in a parliamentary regime than would a similar parliamentarian in a presidential regime where power is concentrated in the person of the President.

The fact that the relationship between high turnout and elections to the most powerful office holds is reflected in the fact that presidential elections have almost six percentage point higher rates of turnout than other elections. Voters know that these are the most important elections in presidential systems, and even though they have a lower chance of affecting the outcome than they do when it comes to legislative elections in presidential systems, they also recognise that there is a much greater *B* value. It is worth reiterating that state development in many African countries has been focussed around the person of the President. It is not just that the President wields formal power, he also wields symbolic power as he is often the leader of the liberation movement, and is portrayed variously as “father of the nation”, “wise man”,⁵⁷¹ “teacher”⁵⁷² or even “Redeemer”⁵⁷³. He becomes the focal point of national life and

⁵⁷¹ Kenyatta in Kenya.

⁵⁷² Nyerere in Tanzania.

⁵⁷³ Nkrumah in Ghana.

identity, and it is thus unsurprising that voters might participate more in these elections than in those to the legislative assembly.

Autocratic regimes have turnout rates nine percentage points higher than non-autocratic regimes when all of the variables in our models are taken into account. Autocratic regimes are more likely to artificially inflate turnout figures to grant themselves greater legitimacy, and it was for this reason that we needed to incorporate the variable into the model. The size of this variable does help control for the effects of rigged elections and occasional poor data points, correcting the regression to the extent that these elections don't pervert our findings.

There is initially a strong, positive relationship between increased proportionality and turnout. Proportional systems have nine percentage points higher rates of turnout than majoritarian systems in Model 1C, but as variables pertaining to the party system and the election at hand are added the variable becomes substantively weaker and statistically insignificant. The literature often argues that the advantage of PR may have something to do with its propensity to increase the number of parties in the system, and we should thus see its effects become weaker when the *number of parties* variable is added. This does not happen; the positive effects of PR are unrelated to its propensity to increase the number of parties in an election.

The party system does appear to be important as a determinant of turnout in Africa. The *number of parties* is statistically significant and positive and in the hypothesised direction. Voters appear to value choice in elections in Africa and more inclusive regimes have much higher turnout. When we use just the number of parties in parliament we get a

stronger sign, leading us to think that this is in some ways a better measure, but the relationship holds even when we use the weaker but more easily available *number of parties* measure. More parties may also stimulate turnout via mobilisation effects. The more parties there are, the more likely it is that there are parties that play on the ethnic, religious, or regional identities of individual voters, and thus more likely that they can mobilise along these lines. This finding correlates with the studies of Seidle and Miller,⁵⁷⁴ Blais and Carty⁵⁷⁵ and Hansen⁵⁷⁶ and Dittrich and Johansen⁵⁷⁷ but contradicts Jackman,⁵⁷⁸ Black⁵⁷⁹ and De Winter et al.⁵⁸⁰ The argument that there might be lower turnout in elections with many parties in Africa due to the fractionalised nature of the opposition in these systems which lessens the chance of a change in government, does not appear to hold. Chapter six will return to this relationship when it looks at ethnicity, testing in greater depth the relationship between fractionalisation and turnout.

Closeness does not act in the hypothesised direction, though it is only initially significant. There appears to be a 0.08 percentage point rise in turnout for every 1 percentage point increase in the difference between the winning candidate and the losing candidate. Voters may choose not to vote in close elections if they are fearful that a close result may result in violence which targets those who voted, such as was the case in the 2005 Ethiopian elections.⁵⁸¹ Alternatively, it may be the case that close elections are a function of low turnout. African opposition parties have not traditionally been particularly strong, and have had limited mobilisation capacity, unlike ruling parties which have access to the organs of state. As such, it is in part when ruling parties are weak, and unable to mobilise their

⁵⁷⁴ Seidle and Miller.1976.

⁵⁷⁵ Blais and Carty. 1990.

⁵⁷⁶ Hansen. 1994.

⁵⁷⁷ Dittrich and Johansen. 1983.

⁵⁷⁸ Jackman. 1987.

⁵⁷⁹ Black. 1991.

⁵⁸⁰ De Winter et al. 1991.

⁵⁸¹ Aalen L and Tronvoll K. 2008. "Briefing: The 2008 Ethiopian Local Elections: The Return of Electoral Authoritarianism". *African Affairs* 108: 430.

supporters that opposition parties can win, or make the election close, with a relatively stable level of overall support. In the 2002 Zimbabwean presidential election, which was the closest election in that country up until that point, turnout was only 55.4%.⁵⁸² African voters also do not always have access to the type of information that would enable them to judge whether an election is likely to be close or not making their assessment of the closeness of the election problematic, and they may well simply assume that their vote either is pivotal or it isn't independent of the election itself. That said, we need to be careful with this variable as it may be unduly affected by the nature of the regime and the fact that we are relying on national level closeness. As such and we shall return to it later in this chapter and again throughout this thesis.

In the final model, the number of years since the last election is significant and is in the hypothesised direction. The longer the time between elections, the higher the turnout. Given the propensity of many African countries to have multiple elections on different dates, in the same year, this is a particularly pertinent finding. A country like Niger, for example, had three election days in one year in 1999. If countries in Africa want to increase turnout rates it may be beneficial to try to use instant runoff elections, or space elections out more.

Somewhat surprisingly, the *First Democratic Election* has turnout rates almost 5 points lower than other elections. The authoritarian regime may no longer be able to use the institutions of state to force people to vote, but is also unlikely to use the institutions of state that they still control to mobilise everyone. Rather, they may well suppress turnout in opposition areas and target only known supporters. It is also worth noting that the first democratic election is almost never the first election for the majority of voters. Most

⁵⁸² African Elections Database

individuals had voted before, whether in the one party elections in Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania or Kenya or the autocratic or military run elections in countries like Nigeria and Zaire. In fact, most had voted often. It looks like whilst outside observers may have been able to dichotomise first democratic elections as separate defining moments, many African citizens could not. People who had been voting every year without fail may not have felt that these elections were particularly different, except for the fact that they were associated with greater instability and uncertainty. Whilst high profile elections like the 1994 election in South Africa may well be different, in most case first democratic elections had lower rates of turnout than elections on either side of the democratisation process.

Finally, while *turnover* is not significant, the presence of the *incumbent* does appear to play a large role in decreasing turnout. Previous Dictators and incumbent Presidents have access to the state security apparatus and para-military in ways that opposition leaders do not. They are able to build on methods of control established during the dictatorial regime. Their presence diminishes trust in the authenticity of political change. Moreover, there is the very real chance that incumbents will work to diminish turnout amongst opposition supporters.⁵⁸³

⁵⁸³ A Fixed Country Effects Model was also run (See Appendix). One of the aims of including socioeconomic factors in the model is to control for possible country effects. Individual countries which aim to increase turnout in the short term cannot vary their populations, population density, life expectancy or the percentage of their population that is Islamic. There is, moreover, a problem that these variables may not always vary that much within countries, and when they do they may do so in a purely linear fashion. The Table shows the results of two regressions, one which includes both socioeconomic effects and country dummy variables, and one which omits the socioeconomic effects which are reasonably fixed and includes only the dummy variables. Both use Botswana as the reference country. By doing this we can control for the differences between countries that may affect turnout but aren't captured by the model, and can interpret the differences in turnout as differences within the same country. In the first model (*Fixed Effects 1*), including dummy variables increases the size and significance of population, literacy, and turnover. When we control for fixed country effects, having a small population appears to radically increase turnout, but this may have something to do with the general trend towards higher populations in most African countries which correlates with a general decline in turnout. When it comes to literacy, our earlier hypothesis that the conventional relationship between literacy and turnout does not exist in Africa is thrown into some doubt. When we control for country effects lower literacy rates do appear to lead to lower turnout, and this cannot simply be a factor of time changes as African countries have not generally seen declining literacy rates. The high costs of voting associated with illiteracy do appear to make a difference when we compare turnout within countries. With regards turnover, we find that we now do find the hypothesised relationship. Changes in government are associated with elections with low turnout. There is also change in sign for closeness so that the model now suggests that an increase in the closeness of an election leads to higher turnout. This suggests that the previous inverse effects that were found may be due to the effects of particular countries. Once we control for country effects, closeness is in the hypothesised direction. Finally, when we look at the country effects themselves we see that in the first model Cape Verde, the Comoros, Djibouti, Gambia, Mauritius and the Seychelles all have statistically significant substantively lower turnout rates than the control country, Botswana, even when all the other variables are taken into account, while South Africa and Ethiopia have significantly higher turnout rates. The former group consists entirely of small, densely populated countries with large Muslim populations. When we remove socioeconomic factors we see that they are generally no longer significant nor do they have large negative effects. When we don't control for socioeconomic factors Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Chad, Guinea, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria and Uganda all have significantly lower turnout rates than Botswana, while those of South Africa and Ethiopia are once again higher. Both of the

4.5.2 Regime Type

Table 4.4: Democracies and Autocracies

Variable	<i>General Model</i>		<i>Democratic</i>		<i>Autocratic</i>	
	B	s.e.	B	s.e.	B	s.e.
Illiteracy Rate	-0.06	0.09	-0.25**	0.11	0.16	0.17
Life Expectancy	-0.22	0.19	-0.14	0.24	-0.26	0.33
Log of Population	-10.00***	1.92	-10.69***	2.47	-8.67**	3.41
Population Density	0.03**	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.04***	0.01
Log GNI per capita	-6.27	4.18	-8.20	5.78	-2.07	6.84
Growth of GNP	-0.01	0.10	-0.10	0.10	0.16	0.29
Year	0.17	0.17	0.31	0.24	0.30	0.32
Percent Muslim	-0.09**	0.04	-0.06	0.05	-0.10	0.09
Voting Age	1.26	0.95	0.15	1.38	1.49	1.52
Parliamentary System	12.37***	4.64	23.31**	10.91	7.93	6.95
Electoral System (3)	2.02	1.37	2.94*	1.62	0.66	2.55
Autocracy	9.37***	2.64				
presidential Election	5.89***	1.96	7.24***	2.28	3.15	3.47
Simultaneous Elections			5.71**	2.84	0.37	3.61
Closeness	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.05	0.08	0.06
Number Of Parties	0.36**	0.15	0.26	0.19	0.44*	2.54
Time Since Last Election	1.27***	0.30	1.48***	0.47	1.06**	0.43
First Democratic Election	-4.70**	2.17	-2.89	2.53		
Turnover	-1.79	1.39	-0.44	1.66	-4.08	2.54
Incumbent	-8.47***	1.58	-8.99***	1.93	-9.31*	2.87
Constant	-208.32	355.24	-454.48	496.84	-490.32	643.43
R ²	0.42		0.49		0.4	
Adjusted R ²	0.38		0.42		0.32	
N of cases	315		158		157	
Degrees Of Freedom	19		19		18	

*** = p < 0.01; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.1

In table 4.4 we analyse the different determinants of turnout in autocratic and democratic regimes as compared to the general model and find some interesting results. The primary determinants of turnout in autocratic regimes are population size, population density, the number of parties, the time since the last election and the presence of an incumbent.

models with fixed effects have larger R-squared values than the model without them, and including no socioeconomic effects but only fixed effects explains 56% of the variance as opposed to 42% with socioeconomic effects but no country effects.

Turnout in these regimes is not particularly affected by the electoral system, the type of election, or the type of executive, unlike what is the case in democratic regimes.

In many ways this is unsurprising. Autocratic regimes, as mentioned earlier, manipulate election results and use the apparatus of state to boost turnout and thereby attempt to boost their legitimacy. These factors are not voter centric. Whether the voter perceives his/her vote to make a difference when it comes to the outcome of the election is somewhat inconsequential for two reasons. First, because turnout appears to be driven more by elite action than by voter action, and second because in most cases his/her vote will not affect the outcome of the election. His/her primary goal is to minimise the costs associated with not voting. The role of elites as determinants of turnout is given further credence by the fact that population density is significant in autocratic regimes but not in democratic regimes. As we mentioned earlier, the standard argument is that turnout may be lower in areas of high population density as the bonds of kinship in predominantly urban areas are lower than those in rural areas. We posited that it might be the case that this didn't hold in Africa due to the nature of African settlement patterns in urban areas where ethnic bonds do not break down to the same degree as they might in the West. What this regression suggests is that the other factor at work, ease of mobilisation, might be as or more important. Densely populated populations may be easier to target and control and force to vote than sparsely populated populations.

The number of parties is also significant in autocratic regimes, but not democratic ones. This could be a sign that, *ceteris paribus*, when autocratic regimes open even limited space for competition, participation increases. Those individuals who may have been able to escape from persecution for non-voting before may now attempt to vote in a change of party.

Alternatively, when there is even limited competition within an autocratic regime it may spur the regime to increase its mobilisation efforts with its own supporters as well as to increase the pressure on opposition supporters to vote for it.

Three factors which are not significant but which are worth noting are illiteracy, GNP growth rates and turnover as all three differ quite strongly from the general and democratic models. Growth in GNP is positive for autocratic regimes whereas it is negative for the other two models, suggesting that in autocratic regimes it may be the case that more people vote the better the economy is doing. As individuals cannot hold the government to account when there is poor economic performance, they may respond by simply not voting as that is the only way that they can get their dissatisfaction across. It may also be the case that at times of particularly poor economic performance the fear that voters have of the regime may be outweighed by immediate concerns about food and other basic needs. Illiteracy is also positively correlated with turnout in autocracies. I would suggest that this is because these regimes are better able to manipulate and control the population in countries where there are generally poor educational and literacy rates. Turnover is particularly interesting. We posited earlier that the low turnout associated with turnover may be due to the instability and fear associate with these moments of dramatic change which may cause people to stay away from the polls. The fact that turnover is more strongly negative in the few cases of turnover in autocratic regimes than it is in democratic regimes lends some credence to this argument.

In democratic regimes the first major difference is illiteracy rates. Unlike in autocratic regimes there is a strong, negative and significant relationship between illiteracy and turnout in democratic regimes, similar to that that we would expect to find in the West. The second major difference is the significance of institutional factors. Parliamentary systems have

turnout rates 23 percentage points higher than presidential systems in democracies, but there are no significant differences in autocracies. Proportional representation adds 6 percentage points to turnout over Majoritarian system in democracies, but isn't significant in autocracies. Simultaneous elections also add 6 percentage points, and presidential elections add 7, neither is significant in autocracies.

What these results show is that in democracies, institutions do matter. By varying the electoral and executive systems in democratic Africa significant increases in turnout can be achieved. In democratic Africa, having all the most important elections on the same day with a five year gap in between elections⁵⁸⁴ can boost turnout by up to twenty percentage points over elections held on their own less than a year after the previous election. They also show that there are remarkable similarities in the determinants of turnout in each regime. Whilst there are very different institutional effects on voting, the socioeconomic determinants are broadly similar with the exception of education. This leads a great deal of weight to our decision to use both types of elections. If the data on autocratic elections had been particularly poor we would've expected to have seen more randomness in the socioeconomic results and more extreme differences between the socioeconomic variables in the democratic and non-democratic systems.

Finally, it is of some interest that the closeness measure, whilst not significant, has broadly the same substantive effects in both models, putting some doubt on the idea that the measure may be unduly influenced by the type of regime.

⁵⁸⁴ As South Africa does.

Table 4.5: Presidential and Parliamentary Elections and Referenda.

Variable	<i>General</i> B	s.e.	<i>presidential</i> B	s.e.	<i>Parliamentary</i> β	s.e.	<i>Referenda</i> B	s.e.
Illiteracy Rate	-0.06	0.09	-0.18	0.14	0.05	0.15	-0.07	0.13
Life Expectancy	-0.22	0.19	-0.20	0.30	-0.73**	0.31		
Log of Population	-10.00***	1.92	-7.63***	2.86	-14.31***	3.26	-1.71	4.61
Population Density	0.03**	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.03†	0.02	0.06**	0.03
Log GNI per capita	-6.27	4.18	-7.51	7.01	-0.12	6.57		
Growth of GNP	-0.01	0.10	-0.06	0.14	0.02	0.15		
Year	0.17	0.17	0.37	0.25	0.56*	0.33		
Percent Muslim	-0.09**	0.04	-0.08	0.06	-0.11	0.07		
Voting Age	1.26	0.95	2.62 †	1.58	3.43**	1.72	3.57*	1.78
Parliamentary System	12.37***	4.64			15.16**	6.43		
Electoral System (3)	2.02	1.37	3.02	1.93	-0.75	2.37		
Autocracy	9.37***	2.64	11.73***	4.11	7.03	5.53		
presidential Election	5.89***	1.96						
/Simultaneous Elections							18.83**	8.69
Closeness of Election	0.02	0.04	-0.03	0.05	0.01	0.07	0.25**	0.11
Number Of Parties	0.36**	0.15	0.01	0.27	0.66*	0.36		
Time Since Last Election	1.27***	0.30	1.53**	0.69	2.03***	0.06	0.87*	0.46
First Democratic Election	-4.70**	2.17	-2.14	2.90	-11.40***	4.02		
Turnover	-1.79	1.39	-3.04 †	1.87	1.13	2.77		
Incumbent	-8.47***	1.58	-9.22***	2.36	-11.70***	2.54	-22.43***	5.6
Disproportionality					-0.81***	0.35		
Constant	-208.32	355.24	-623.55	515.70	-995.06	671.88	-7.8	47.71
R ²	0.42		0.48		0.53		0.62	
Adjusted R ²	0.38		0.4		0.43		0.55	
N of cases ⁵⁸⁵	315		130		111		48	
Degrees Of Freedom	19		17		19		8	

*** = p < 0.01; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.1, † = p < 0.110

4.5.3 Type of Election

Finally we need to look at whether there are different determinants of turnout depending on the type of election being held. Most of the literature tends to focus on one type

⁵⁸⁵ The total number of Presidential elections, parliamentary elections and Referenda add up to 289, 26 cases less than in the general model. This is because of the inclusion of the disproportionality variable in the parliamentary election regression. As mentioned earlier, there were a number of cases where only number of seats or proportion of votes gained was available. These cases were randomly distributed and did not bias the sample.

of election, usually parliamentary elections, and this part of the chapter will in part seek to find whether this is necessary in the study of African elections. One of the only articles that attempts to compare the differences in turnout determinants for parliamentary and presidential elections is that of Fornos, Power and Garand⁵⁸⁶ who run separate regressions for presidential and parliamentary elections in their study of turnout in South America, though they find very similar results for both. In both presidential and parliamentary systems, as revealed by Table 4.5, we find that the same relationships between population size, the time since the last election and the presence of an incumbent and turnout exist. The negative effects of a large population are somewhat more substantive in parliamentary systems, but otherwise the coefficients are very similar.

The first major finding is the difference between the effects of an autocratic leader in a parliamentary election as opposed to a presidential election. While we find the posited relationship between turnout and autocracies in presidential elections, indeed the effect is larger than in the general model, there is no significant relationship in parliamentary elections. Why might this be the case? First, as we have already mentioned, autocratic regimes in Africa have tended to concentrate power around the person of the President, decreasing the importance of parliament to ordinary voters, and also to the regime itself. Le Vine⁵⁸⁷ finds that the parliaments in the fourteen francophone African he studies from independence until 1975 do not play an important role in policy-making. Stultz⁵⁸⁸ looks at twelve Parliaments in Anglophone Africa and finds a similar result. These parliaments served mostly as a place to legitimise government policies, recruit and socialise new elites, and mobilise public support for political regimes.⁵⁸⁹ In the context of the single party state Barkan

⁵⁸⁶ Fornos, Power and Garand. 2004.

⁵⁸⁷ Le Vine. 1979.

⁵⁸⁸ Stultz. 1968.

⁵⁸⁹ Mezey M. 1979.

showed that in Kenya the parliaments served as a mechanism to link rural communities to the state and as a feedback mechanism which ensured the long term success of the one party state,⁵⁹⁰ but not as an arena for key decision making. These factors point to the regime focussing its attention on mobilising for presidential elections, and voters not finding parliamentary elections as important when there is an autocratic government. Perhaps autocratic regimes may not be able to boost turnout in elections which no one perceives as important, maybe the elites have no interest in doing so. Second, *turnover*, which isn't significant in the general or parliamentary models is almost statistically significant in presidential elections, and has a greater substantive effect. As presidential transfers of power are likely to be particularly unstable periods in many regimes, this adds credence to our argument that instability may put voters off voting.

What is particularly interesting about parliamentary elections is that many of the posited relationships that weren't found in the general model, or which couldn't be tested, are significant and in the hypothesised direction. The number of parties, for example does increase turnout. Disproportionality lowers turnout, and appears to be more important than the electoral system itself as when this variable is included electoral systems are no longer significant and the sign changes. Voters appear to realise when the system produces outcomes which do not mirror their choices, and they are then less likely to vote. Given the weak powers of many parliaments we would expect this result using the rational choice paradigm as the weakness of the *B* term makes the *P* term even more important. Thus, these features of the party system appear to be particularly important when looking at turnout in Africa's parliamentary elections, even if they aren't when it comes to presidential elections.

⁵⁹⁰ Barkan. 1979.

The final elections to be looked at are referenda. These elections have, perhaps surprisingly, generally seen higher levels of turnout than other elections. Of the elections sampled the average turnout rate for referenda was 74% as opposed to 69% in parliamentary elections and 71% in presidential elections. This may be because these elections are often critical elections that are held to decide whether to change to a democratic system, such as in Uganda in 2000 and 2005, or to become a one party state such as in Ghana in 1964. Both voters and elites have a particular interest in mobilising voters for these elections. Moreover, opposition groups are often able to mobilise more effectively when it is against a referendum question rather than against the government per se, as was the case in the Zimbabwean referendum in 2000 which Robert Mugabe lost. The government is also more likely to accept the results of these elections as even if they lose, their actual hold on power is not at stake. Hence, Robert Mugabe was able to accept the result of the 2000 Referendum as his position was not affected.⁵⁹¹

Due to the small number of cases the number of variables that could be used was somewhat constrained, and only the most pertinent could be used. The results indicate that both the presence of the incumbent and the voting age are important. In the case of the latter variable, the particular importance of the voting age may suggest that this type of election requires voters to be especially integrated into their communities and "mature" in order to recognise the importance of these elections. This may be why it is also significant in parliamentary elections. *Time since Last Election* and *Simultaneous election* suggest that Referenda are somewhat dependent on other elections when it comes to turnout. Combining a referendum with another election boosts turnout by 19 percentage points, and every year that passes without an election increases the turnout in a subsequent referendum by 0.87

⁵⁹¹ Thompson M and Kuntz P. 2006: 125.

percentage points. Finally, *Closeness* appears to have the opposite effect to that which we would expect, close referenda have lower turnout, which is not the case in parliamentary or presidential elections. This may be because non-competitive referenda, such as those for the legitimisation of the one party state are precisely those which governments will seek to maximise turnout in. Doubt is cast on this theory when we control for autocracy⁵⁹² as closeness is still significant and in the same direction.

4.6 Conclusions

This chapter has made a major advance in the study of African elections with the most comprehensive data and analysis available to date. It has shown that while there are some reasons to believe that the standard rational choice model does have some validity in the African context at a cross-national level, the determinants of turnout in Africa differ from those in Europe in a number of key ways. Turnout in African elections, whether democratic or autocratic, is affected by fear. The role of authoritarian incumbents in manipulating turnout for their own ends, as well as the instability which occurs at times of turnover or regime change, such as in first democratic elections, in minimising turnout are features not prevalent in the literature on developed nations. Religion too is an under researched variable which appears to be important in Africa. Crucially, institutions do matter, especially in parliamentary regimes, a major hypothesis that has been confirmed.

If we go back to the rational choice equation, $R = PB - C$, we see that there are some aspects of the model which appear to validate the argument that the model holds whatever the context. P , the probability that one's vote is decisive, is one of the more difficult aspects to validate with our data. This aspect of the model is usually measured by the *Closeness*

⁵⁹² Regression not shown.

variable, and the results above show that it is only significant when the fixed effects of every country are controlled for with socio-economic controls and in referenda. This doesn't appear to be linked particularly well with the election being democratic as the variable is insignificant and in the wrong direction in these elections. In any election where the B term is high, such as presidential elections which might be perceived as more important, or in elections where any authoritarian elements are present, closeness appears to take a back seat. That said, the measure being used is not only problematic due to it only measuring national level closeness which is more theoretically justifiable in presidential elections (though interestingly it is insignificant here), but also because it measures actual rather than perceived closeness. This latter point is a problem with almost all national level studies of closeness and we don't have any data on this in Africa. The next chapter returns by looking at closeness at a constituency level in a small subset of countries, but I am only able to properly measure *perceptions* of closeness in the Durban case study.

Three other variables may reveal more information about the P term. First, in parliamentary systems the probability of one's vote making a difference is higher as there is a greater chance of the party that you support gaining some representation in what is not a zero sum game and this chapter has found that parliamentary systems had higher rates of turnout. Second, in countries with low populations one vote is worth more than in a country with a very large population, and there is a very strong relationship between low populations and high turnout observed no matter what the context in Africa.

Finally, electoral systems which make more votes count, such as proportional systems only have higher rates of turnout in parliamentary elections in Africa. Two component aspects of the electoral system are generally important however. The more parties there are in the

election the higher the turnout. This leads us to believe that it may be the greater choice that PR systems provide, rather than the electoral system's role in making every vote count which is important. Moreover, in parliamentary elections, the key variable appears to be the degree of disproportionality which is important, leading us towards the idea that in parliamentary elections voters want their vote to be reflected in the eventual results, as opposed to wanting their vote to be decisive.

When it comes to the *B*, or Benefit, term some support for its continued inclusion in a model of turnout for Africa is found. The elections which generally matter most in the African context are undoubtedly presidential elections as this is where most power lies. In almost all the regressions run, presidential elections do indeed have higher rates of turnout. Somewhat surprisingly though, the highest turnout levels are recorded in referenda. The importance of these elections as gateways to systemic change may increase their importance in Africa and account for the higher turnout levels.

Two variables that are significant in particular contexts and are related to the *B* term are life expectancy and GNI per capita. GNI per capita is generally inversely related to turnout, indicating that individuals have more to gain from elections where their living conditions are particularly poor, but is only significant in parliamentary elections. Similarly, life expectancy is inversely correlated with turnout, but is only significant in parliamentary elections.

Costs are hard to measure at a national level, but low population densities, which lower the costs of getting to the polls are indeed significant boosters of turnout throughout the chapter. Costs of acquiring information are reduced by literacy, and in democratic and

presidential elections as well as in referenda low literacy lowers turnout. In more autocratic elections there is an inverse relationship, perhaps due to the fact that illiterate people are easier to mobilise as they are cheaper to bribe and easier to intimidate. In addition, in referenda, simultaneous elections significantly boost turnout. The chapter has also shown that the longer the time period between elections, the higher the turnout, indicating that voters may measure costs across elections.

Thus there is some evidence that all three of these factors are important, though little to suggest that the *P* and *B* terms work in conjunction with one another. Moreover, these factors are not the only or the largest effects, and alternate explanations may well be at play.

The importance of mobilisation may be indicated by the importance of the population and population density variables, both of which can be explained by their relationship to the costs of getting out the vote. This is a factor that cannot really be proved with the available data as there is isn't reliable data on trade union membership or party membership⁵⁹³ across the entire continent over the time period being considered and we shall return to it in later chapters when we look at areas where better data are available.

Finally we find that fear can be an important determinant of turnout. Throughout the study, the presence of the incumbent significantly decreases turnout, whether in autocratic or democratic elections. Incumbents have much greater scope to manipulate turnout. Autocratic elections in general have higher turnout figures, and it is argued that this may not simply be due to ballot stuffing, but may also because of their superior coercive abilities. This is partially supported by the fact that this variable is insignificant in parliamentary elections

⁵⁹³ Gray M and Caul M. 2000. 'Declining Voter Turnout in Advanced Industrial Democracies 1950 to 1997: The Effects of Declining Group Mobilisation', *Comparative Political Studies* 33: 1091-1122.

where there is just as much scope for ballot stuffing, but where the reduced importance of these elections for authoritarian rulers diminishes the need to coerce turnout for legitimisation or guaranteed control. In the next section we look at this in more detail, providing an empirical justification for a theoretical account of turnout in Africa which is significantly affected by regime type, even when we only look at democratic regimes. Times of particular instability can also lower turnout. In first democratic elections, which are particularly associated with instability, turnout is lower no matter what the type of election. Elections where there is a change in government also have much lower turnout rates.

Thus the highest rates of turnout occur in elections to the Presidency in small, densely populated countries where a large number of parties are running against in a country where an election has not taken place for some time. It appears from this that we need to pay more attention to the driving role of elites and their incentives when looking at turnout in Africa, rather than focussing purely on the socio-economic and institutional contexts of various countries. In the next two chapters we will start to look in more detail at the actual calculus of voting of the African voter, situating individual decisions obtained from the Afrobarometer survey within the sets of national level variables that we have uncovered in this chapter.

Part C

Chapter 5: Individual Level Turnout across Africa

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter focussed on determining the major institutional effects on national level turnout in the broadest possible cross section of elections on the continent. This chapter builds on chapter four by moving to a study of the individual level determinants of voting in a subset of more democratic African countries. It uses socioeconomic, mobilisation and attitudinal models of turnout within a framework of rational choice theories generated in the West which will be further contextualised in chapter six where the Africa-specific and generational variables referred to in chapter three will be tested.

All of the data used in the next two chapters are derived from the Afrobarometer surveys undertaken in the last two rounds between 2005 and 2008. Round three covers eighteen countries (Benin, Botswana, Cape Verde, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe) of which seventeen are used, and available round four data omits Zambia and Zimbabwe but includes Burkina Faso and Liberia. The Afrobarometer survey is the most comprehensive and advanced data collection project ever conducted in Africa. The survey is conducted by a partnership involving the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA), the Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD-Ghana), and the Department of Political Science at Michigan state University. Surveys take place in the preferred language of the interviewee, face to face, and currently include most African democracies. The data are reliable and generalisable,⁵⁹⁴ and had been cited in 216 separate articles as of October 2006.⁵⁹⁵ As a single dataset was not available, the data from both rounds and the individual

⁵⁹⁴ Bratton, Mattes, and Gyimah-Boadi. 2004.

⁵⁹⁵ Michigan state University. 2006. "Bibliography of Scholarly & Scientific Citations to the Afrobarometer".

country surveys was recoded and collated to form the dataset used. Round one (conducted in twelve countries in 1999-2001) is not included as the battery of questions used is, as a whole, different enough from those used in latter rounds that they are not strictly comparable. Round two (sixteen countries, 2002-2004) is not included as voters were not asked whether or not they had voted.

As a result of the problems with using data from Rounds one and two it is not possible at this stage to do any advanced time series analysis of individual turnout in Africa's democracies. Indeed, the fact that most of the countries that are involved in this chapter have only had two or three election cycles over the course of the Afrobarometer survey cycle means that even if they had been available it would only be possible to make very simplistic findings with limited statistical validity. As such, this chapter is necessarily a cross sectional study of voting. It tests three ways of thinking about voters.

First, voters can be seen as being essentially the same in all democracies.⁵⁹⁶ A poor, rural citizen in Botswana will essentially face the same barriers (or perhaps incentives) to voting as a poor, rural citizen in South Africa or Nigeria. This is the central assumption that rests behind the approach taken by Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi in their seminal work on African attitudes towards democracy.⁵⁹⁷ Throughout the book, including in their brief study of turnout, they make use of pooled data from Round one of the Afrobarometer. This method makes no attempt to either control for fixed country effects or to look at the national level variables that shape turnout, but it does have some virtues in terms of ease of use and interpretation which is important when one is engaging in a project of discovery where little work has been done before, and also in that it can reveal important factors that all voters

⁵⁹⁶ Przeworski A and Teune H. 1970. *The Logic of Comparative Social Enquiry*.

⁵⁹⁷ Bratton, M, Mattes, R and Gyimah-Boadi. 2005. *Public Opinion, Democracy and Market Reform in Africa*.

share. In this pooled analysis of the Round three and four surveys is used to help build a general model of turnout.

This type of model is limited by the fact that it can mask national-level differences. Different countries may be different in ways that current data or statistical tools cannot yet reveal. Using a fixed effects model based on the data in the previous chapter⁵⁹⁸ Benin and South Africa (both countries included in the Afrobarometer) had significantly higher rates of turnout than other counties and Cape Verde (included in the Afrobarometer) had a significantly lower rate of turnout after a full battery of socioeconomic and institutional controls was included, indicating that there was something about the turnout in these countries that the model was unable to explain.

In his study of turnout in Africa using Round one data, Daniel Young⁵⁹⁹ does make use of a fixed effects model. He finds that Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa and Zambia are all sources of unexplained variation in his model. This is an important finding, and as noted in the previous chapter and above, there is sometimes variation at a national level that we cannot explain. It is, however, not particularly helpful or interesting when trying to explain individual level decisions to vote. To say simply that South Africans or Malawians are more likely to vote than Namibians or Ugandans seems to miss the point of the exercise. These are findings that could be ascertained with far less effort by simply looking at national level voting figures, and they say nothing about why South Africans or Malawians are more likely to vote.

⁵⁹⁸ See Footnote 583 for details of why this was done, and the appendix for the model itself.

⁵⁹⁹ Young D. 2004. "A Closeup of Voter Turnout: Survey Data From Africa" Paper presented at the annual meeting of the The Midwest Political Science Association, Palmer House Hilton, Chicago, Illinois, Apr 15, 2004

What is needed is to recognise national level variation whilst at the same time seeking to explain it. Chapter four went part of the way there; this chapter goes further and builds significantly on the work of Young and Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi by making use of multilevel models of participation. Institutional level variation was shown to be important in chapter four, in part because national level institutions shape the nature of voluntary organisations and the opportunity structure for participation.⁶⁰⁰ These aren't factors that can be left out of the analysis. They interact with and shape individual decisions and actions. As such it is important to disaggregate analysis of voter participation by nation,⁶⁰¹ whilst still testing which institutions are responsible for national differences. Multi-level modelling models differences in voting behaviour according to the national context, correcting for dependence of observations within countries (intra-class correlation) and adjusting to both within and between parameter estimates for the clustered nature of the data.⁶⁰²

Finally, it is helpful to think of voters as not only being the product of the country that they live in, but also to think of them as being affected by the character of the election that they are taking part in. Students of African politics have known this for decades, perhaps better than Western students of politics. No Kenya specialist, for example, would assume that a voter in the 2007 Kenyan elections would be facing the same constraints as a voter in the 2002 elections, even though both elections took place in the same country under broadly the same electoral rules and institutions. The individual character of elections does affect the way that voters behave. This does not, however, mean that the big picture should be ignored. Instead, by looking for variation at this level across countries the way that individuals approach the act of voting can be better understood. It can only go so far however and relies on having data at both levels of analysis for all countries. In one crucial area, the level of

⁶⁰⁰ Verba, Sidney, Norman Nie and Jae-on Kim 1978. *Participation and Political Equality*.

⁶⁰¹ Kittilson. 2005. "Rising Political Inequality in Established Democracies: Mobilization, Socio-Economic Status and Voter Turnout"

⁶⁰² Raudenbush S and Bryk A. 2002. *Hierarchical Linear Models: Applications and Data Analysis Methods*.

closeness at constituency level, this was not a possibility and so a case study approach had to be used. Using the cases of Botswana and Lesotho this chapter is able to test the importance of actual closeness at a constituency level with a multilevel model that has constituencies, not countries, as the level two unit of analysis.

Throughout the next two chapters it is important to remember that, as mentioned in chapter three, reported turnout in the Afrobarometer survey is very high. With a mean turnout of over 85%, a two or three percentage point change in a variable can be very substantive and in fact compares well with the US studies mentioned in chapter 2 which face similarly high rates of reported vote.

5.2 Operationalisation

5.2.1 The Dependant Variable

The dependant variable in each case will be whether the respondent said that they voted or not. Only registered voters were considered because the question of total alienation from the system, which is signified by non-registration, is a different one to that of a voter who technically can vote but either chooses not to or is unable to,⁶⁰³ and one with different determinants.⁶⁰⁴ This group of citizens are an important group that will revisit at the end of this thesis, but crucially these individuals *cannot* vote. They are not targeted by election agents during election campaigns, they cannot be deterred by events on the day or change their minds about voting as the election nears. By not registering they opt out of the voting process, whether by choice or circumstance. This chapter looks at people who are sufficiently engaged that they have devoted sometimes substantial effort to registering, but who still do not vote on Election Day. There are indeed structural obstacles to registration, and amongst

⁶⁰³ Ferejohn J and Fiorina M. 1975.

⁶⁰⁴ Timpane R.1998. "Structure, Behaviour and Voter Turnout in the United States" in *American Political Science Review* 92(1)145-58.

currently registered voters in the Durban case study⁶⁰⁵ one of the major reasons that those contacted who hadn't voted before said that they hadn't was because they had not registered. As the variable is dichotomous, logistic regression analysis will be used. Respondents who indicated that they could not remember were excluded from the analysis.

5.2.2 Socioeconomic Determinants of Turnout

Age measures the respondents age at the time of the election. For now a linear relationship with turnout is assumed, but this will be revisited in chapter six. *Gender* is coded as 0 when male and 1 when female, and initial analysis shows that men are 4 percentage points more likely to vote than women. This is in line with our earlier theoretical discussion which highlighted that women have often reacted to their marginalisation from the state by withdrawing from participation in it.⁶⁰⁶ In countries like Lesotho politics is often seen as male sphere and culture is sometimes seen as being used as an excuse to sideline women.⁶⁰⁷ Throughout Africa women have also been seen to be more involved in informal than formal politics, and are most involved in politics which affects them directly, such as at a community level.⁶⁰⁸

Measuring income or wealth is frequently found to be a key measure of the propensity to vote in the West⁶⁰⁹ but due to the high reliance on non-cash income in Africa is a problematic variable to use here. When examining income and wealth it is not the effects of having money per se that are being assessed, but rather whether wealth, or the lack thereof, structures political participation either by creating structural barriers to participation or, as has been found in a number of developing countries, makes people more susceptible to

⁶⁰⁵ See chapter seven.

⁶⁰⁶ Parpart J. "Women and the state" in Rothchild D and Chazan N. 1988. *The Precarious Balance: state and Society in Africa*.

⁶⁰⁷ Kabemba C. 2003: 31-32.

⁶⁰⁸ Baker B. 2000. *Escape from Domination in Africa*.: 65-67.

⁶⁰⁹ Kittilson. 2005.

integration into clientelistic networks.⁶¹⁰ To overcome this problem, and to provide a measure of poverty, the *Lived Poverty Index* a measure of consumption, or the lack thereof, developed for the Afrobarometer is used.⁶¹¹ This variable is a direct (rather than indirect) measure of people's ability to secure the basic necessities of life.⁶¹² For the purposes of this study the conceptualisation used by Bratton in his 2005 paper "Poor people and democratic citizenship in Africa" is used. This is a more complete measure than that used in the 2003 conceptualisation and is constructed from the questions on access to food, clean water, health care, cooking fuel and cash income. A variable with five values ranging from 0 to 4 where the "well-to-do" who, during the year prior to the survey, never went without food, clean water, health care, cooking fuel, or cash income are coded as 0 is used. The "occasionally poor" (coded as 1) are those who encountered at least one unmet basic need in the last twelve months. The "poor" (coded 2) are those who confronted several shortages of certain basic needs during the same period, the "very poor" (3) are those who suffer regular and persistent shortages across many basic needs, and the "destitute" (4) are those who "always" lack the basic requirements for a decent life.⁶¹³

Rural codes rural respondents as 1 and urban as 0, whilst *Employed* codes the formally employed as 1 and the unemployed as 0. They are expected to be significant and negative and positive respectively. In a study of the 1992 elections in Mali the only significant differences in turnout related to the urban-rural divide with the turnout in the 19 urban communes significantly higher than the 36 rural communes.⁶¹⁴ In India on the other

⁶¹⁰ Claire B  nit-Gbaffou and St  phanie Tawa Lama-Rewal, "Urban governance, participation and the voice of the poor in Indian and South African cities: a research agenda for comparison", forthcoming in *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 2008; Christine Fauvelle-Aymar. 2008. "Electoral turnout in Johannesburg: socio-economic and political determinants." *Transformation* 66/67, 142-167; Lodge. 2003.

⁶¹¹ Afrobarometer. 2003. "Poverty, Poverty Measurement, and Democracy in Southern Africa" *Afrobarometer Briefing Paper No. 4*; Bratton, M, Mattes, R and Gyimah-Boadi. 2005. *Public Opinion, Democracy and Market Reform in Africa*..

⁶¹² Mattes R, Bratton M and Derek Davids Y. 2003. "Poverty, Survival and Democracy in Southern Africa" *Afrobarometer Paper No. 23*

⁶¹³ Bratton M. 2005. "Poor People and Democratic Citizenship in Africa".

⁶¹⁴ Vengroff R and Kone M. 1995. "Mali: democracy and political change" in Wiseman J (ed). *Democracy and Political Change in Sub-Saharan Africa*..

hand, more urbanised areas have lower rates of turnout.⁶¹⁵ It is hypothesised that the structural obstacles to voting are greater in rural areas, but it might equally be the case that the clientelistic networks in rural areas are stronger, fostering higher turnout.

For *Education* four dummy variables for those with no education, only a primary school education, only a secondary education or a tertiary education are used. Whilst the most educated vote at 18 percentage points more than the least in Finland, 21 in the Netherlands, 26 in Switzerland, 33 in the USA and 2-3 points more in the UK, Portugal and Spain,⁶¹⁶ and chapter 4 showed a clear relationship between higher rates of literacy and turnout at a national level, inspection of the relationship between education and turnout does not seem to follow this pattern in the survey data. Inspection of the data suggests that rather than a clear positive or negative linear relationship between education and turnout, a seemingly random pattern is present.

The final SES variable used is *Head of Household*. This is not a variable generally used in the turnout literature, but there are strong theoretical reasons for thinking that it might be significant. Focussing on gender can obscure more culturally salient axes of difference, in particular seniority.⁶¹⁷ In addition, a woman who is the head of a household may be freed from some of the limits imposed by institutions such as customary marriage,⁶¹⁸ as well as from the domestic constraints of patriarchal dominance. This variable is important the effects of being a woman are to be disaggregated from the constraints of being in a male dominated household.

⁶¹⁵ Diwakar R. 2008. "Voter Turnout in the Indian states: An empirical analysis". *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Political Parties* 18 (1):75-100.

⁶¹⁶ Kittilson. 2005.

⁶¹⁷ Cornwall A. 2005. *Readings in Gender in Africa*.

⁶¹⁸ Geisler G. 2000. "Parliament is another terrain of struggle": women, men and politics in South Africa', *Journal of Modern African Studies* 38 (4).

5.2.3 Access to Information and Knowledge

Political Knowledge was constructed from the questions on whether respondents could correctly identify their MP and a Senior Cabinet Member and ranges from 0 to 2 where 2 is being able to identify both. *Broadcast News* is an 8 point scale which measures consumption of television and radio news where 0 is a respondent who never listens to the radio news or watches the television news and 1 is one who does both daily. *Newspaper News* is a four point scale from 0 to 1 where 0 is a respondent who never reads the newspaper and 1 is one who does so daily. All of these variables are expected to be significant. In a study of 60 developing countries between 1980 and 2005 Verge finds that media access and freedom fosters turnout. He finds that radio access is particularly important but that when government controls the press citizens are less likely to express their views at the polls.⁶¹⁹ A comprehensive measure of government ownership of the media was unavailable, but in the sample radio and television was still overwhelmingly state owned whilst newspapers were more likely to be privately owned.⁶²⁰ As such separate broadcast and newspaper media access are studied separately.

5.2.4 Mobilisation

The importance of group mobilisation in fostering turnout has been established since early work conducted in the United States.⁶²¹ Being a member of a group connects citizens to the democratic process⁶²² and can make it rational for particular segments of the electorate to vote even when the cost-benefit incentive structure seems to indicate that they should

⁶¹⁹ Vergne C. 2009. "Turnout in Developing Countries: The effect of Mass Media on National Voter Participation." CERDI No. 200929.

⁶²⁰ Fardon R and Furniss G. 2000. *African Broadcast Cultures: Radio in Transition*; Djankov S, Nenova T, McLiesh C and Shleifer A. 2003. "Who Owns the Media?" *Journal of Law and Economics*, Vol. 46 No. 2: 341-381

⁶²¹ Rosenstone, Steven J. and John Mark Hansen. 1993. *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America*; Burnham W. 1965. "The changing shape of the American political universe" *American Political Science Review* No. 59 Vol. 1:7-28; Burnham W. 1987. "The turnout problem" in Reichley J (ed). *Elections American Style*.

⁶²² Gray M and Kittilson M. 2005. "Feeling Left Out by the Left? Left Party Economic Performance and Voter Turnout in Comparative Perspective, 1950 to 2000".

abstain.⁶²³ Political party membership in particular is often found to be a significant predictor of vote.⁶²⁴ A question on party membership wasn't available, but can a dichotomous variable *Close to Political Party* measuring whether respondents felt close to a particular party was employed. Active membership of a religion is a 4 point scale from 0 to 1, *Member Religion*, where 0 is not being a member of a religion, 0.33 is an inactive member, 0.66 an active member and 1 the holder of a leadership position in a religion.

One of the most important theoretical drivers of group turnout, Trade Unions, is not asked about in round four of the Afrobarometer. In the West a great deal of evidence has been found to suggest that there is a strong link between declining union density and falling voter turnout in Industrialised democracies,⁶²⁵ though Franklin finds little evidence to support this.⁶²⁶ Whilst the effects of trade union membership cannot be directly measured, the *Politically Active* variable looks at the more general signs of being mobilised. This is a 12 point composite measure, ranging from 0 to 1, constructed to measure the frequency that respondents joined others to raise an issue or attended demonstrations and community meetings. Those who said that they would never attend any of the three were coded as 0 whilst those who often attended all three were coded as 1. Two other measures related to mobilisation were included *Contact Politician* is a 6 point composite variable including responses to the questions on whether an MP or Councillor had been contacted. Responses were coded as 0 when neither had ever been contacted and 1 when both had been frequently contacted. *Contact Government Official* measures whether a government official had been contacted and ranges from 0 to 1 on a 4 point scale where 0 is never and 1 is often. "Don't Know" responses were coded as 0 for both of the Contact variables.

⁶²³ Uhlnaer, C. 1989. "Rational Turnout: The Neglected Role of Groups" *American Journal of Political Science*. Vol. 33:390-422

⁶²⁴ Gray M and Caul M. 2004.

⁶²⁵ Gray M and Caul M. 2004; Racliff B and Davis R. 2000. "Labour Organization and Electoral Participation in Industrial Democracies" *American Journal of Political Science* Vol. 44 No. 1:132-41; Norris, P. 2002. *Democratic Phoenix: Reinventing Political Activism*.

⁶²⁶ Franklin, M. 2004.

5.2.5 Political Attitudes and Experiences

Interest in Politics is a 5 point scale from 0 to 1 where 0 is none and 1 is a great deal. Many studies have found that electoral fraud and violence lowers turnout⁶²⁷ and *Election Free and Fair* measures respondents perceptions of the fairness of the election. This variable ranges on a 5 point scale from 0 to 1 where 0 is that the election was seen as entirely unfree and 1 entirely free and fair. For this and all other variables based on responses to questions of opinion "Don't Know" responses were coded the middle value of the scale. *Prefer Alternatives* is a 12 point scale from 0 to 1 combining responses to the questions on whether one party states, one man rule and military rule were preferable to democracy. If all three were preferred the variable was coded 0, if none were preferred it was coded 1. A negative relationship with turnout is expected. Finally *How Often Attacked* is a 5 point variable where 0 is never attacked and 1 is always attacked. "Don't Knows" were coded as 0 as if the respondent could not remember being attacked or not it is unlikely that this had much impact on voting. Two alternatives are possible. First, that being frequently threatened is what drives turnout, second that violence and intimidation put Africans off electoral participation.

5.2.6 Institutional Setting

For the variables initially used to study institutions at the second level the operationalisation and data from chapter two are used apart from *Status: PR + CL* (as used by Massicotte et al)⁶²⁸ which is a measure constructed using Freedom House scores which could not be used in Chapter 4 as they weren't available for all the data points.⁶²⁹ All of the cases in the sample are either coded as 1 "Partly Free" or 2 "Free". There are no cases of "Un-free"

⁶²⁷ Vergne C. 2009

⁶²⁸ Massicotte L, Blais A, Yoshinaka A. 2004. *Establishing the Rules of the Game: Election Laws in Democracies*.

⁶²⁹ Once again, all models were run using the conceptualisation of democracy used in chapter two and no significant differences were found apart from in the sections that rely on this alternate conceptualisation of democracy, ie. Regime type in the next chapter.

elections. In terms of *Electoral System* the sample has ten majoritarian systems, five Proportional systems and four Mixed systems.

5.3 Pooled Results

5.4.1 Rural and Primary School Educated: The typical African Voter

African voters are, as hypothesised, very different to Western voters in a number of key respects. Whereas educated urban Western citizens are significantly more likely to vote than their uneducated rural counterparts,⁶³⁰ the opposite holds amongst the African citizens polled by the Afrobarometer. Table 5.1 shows that in the basic model rural citizens are two percentage points more likely to vote than urban citizens,⁶³¹ a substantive finding when mean turnout is over 85%. This variable does become insignificant when further controls are added in the pooled analysis, but is significant in the multilevel analysis undertaken later on in the chapter. There is evidence to suggest that this pattern of higher rural turnout is not as anomalous as one might think. Baker⁶³² finds that the urban proletariat in Africa show the least interest in voting. In Zimbabwe the lowest turnout is often recorded in Harare, Bulawayo and Mutare. Other examples of very low turnout African cities include Libreville, Nouakchott and Abidjan. Peasant behaviour may have been characterised by being "inwardly orientated" during the pre-capitalist era but after independence rural people began to recognise the gains to be had from the state.⁶³³ Lacking basic resources encouraged them to

⁶³⁰ Blais A, Gidengil E, Nevitte N & Nadeau R.2002; Verba S, and Nie N.1972; Verba S, Schlozman K, & Brady H.1995; Miller W, and Shanks M.1996; Berelson, B et al.1954:336-7; Van Egnond M, De Graaf N & Van Der Eijk C.1998.

⁶³¹ For an unemployed, 26 year old, female voter of average means with only a Primary school education.

⁶³² Baker B. 2000: 53

⁶³³ Migdal J. 1974. *Peasants, Politics and Revolution: Pressures towards Political and Social Change in the Third World*.

Table 5.1: Pooled Analysis

Variable	<i>Model 1: Socioeconomic</i>		<i>Model 2: Head of Household</i>		<i>Model 3: Information and Knowledge</i>		<i>Model 4: Mobilisation and Experiences</i>			
	Odds	B (s.e.)	Odds	B (s.e.)	Odds	B (s.e.)	Odds	B (s.e.)	Odds	B (s.e.)
	Ratio		Ratio		Ratio		Ratio		Ratio	
Age	1.02	0.03*** (0.00)	1.02	0.02*** (0.00)	1.02	0.02*** (0.00)	1.01	0.02*** (0.00)	1.02	0.02*** (0.00)
Gender	0.78	-0.24*** (0.03)	0.84	-0.17*** (0.04)	0.92	-0.09** (0.04)	1.00	-0.001 (0.03)	1.01	0.01 (0.04)
Lived Poverty Index	0.99	-0.01 (0.02)	0.98	-0.02 (0.02)	1.01	0.01 (0.02)	0.97	-0.03 (0.02)	1.02	0.02 (0.02)
Rural	1.16	0.15*** (0.04)	1.15	0.14*** (0.04)	1.19	0.18*** (0.04)	1.04	0.04 (0.04)	1.06	0.06 (0.04)
Education : Tertiary	0.80	-0.23*** (0.05)	0.80	-0.22*** (0.05)	0.71	-0.34*** (0.06)	0.75	-0.30*** (0.06)	0.80	-0.22*** (0.06)
Education : Primary	1.19	0.17*** (0.04)	1.17	0.16*** (0.04)	1.35	0.30*** (0.04)	1.32	0.28*** (0.05)	1.22	0.20*** (0.05)
Education: None	0.99	-0.01 (0.05)	1.01	0.01 (0.05)	1.35	0.30*** (0.05)	1.44	0.37*** (0.05)	1.31	0.27*** (0.05)
Employed	1.21	0.19*** (0.04)	1.19	0.17*** (0.04)	1.13	0.13*** (0.04)	1.14	0.13*** (0.04)	1.15	0.14*** (0.04)
Head Of Household			1.27	0.24*** (0.04)	1.25	0.23*** (0.04)	1.19	0.17*** (0.04)	1.20	0.18*** (0.04)
Political Knowledge					1.52	0.42*** (0.03)	1.36	0.31*** (0.03)	1.33	0.29*** (0.03)
Broadcast News					1.57	0.45*** (0.07)	1.50	0.39*** (0.07)	1.47	0.39*** (0.07)
Newspaper News					1.04	0.04 (0.06)	0.94	-0.06 (0.06)	0.93	-0.07 (0.06)
Close To Political Party							1.98	0.68*** (0.03)	1.85	0.61*** (0.04)
Member Religion							1.40	0.33*** (0.06)	1.50	0.41*** (0.06)
Politically Active							2.70	0.99*** (0.08)	2.09	0.74*** (0.08)
Contact Politician							1.94	0.66*** (0.11)	1.92	0.65*** (0.11)
Contact Government Official							0.61	-0.50*** (0.10)	0.65	-0.44*** (0.10)
Interest In Politics									1.38	0.32*** (0.05)
Election Free and Fair									3.26	1.18*** (0.06)
Prefer Alternatives									0.80	-0.22** (0.10)
How Often Attacked									0.59	-0.53*** (0.10)
Constant		0.96*** (0.06)		0.96*** (0.06)		0.23*** (0.09)		-0.37*** (0.09)		-1.11*** (0.11)
Pseudo R ²		0.0250		0.0265		0.0408		0.0709		0.0918
LR chi2		651.14		690.35		1064.1		1847.81		2387.91
N of cases		34393		34393		34375		34352		34302
Degrees Of Freedom Used		8		9		12		20		24

*** = p < 0.01; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.1 Reference Category for Education is Education: Secondary

engage in patron-client relationships, and generated high rates of participation, such as in Ghana under Rawlings. Rural voters also showed themselves to have relatively high levels of

sophistication when assessing incumbent performance during the one party state era such as in Tanzania in 1965⁶³⁴ and Kenya in the 1970s.⁶³⁵

That said, given the finding in chapter four that countries with higher population densities have higher turnout it may at first appear surprising that rural voters vote at higher rates than their urban counterparts. Two factors are worth noting that make this less surprising. The first is that in Chapter four that the higher density, higher turnout relationship was most pronounced and significant in more autocratic regimes where a culture of targeted fear and intimidation was needed to increase the dangers of non-voting. In those circumstances high density populations were easier to monitor and punish if necessary. In this chapter the sample is formed mostly of countries on the less autocratic end of the democratic continuum where that hypothesised relationship is less likely to hold. Secondly, and just as importantly, the reader will note that whereas the last chapter looked at population density as a whole, in this chapter urban and rural voters are disaggregated. As such, both findings (that lower population density leads to lower turnout and that rural voters are more likely to vote) hold up to scrutiny when country level effects are controlled for.

This is an important finding for another reason. Earlier in this thesis it was noted that Hoffman-Marinet had argued that population density was a proxy for the difference between rural and urban constituencies.⁶³⁶ In fact it seems that these are two different variables. The increased costs of voting due to having to travel long distances to get to polling stations in dispersed areas⁶³⁷ or the difficulties in targeting voters across large expanses of territory are a

⁶³⁴ Hyden G. 1980. *Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania: Underdevelopment and an Uncaptured Peasantry*.

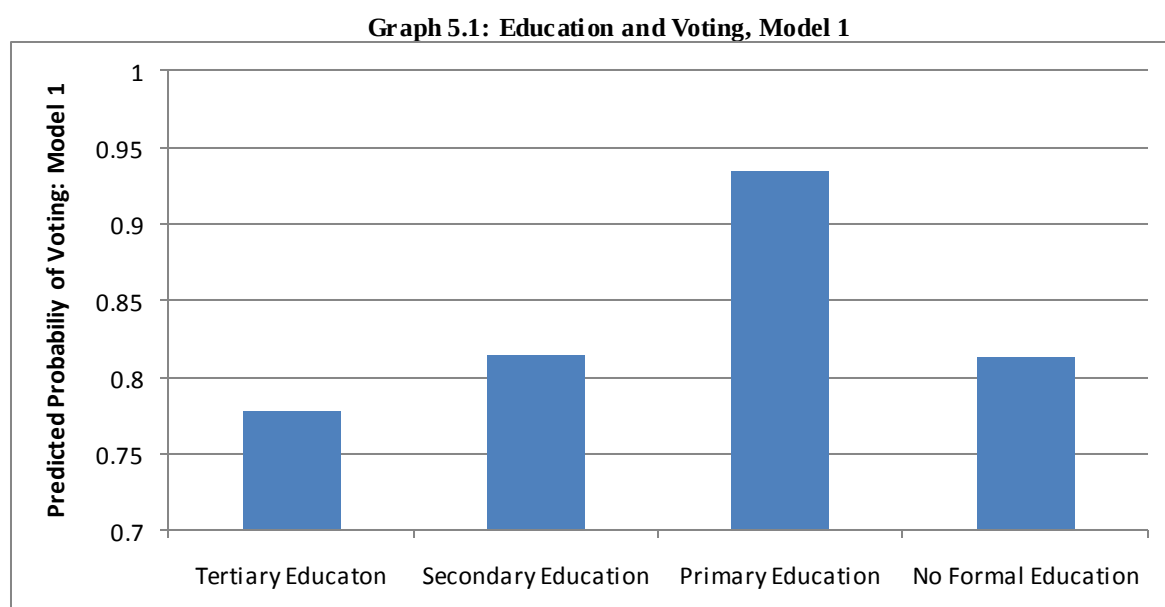
⁶³⁵ Barkan J and Okumu J. 1978. " 'Semi-Competitive' Elections, Clientelism and Political Recruitment in a No-Party state: the Kenyan Experience" in Hemet G, Rose R and Rouquie (eds). *Elections Without Choice*.

⁶³⁶ Hoffman-Marinet, 1994. "Voter Turnout in French Municipal Elections" In Lopez-Nieto L (ed) *Local Elections in Europe*. Institut de ciències polítiques I socials, Barcelona 13-42.

⁶³⁷ Tattersall, N. 29 April 2007. "Malians vote for President". Reuters, Available at <http://sociolingomali.wordpress.com/2007/04/29/malians-vote-for-president-toure-favourite/>

separate factor to the stronger “interpersonal bonds, primary social structures and consensus norms,”⁶³⁸ and clientelistic politics and threats of sanction as well as offers of rewards that can characterise rural areas in Africa.⁶³⁹

Just as interesting is the finding on education. In Model 1 the usual correlation between increased education and higher turnout does not hold. Graph 5.1 shows the predicted probabilities of voting for people with different levels of education. Individuals with a tertiary education have the lowest predicted probability of voting (77%), those with a primary education have the highest (93%) and those with no education or a secondary education have a similar probability of voting at around 81%.⁶⁴⁰ In Models 3 to 6 a more linear relationship between education and voting emerges when variables such as political knowledge and interest are introduced, but just as was the case with the finding about rural voters, when I conduct multilevel analysis later on in the chapter the higher predicted probabilities of voting amongst primary school educated citizens re-establishes itself.



⁶³⁸ Hoffman-Marinet, 1994. “Voter Turnout in French Municipal Elections”; Wirth I. 1938. Urbanism as a way of life. *American Journal of Sociology*. 44:3-24.

⁶³⁹ Kunezi and Lambright. 2007.

⁶⁴⁰ For an unemployed, 26 year old, rural, female voter of average means.

A little education goes a long way. For those with absolutely no education basic obstacles such as not being able to read the ballot paper predominate. This can be a major obstacle to voting, such as in the 1991 Mauritian Referendum where voters had to find their names and numbers on very long lists to get their voting cards.⁶⁴¹ These individuals are also more likely not to have contacted an important person, have no interest in politics, not listen to or read the news and to be female. For those with a primary school education these factors are much less of a problem. These citizens who have been through basic schooling also have greater levels of trust in the government, President and institutions of state than the rest of the population and lower levels of trust in opposition parties. They appear to have been provided with the tools to participate in the system but not those needed to criticise it or to escape reliance upon it. This is made more plausible by the lower probability of voting by those with higher standards of education. More than a basic education might lead to increased dissatisfaction with the political system as citizens become more critical. More educated citizens are also less likely to be tied to the state for income generation and material success.

In the basic model, as expected, older citizens are a lot more likely to vote than young citizens. Age will be looked at again in the next chapter, but for now it is worth noting that, in a finding that stays approximately the same throughout all the models, an 80 year old is 3 1/3 times more likely to vote than an 18 year old, with a predicted probability of voting of 88% as opposed to 25% for an 18 year old.⁶⁴²

As expected, women are less likely to vote than men. A woman is 2 percentage points less likely to vote than a man.⁶⁴³ It is worth noting that while the sign remains in this direction almost throughout the analysis in this chapter, the variable does become

⁶⁴¹ Baker B. 2000:44-78.

⁶⁴² For an employed, rural, female voter of average means with only a Primary school education.

⁶⁴³ For an employed, rural, 36 year old voter of average means with only a Primary school education.

insignificant from Model 2 onwards. A more stable indicator is *Head of Household*, which we add in Model 2. Being the head of the household, whether male or female, adds two percentage points to the predicted probability of voting. It appears that status and being responsible for a household is a better predictor of participation than gender in the African countries studied. This is not a factor which has been reported in previous studies of turnout on the continent or the rest of the world, but makes sense if the way that women might become more emancipated when in charge of their own households is thought about. It confirms the idea that women are held back from participation by the burdensome household duties and cultural norms that come with living in male headed households.⁶⁴⁴ Being employed also increases the predicted probability of voting by 2 percentage points,⁶⁴⁵ but the *Lived Poverty* is not. Even in the most basic model, income and deprivation does not appear to have a clear relationship with voting in the pooled model. This is surprising given the evidence from studies in South America that show that the lower the level of individual resources, the greater the incentives for voting in response to clientelistic inducements.⁶⁴⁶

5.4.2 Knowledge and exposure to media.

In the third model *Political Knowledge* and exposure double the pseudo R squared in size, but it is still quite low indicating that there is still a great deal of unexplained variation in the model. Two important findings emerge. African voters, like their European and American counterparts, do generally have better knowledge of their political leaders and are also keener followers of radio and television news than their non-voting counterparts. Being able to identify both of the national leaders asked about was associated with a 4 percentage

⁶⁴⁴ Bratton M, Chu Y and Lagos M. 2010. "Who votes? Implications for New Democracies" in *Taiwan Journal of Democracy* Vol. 6 No. 1: 107-136.

⁶⁴⁵ For a 36 year old, female, rural voter of average means with only a Primary school education.

⁶⁴⁶ Remmer K. 2010. "Political Scale and Electoral Turnout: Evidence from the Less Industrialised world" in *Comparative Political Studies* Vol. 43 No. 3: 275-303.

point higher predicted probability of voting,⁶⁴⁷ whilst being a daily consumer of radio and television news increased participation by 3 percentage points.⁶⁴⁸

This finding is tempered by a seemingly contradictory one when it comes to consumption of newspaper news. Those who read newspapers daily are less likely to vote than those who never read a newspaper. Whilst this variable is not initially significant it increases in strength and becomes significant as we include multilevel controls. A careful reader might ask whether this finding is in some way a statistical anomaly, but it holds whether or not *Broadcast News* or *Political Knowledge* are included in the model.

As such, exposure to the media and political knowledge are not on their own enough to boost turnout, and the finding about newspaper readership along with earlier findings about education and urbanisation lead to a picture of the African voter which stands in rather sharp contrast to the modernisation thesis that all media consumption in African democracies aids participation.⁶⁴⁹ The consumers of the predominantly state owned broadcast media⁶⁵⁰ vote more frequently than the consumers of newspapers which are more likely to be sympathetic to opposition viewpoints and opposition parties and to be privately owned.⁶⁵¹ Turnout in Africa appears to be tied to socioeconomic variables associated with less critical responses to government. Highly educated newspaper readers are perhaps more likely to be alienated from the current political regimes by access to more critical assessments of politics whilst those who rely predominantly on broadcast news are more likely to be encouraged to participate than not. Rural, poorly educated, broadcast news consuming voters who also score less

⁶⁴⁷ For an employed 36 year old, female, rural voter of average means with only a Primary school education with all other values set at their mean.

⁶⁴⁸ For an employed 36 year old, female, rural voter of average means with only a Primary school education with all other values set at their mean.

⁶⁴⁹ Hyden G, Leslie M and Ogundimu F. 2002. *Media and Democracy in Africa*.

⁶⁵⁰ Fardon R and Furniss G. 2000. *African Broadcast Cultures: Radio in Transition*; Djankov S, Nenova T, McLiesh C and Shleifer A. 2003. "Who Owns the Media?" *Journal of Law and Economics*, Vol. 46 No. 2: 341-381

⁶⁵¹ Blaydes, L. 2006. "Who votes in Authoritarian elections and why? Determinants of voter turnout in contemporary Egypt". Paper prepared for the 2006 APSA annual meeting, August 31-September 3 2006, Philadelphia PA: 3.

strongly on all aspects of cognition are more susceptible to misinformation and take their voting cues from traditional and party patrons. As such their participation is likely to be more mobilised than autonomous.⁶⁵² We now need to look at how African citizens are mobilised, and indeed, who mobilises them.

5.4.3 Mobilisation

Mobilisation is important. In Model 4 being politically active has huge effects on turnout, with those who are most active being 10 percentage points more likely to vote. Those who never participate in political activities (excluding voting) have a 74% predicted probability of voting and those who are very politically active have an 84% predicted probability.⁶⁵³ Contacting a politician raises the likelihood of voting by five percentage points.⁶⁵⁴ Indeed, both passive and active mobilisation are important with members of a religion and those close to a party being 3 and 8 1/2 percentage points more likely to vote respectively.⁶⁵⁵ In light of the size of the effects uncovered thus far these are very large effects and are very important. As noted earlier in this thesis and as will be explore more fully in the case study of Durban, across the continent, African political parties and governments show themselves to be mobilising machines, in stark contrast to their lacklustre performance between elections and generally poor organisational abilities.⁶⁵⁶

One significant exception to the story that holds that contacting and communing aids turnout is contacting government officials. Unlike in the Round one studies of Bratton et al⁶⁵⁷ where they fail to disaggregate contacting government officials or Young⁶⁵⁸ who generally

⁶⁵² Bratton, M, Mattes, R and Gyimah-Boadi. 2005.

⁶⁵³ For an unemployed 26 year old, female, rural voter of average means with only a Primary school education with all other values set at their mean.

⁶⁵⁴ See Note 653.

⁶⁵⁵ See Note 653 .

⁶⁵⁶ Bratton and van de Walle. 1997.

⁶⁵⁷ Bratton, M, Mattes, R and Gyimah-Boadi. 2005.

⁶⁵⁸ Young D. 2004.

finds the opposite, respondents in Rounds three and four who contact a government official are 4 percentage points less likely to vote than others.⁶⁵⁹ This finding, which stands up whether I include contacting politicians or not, is in need of some explanation. There are two possible explanations, first, that something has changed *in Africa* during the period between the first and third and fourth rounds of the survey that might help explain this shift, or second that something to do with the *survey* has caused an anomalous result in either this study or the other studies. I believe that it is the latter and that the findings in this chapter are robust.⁶⁶⁰ Further evidence that our claim that contacting government officials is negatively related to turnout is the finding in Bratton et al⁶⁶¹ (which they do not attempt to explain) that those who contacted other influential people were less likely to vote. So why does this relationship exist? It seems that those who contact government officials may be signalling that they have lost faith in party politics. Contacting a non-political figure can be seen here as an indicator of dissatisfaction with politics, a way out of the system, avoiding party figures and party politics and approaching the state bureaucracy instead.

5.4.4 Political Experiences and Attitudes

Model 5 shows that being interested in politics does, as one would expect, increase participation but what is more interesting is the way that attitudes towards elections and democracy affect participation. Africans who prefer other political systems are two percentage points less likely to vote than those who support democracy. Preferring one party politics, military rule or one man rule does not motivate citizens to get involved in politics to

⁶⁵⁹ For an employed 36 year old, female, rural voter of average means with only a Primary school education with all other values set at their mean.

⁶⁶⁰ In Round 1 respondents were asked "In the past year, have you contacted a government or political party official about some important problem or to give them your views?" and then "In the past year, have you contacted any other influential person such as a church or community leader about some important problem or to give them your views?". In Rounds 3 and 4 respondents were asked "During the past year, how often have you contacted any of the following persons about some important problem or to give them your views" followed by a list including a Local Government Councillor, an MP, an official of a government agency, a traditional leader and ending with any other influential person. As such Young's "Contact with Government Officials" variable is not that at all, it would be more accurately called "Contact with anyone involved in Politics or Government". Given that we have found an important difference between contacting government officials and contacting politicians when studying turnout in Africa the round 1 data becomes a little problematic in this respect.

⁶⁶¹ Bratton, M, Mattes, R and Gyimah-Boadi. 2005.

change the system or to elect individuals who share their beliefs; rather it encourages alienation from electoral politics. As long as these voters (and their leaders) see no benefit in taking part in democratic politics at all the chances of them using extra-parliamentary means to secure their objectives remain real. Alternatively, those who dislike or see no point in voting may prefer some other form of government where they would not be asked to do vote. That said, given the limited substantive scale of this variable, the number of people affected remain fairly low.

This section also reveals one of the most important variables in terms of substantive effects. Believing that the election was free and fair raises participation by eleven percentage points over those who think the election was rigged or in some way flawed. African voters are not just the automatons that some earlier work on political participation might have us believe. Yes, as shown earlier, some voters may well be easier to influence than others, particularly in rural areas, but if they do not believe that the election is free and fair they are much less likely to vote, no matter the incentives.⁶⁶² This is reinforced by the fact that those who have been regularly physically attacked are four and a half percentage points less likely to vote. Of those physically attacked only 30% as opposed to 40% of those not attacked thought that the election was free and fair. So it appears then that there is some evidence to suggest that brutal intimidation as a mobilising strategy is a relatively unsuccessful one in elections in the countries covered by this survey; but that it may well be effective as a demobilising strategy.

⁶⁶² There is a potential causality issue here. Those citizens who vote may well, in hindsight, judge the election to have been free and fair as a way of justifying their decision to take part in it. I do not think that this is that likely in the cases under consideration however. First, as mentioned in this chapter, African respondents were relatively good at assessing the fairness of an election objectively, at least in terms of how their assessments correlated with outside assessments. Second, it seems more likely that voters whose candidates *lose* might consider the election to have been unfair. The fact that this isn't found does seem to add weight to the idea that African voters are able to make objective judgements as to the fairness of the election.

5.5 Initial Multilevel Results

The pooled data provided the initial evidence for, in particular, the importance of mobilisation and assessments of the fairness of the election, findings that need to be tested in multilevel analysis to check their validity. As the simple pooled results only generate a Pseudo R squared of around 0.09 it also seems clear that national or electoral context does matter and we need to take a look at the effects of context and national institutional variation if we are to better understand the African voter. The following two tables show two different approaches to understanding context. The first focuses on individual elections and the second looks at countries as the unit of analysis at the second level. Used in conjunction with one another they show whether the individual decision to vote is shaped predominantly by elections or countries and reveal how institutions related to each affect that decision.

Table 5.2: Multilevel Model with Elections as the unit of analysis at Level 2

Variable	Model M1		Model M2: The Election		Model M3: Time	
	Odds Ratio	B (s.e.)	Odds Ratio	B (s.e.)	Odds Ratio	B (s.e.)
<i>Level 1: Individual</i>						
	1.01	0.02 *** (0.00)	1.02	0.02 *** (0.00)	1.02	0.02 *** (0.00)
Age						
Gender	0.96	-0.04 (0.04)	0.96	-0.04 (0.04)	0.96	-0.04 (0.04)
Lived Poverty Index	1.04	0.04 ** (0.02)	1.04	0.04 ** (0.02)	1.04	0.04 ** (0.02)
Rural	1.14	0.13 *** (0.04)	1.14	0.13 *** (0.05)	1.14	0.13 *** (0.05)
Education : Tertiary	0.89	-0.12 * (0.05)	0.89	-0.12 * (0.05)	0.89	-0.12 * (0.05)
Education : Primary	1.12	0.12 ** (0.06)	1.13	0.12 ** (0.06)	1.13	0.12 ** (0.06)
Education: None	1.07	0.06 (0.07)	1.07	0.06 (0.07)	1.07	0.06 (0.06)
Employed	1.07	0.07 * (0.04)	1.07	0.07 * (0.04)	1.07	0.07 * (0.04)
Head Of Household	1.11	0.10 ** (0.05)	1.11	0.10 ** (0.05)	1.11	0.10 ** (0.05)
Political Know ledge	1.13	0.13 *** (0.03)	1.14	0.13 *** (0.03)	1.13	0.13 *** (0.03)
Broadcast News	1.27	0.23 *** (0.09)	1.26	0.23 *** (0.09)	1.27	0.23 *** (0.09)
Newspaper News	0.83	-0.18 *** (0.06)	0.83	-0.18 *** (0.06)	0.83	-0.18 *** (0.06)
Close To Political Party	1.87	0.62 *** (0.07)	1.87	0.62 *** (0.07)	1.87	0.62 *** (0.07)
Member Religion	1.22	0.20 *** (0.08)	1.22	0.20 *** (0.08)	1.22	0.20 *** (0.08)
Politically Active	2.67	0.99 *** (0.24)	2.69	0.99 *** (0.24)	2.69	0.99 *** (0.24)
Contact Politician	2.01	0.70 *** (0.23)	2.02	0.70 *** (0.23)	2.02	0.70 *** (0.23)
Contact Government Official	0.72	-0.32 *** (0.08)	0.73	-0.32 *** (0.08)	0.73	-0.32 *** (0.08)
Interest In Politics	1.38	0.33 *** (0.07)	1.39	0.33 *** (0.07)	1.39	0.33 *** (0.07)
Election Free and Fair	2.62	0.97 *** (0.18)	2.64	0.97 *** (0.17)	2.64	0.97 *** (0.17)
Prefer Alternatives	0.72	-0.33 *** (0.07)	0.72	-0.33 *** (0.08)	0.72	-0.33 *** (0.08)
How Often Attacked	0.60	-0.52 *** (0.07)	0.59	-0.52 *** (0.06)	0.59	-0.52 *** (0.06)
<i>Level 2: Elections</i>						
Incumbent			0.86	-0.15 (0.23)		
Turnover			1.34	0.29 (0.30)		
Closeness (Margin of Victory: 1-85)			1.002	0.002 (0.01)		
Democratic Election Number					0.95	-0.22 (0.10)
Time Since Last Election					0.98	-0.05 (0.09)
Constant	-0.47 ** (0.20)		-0.55 (0.39)		-0.20 (0.63)	
<i>Random Effects</i>						
Sd	0.83 *** (0.11)		0.80 *** (0.11)		0.83 *** (0.11)	
-2Log Likelihood	21839.02		21867.3		21868.9	
No. of Groups	29		29		29	
No. of Individuals	34302		34302		34302	

Reference Category for Education is Education: Secondary *** = p < 0.01; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.1 †close to 0.1

Table 5.3: Multilevel Model with Countries as the unit of analysis at Level 2

Variable	<i>Model M5</i>		<i>Model M6</i>	
	Odds Ratio	B (s.e.)	Odds Ratio	B (s.e.)
<i>Level 1: Individual</i>				
Age	1.02	0.02 *** (0.00)	1.02	0.02 *** (0.00)
Gender	1.00	-0.00 (0.04)	1.00	-0.00 (0.04)
Lived Poverty Index	1.04	0.04 * (0.02)	1.04	0.04 * (0.02)
Rural	1.08	0.08 (0.04)	1.08	0.07* (0.04)
Education : Tertiary	0.88	-0.13 ** (0.06)	0.88	-0.13 ** (0.06)
Education : Primary	1.20	0.18 *** (0.05)	1.21	0.19 *** (0.05)
Education: None	1.18	0.16 *** (0.06)	1.18	0.17 *** (0.06)
Employed	1.08	0.08* * (0.04)	1.08	0.08** (0.04)
Head Of Household	1.11	0.10 ** (0.04)	1.10	0.10 ** (0.04)
Political Knowledge	1.40	0.33 *** (0.03)	1.39	0.33 *** (0.03)
Broadcast News	1.12	0.11 (0.07)	1.12	0.11 (0.07)
Newspaper News	0.86	-0.15 ** (0.07)	0.86	-0.15 ** (0.07)
Close To Political Party	1.82	0.60 *** (0.04)	1.83	0.60 *** (0.04)
Member Religion	1.21	0.19 *** (0.06)	1.21	0.19 *** (0.06)
Politically Active	2.64	0.97 *** (0.09)	2.70	0.99 *** (0.09)
Contact Politician	2.05	0.72 *** (0.11)	2.05	0.72 *** (0.11)
Contact Government Official	0.69	-0.37 *** (0.10)	0.69	-0.37 *** (0.10)
Interest In Politics	1.43	0.36 *** (0.05)	1.44	0.37 *** (0.05)
Election Free and Fair	2.73	1.00 *** (0.07)	2.77	1.02 *** (0.07)
Prefer Alternatives	0.74	-0.31 *** (0.10)	0.74	-0.30 *** (0.10)
How Often Attacked	0.57	-0.57 *** (0.11)	0.55	-0.59 *** (0.11)
<i>Level 2: Countries</i>				
Status: PR + CL (1=Partly Free, 2=Free) ⁶⁶³			0.42	-0.86 *** (0.18)
Electoral System (1= FPTP, 3= PR)			1.46	0.37 *** (0.22)
Constant	-0.71 *** (0.19)		0.34 (0.31)	
<i>Random Effects</i>				
Sd	0.67 *** (0.11)		0.71 *** (0.12)	
-2Log Likelihood	22683.02		22639.4	
No. of Groups	19		19	
No. of Individuals	34302		34302	

Reference Category for Education is Education: Secondary *** = p < 0.01; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.1 †close to 0.1

⁶⁶³ As used by Massicotte, Blais, Yoshinaka. 2004

The importance of using multilevel models is revealed in Model M1 where the standard deviation of 0.83 indicates that people in an election which is one standard deviation above the mean have odds of voting that are 2 1/3 times higher than a comparable voter in an average election.⁶⁶⁴ It is thus clear that important cross national variation does exist and needs to be taken into account. For the variables previously examined, as mentioned earlier, the *Rural* and *Lived Poverty* variables respectively regain their significance or become significant in both Table 5.2 and Table 5.3. Being in poverty now has the hypothesised relationship with voting and is significant. Poorer Africans, unlike their European counterparts, are more likely to vote for all the reasons raised in chapter four. Moreover, the initial finding that the primary school educated vote at the highest rate re-establishes itself, whilst the substantive effects of political activity become larger and those of thinking that the election was free and fair become less important in Table 5.2. This latter finding is interesting, and upon further examination voters are found to be relatively good at working out whether the election was generally free and fair, but less good at assessing elections that are not free and fair. Elections in years where freedom house assess the country as being generally free are seen to be free and fair with only minor problems by 80% of respondents, whilst election years that are not free by Freedom House standards are seen to be free and fair with minor problems by 60% of respondents.

It is important to be particularly careful when looking at contextual variables that might be important at the second level. As there are only 29 cases too many variables cannot be used and parsimony is especially important.⁶⁶⁵ Snijders and Bosker argue that this second level sample size is the most restrictive element in the design. They note that a two-level design with 10 groups is at least as uncomfortable as a single-level design with a sample size

⁶⁶⁴ [exp(0.83) = 2.29]

⁶⁶⁵ Hobolt, S. Spoon J and Tilley J. 2009. "A vote against Europe? Explaining defection at the 1999 and 2004 European Parliament elections". *British Journal of Political Science* Vol. 39 No. 1: 93-115.

of 10.⁶⁶⁶ As such, whilst there is some work using the multilevel approach with a similar numbers of cases which includes six or more variables at the second level,⁶⁶⁷ we introduce variables in small clusters to minimise the chances of error at this level.

None of the national level variables are significant at the 0.1 level in Table 5.2. This may well be because of the small sample size in this chapter. Moreover, all the controls that were included in chapter four cannot be included, and equally importantly the fact that there are a maximum of two elections from each country means that country effects may well be more statistically significant.

Just as was the case in chapter four, Table 5.3 shows that elections that take place in countries that are less free on the Freedom House rankings have higher rates of participation. How can it be that potential voters are good at working out whether an election was free and fair by freedom house standards and are more likely to vote if they think the election is free and fair, when countries where the election *isn't* free and fair have higher rates of turnout? The multilevel approach helps to solve this apparent conundrum as two different forces are at play here. "Partly Free" elections start at a higher baseline due to the differing mobilisation incentives of agents in these systems. Where the outcome approaches certainty voters are monitored and the ruling party is firmly in control, such as in the Electoral Authoritarian regimes⁶⁶⁸ in the "Partly Free" category, higher turnout is a key aim as it is used as a sign of legitimacy. When the election outcome is less certain and where the election is a real contest elites no longer aim to maximise turnout, they aim to maximise their own party vote. As such rather than targeting voters in general, specific groups are targetted and non-supporters are

⁶⁶⁶ Snijders and Bosker 1999

⁶⁶⁷ Rahn W and Rudolph, T. 2002. "A multilevel model of trust in local government." Paper Presented at the 2002 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, IL.

⁶⁶⁸ We shall look at these in a more systematic fashion later on.

ignored or suppressed, hence the lower general level of voting. In both cases, however, voters still are more likely to vote the more free they think the election was. For some this will be because their experience of the "partly free" election was a free and fair one, for some it will be due to lower expectations of what constitutes a free and fair election, but what is clear is that making use of techniques of mobilisation that make voters suspicious of the election will depress the predicted probability of voting, whatever the system.

5.6 Closeness Revisited

Perhaps the most contested claim of the rational choice school is that an individual's decision to vote is driven by the likelihood that her vote will be the pivotal vote, that it will make the crucial difference in an election between her favoured candidate winning and losing. Chapter two revealed a great deal of variance in the empirical findings with regards to closeness at the individual level, with Aldrich,⁶⁶⁹ Barzel and Silverberg,⁶⁷⁰ Hofsetter⁶⁷¹ and Diwakar⁶⁷² all finding that closeness is an important predictor of voting, whilst Johnson and Pattie,⁶⁷³ who use a multilevel model incorporating constituency level data, find no relationship between closeness at the constituency level and turnout.

Chapter four showed that the closeness variable at a national level had little consistent validity. At times it had a sign which indicated that it was associated with lower turnout in elections. This applied to both predominantly democratic and more authoritarian elections in the pooled models and was the case in both parliamentary elections and referenda. Only in presidential elections were increased margins of victory associated with lower turnout (though this was not significant). When country fixed effects were controlled for an effect in

⁶⁶⁹ Aldrich J.1993.

⁶⁷⁰ Barzel and Silberberg.1973."Is the act of voting rational?" *Public Choice*,16:51-58

⁶⁷¹ Hofsetter RC.1973."Inter-Party Competition and Electoral Turnout:The case of Indiana." *American Journal of Political Science*,,17(2)

⁶⁷² Diwakar R. 2008. "Voter Turnout in the Indian states: An empirical analysis". *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Political Parties* Vol. 18 No. 1:75-100

⁶⁷³ Johnston R & Pattie C.1997.

the hypothesised direction was found, but doubts remained about the use of this model. In this chapter only a very small, insignificant relationship was found. Table 5.4 attempts to provide some clarity by summarising the effects of national level closeness in parliamentary elections using the individual level data from this chapter without controls.

Table 5.4: Closeness

	<i>Model C1: Pooled Data</i>	<i>Model C2: Countries at Level 2</i>	<i>Model C3: Elections at Level 2</i>
Variable	B (s.e.)	B (s.e.)	B (s.e.)
Closeness Seats (Margin of Victory: 1-84)	-0.05*** (0.00)	-0.04*** (0.00)	0.001 (0.01)
Constant	2.08*** (0.03)	3.61*** (0.28)	2.18*** (0.28)
Pseudo R ²	0.0019		
LR chi2	51.88		
N of cases	35129		
Degrees Of Freedom Used	1		
<i>Random Effects</i>			
Sd		1.17*** (0.20)	0.84*** (0.11)
-2Log Likelihood		25650.532	24841.514
No. of Groups		19	29
No. of Individuals		35129	35129

*** = p < 0.01; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.1 †close to 0.1

Once again the data on closeness is not particularly compelling. In the pooled model closeness is significant and in the hypothesised direction, but explains less than 1/5th of a percent of the variance. Model C2, which uses a multilevel approach with countries as the level 2 unit of analysis is somewhat theoretically problematic. If we include *Closeness* in the full model M6 we find that it is significant and has the same sign and value but that it makes *Status* insignificant. Further thought on this variable seems to suggest that with this small sample size it may be a proxy for the fairness of the election. There are also theoretical problems using this variable at the country level given that it takes on multiple values for each country. Model C3, which is theoretically stronger in this regard has a coefficient for *Closeness* which is in the opposite direction to what we would expect, just as it was in chapter four.

All this leads towards some distrust with regards this variable and it might well make more sense to think of the closeness that matters as being about the closeness at a constituency rather than a national level. It is here that an individual voters vote is or isn't decisive and so ideally it is this level that we should be looked at.

Unfortunately the Afrobarometer does not sample individuals on the basis of which constituency they are in, does not ask a question which asks which constituency they are in and uses enumeration areas which often do not exactly match the enumeration areas used in national censuses which are, mostly, not conducted with constituencies in mind anyway. All of this, in concert with the fact that the Afrobarometer does not publish which enumeration areas respondents fall into makes it impossible to conduct the three level multilevel analysis (individuals situated in constituencies within countries) that would best allow us to test the thesis that constituency level closeness matters with the data used thus far.

As such, it was decided that the best method available was the use of two individual country case studies of the importance of closeness in the 2002 Basotho elections and the 1999 Botswana election using Round three data. These two cases of parliamentary election in parliamentary systems were chosen as they have a number of key institutional differences which might affect the salience of the closeness.⁶⁷⁴ Botswana is one of the most established democracies in the sample whilst Lesotho is one of the least. Botswana is the oldest continuous multiparty democracy in Africa having had free and fair elections since independence, whilst Lesotho experienced a more difficult transition from colonial rule to multiparty democracy with periods of absolute monarchy, military rule and a number of coups.⁶⁷⁵ The 1999 Botswana elections were conducted under the first-past-the-post system

⁶⁷⁴ Based on methods in Mill, JS. 1843. *A System of Logic*, Book VI and Book XII

⁶⁷⁵ Machobane, LBBJ. 2001. *The King's Knights: Military Government in the Kingdom of Lesotho, 1986-1993*.

used since independence, whilst the 2002 Basotho elections made use of Africa's first mixed member proportional system with 80 constituency and 40 top up seats.⁶⁷⁶ Whilst Botswana elections have generally been peaceful, the elections in 2002 in Lesotho were the first elections not followed by violence or significant political instability.⁶⁷⁷

In the election in Botswana turnout was 77%, with the Botswana Democratic Party who have been in power since independence winning 57% of the vote and 83% of seats due in part to the very split nature of the opposition. The Botswana National Front won 26% of the vote and 15% of the seats and the Botswana Congress Party won 12% of the vote and 1 seat.⁶⁷⁸ In Lesotho the election was won by the ruling Lesotho Congress for Democracy who had split from the former ruling party prior to the 1998 elections after the Prime Minister had faced internal challenges to his leadership. The LCD won 79 of the 80 seats in 1998 with 61% of vote under the first-past-the-post system. Opposition anger and unrest following this result led to wide scale protest, a mutiny by junior army officers and the 1998 SADC intervention by South African troops. Partly as a result of this a new electoral system was introduced and in 2002 the LCD once again won all but one of the constituency seats with 55% of the vote, but as a result of the introduction of the new electoral system the Basotho National Party with 22% of the vote was awarded half of the PR seats with the rest split amongst other opposition parties⁶⁷⁹ which generally remain weak and divided.⁶⁸⁰ Turnout was 67%⁶⁸¹ following a complete re-registration of voters.⁶⁸²

⁶⁷⁶ Elklit, J 2002, "Lesotho 2002: Africa's first MMP elections" *Journal of African Elections*, 1(2), September 2002, 1-10.

⁶⁷⁷ Kabemba, C (ed) 2003: 1.

⁶⁷⁸ <http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/bot1999results1.htm>.

⁶⁷⁹ *Lesotho General Election 25 May 2002: The Report of the Commonwealth Observer Group*. Commonwealth Secretariat, London.

⁶⁸⁰ Kabemba C. 2003: 6.

⁶⁸¹ <http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/les2002results.htm>

⁶⁸² Election Observer Mission Report: Lesotho 2002 National Elections: 14.

Table 5.5 provides the results of multilevel logistic regressions of the propensity to vote in Botswana and Lesotho using data from the Afrobarometer. For Botswana it was possible to obtain the enumeration areas (EAs) used by for the Afrobarometer survey from the publishers of the Afrobarometer. These EAs did not, however, match exactly the EA's used in the national census and a map of the EAs used in either the Afrobarometer or the national census was not available despite all efforts to obtain one. I was forced to link the 126 EAs first to individual polling stations using the EA details, district and town variables, maps and constituency level information. The polling stations were then placed in the relevant constituencies. The placement was then checked against information obtained from the Botswana Election Commission and was then cross checked by a third party.

A different method was used for the study of Lesotho. As EA level data was not available district level data had to be used instead of using constituency level data. Lesotho is a particularly useful case from a data perspective in that the constituencies are part of the basic administrative design of the country, with no constituencies crossing district boundaries.⁶⁸³ As such it was possible to place all respondents in a district and model the effects of closeness at a district level. Whilst this is not as accurate an assessment as I have for Botswana, and there are only 10 cases at the second level, it nonetheless provides a reasonable approximation of sub-national closeness.

⁶⁸³ Bureau of Statistics. 2003. *2001 Lesotho Demographic Survey: Analytical Report, Volume 1*.

Table 5.5: Closeness in Botswana and Lesotho, by constituency

Variable	Botswana 1999 Election		Lesotho 2002 Election	
	Odds Ratio	B (s.e.)	Odds Ratio	B (s.e.)
Young (18-25)	0.24	-1.43 *** (0.21)	0.31	-1.17 *** (0.18)
Gender (1=Female)	1.30	0.26 (0.17)	1.2	0.19 (0.17)
Education : Tertiary	0.60	-0.52 * (0.31)	1.23	0.21 (0.42)
Education : Primary	0.88	-0.13* (0.23)	0.86	-0.15 (0.21)
Education: None	1.46	0.38 (0.25)	1.00	-0.00 (0.27)
Employed	1.35	0.30 (0.20)	0.91	-0.09 (0.23)
Political Knowledge	1.36	0.31** (0.13)	2.08	0.73 *** (0.26)
Broadcast News	0.37	-1.01*** (0.28)	0.52	-0.66** (0.33)
Close To Political Party	2.49	0.91 *** (0.19)	2.81	1.03*** (0.18)
Politically Active	1.12	0.11 *** (0.04)	1.07	0.07 * (0.04)
Contact Politician	2.59	0.95 *** (0.34)	1.11	0.10 (0.07)
Election Free and Fair	7.33	1.99 *** (0.42)	0.94	-0.06(0.04)
Winner Margin of Votes (Bot:1-74, Les: 10-49)	0.99	-0.01 ** (0.00)	0.99	-0.01 ** (0.00)
Constant		-1.11*** (0.11)		0.67* (0.36)
<i>Random Effects</i>				
Sd		0.09 (0.37)		2.11e-08 (0.12)
-2Log Likelihood		926.49		981.12
No. of Groups		51		10
No. of Individuals		906		1058

Reference Category for Education is Education: Secondary *** = p < 0.01; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.1

Closeness at the constituency level does appear to matter in Lesotho and Botswana. Including other election related controls (not shown) such as the number of parties in each constituency, the length of tenure of the sitting MP, whether the incumbent MP was standing again and the size of the constituency made no difference to the *Closeness* variable and these variables were also always insignificant. As such closeness at the constituency level in these two parliamentary systems was the most important election related predictor of vote. In Botswana an individual in the closest constituency election had a predicted probability of voting eighteen percentage points higher than a similar voter in the constituency with the highest margin of victory.⁶⁸⁴ In Lesotho an individual in the closest constituency election had a predicted probability of voting eight percentage points higher than a similar voter in the constituency with the highest margin of victory.⁶⁸⁵ These findings are amongst the largest substantive effects found thus far and suggest that, at least in these two countries, voting is connected to closeness. In the more proportional system of Lesotho the closeness of the race

⁶⁸⁴ For an employed, young, female, rural voter of average means with only a Primary school education and all other values at their mean.

⁶⁸⁵ For an employed, young, female, rural voter of average means with only a Primary school education and all other values at their mean.

has a slightly lower substantive effect on turnout. This is something we might expect given that one's vote counts for the PR count in a constituency even if it doesn't count for the election of a constituency MP. The much lower turnout (50%) in a far closer election in national terms in 2007⁶⁸⁶ seems to show that what is still more important to voters is the closeness of the constituency election. Alternate studies have shown that there is in fact little support amongst the public for the new MMP system,⁶⁸⁷ and voters do not appear to have incorporated the importance of national level closeness made possible by PR into their calculus. The findings on Lesotho also need to be tempered by the knowledge that a more approximate method was used than in the more robust study of Botswana.⁶⁸⁸

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter has led to a conceptualisation of the African voter based far less on structural obstacles to voting than might have been imagined. Indeed, it is the individuals most likely to have to overcome the structural constraints theorised by the resources literature that are most likely to vote, and it is political parties, often seen to be inept, that are most important in mobilising voters.

Four major findings help to better understand the typical voter. The first is that turnout in the countries in the sample is predominantly mobilised turnout. Voters here vote because they are asked or told to do so. The more reflective voters are, the more education they have after a certain point, if they read newspapers, the less likely they are to be drawn into this mass mobilisation machine. Similarly, those who begin to look outside of party politics by

⁶⁸⁶ *EISA Election Update 2007 Lesotho* 1, 31 January 2007.

⁶⁸⁷ Kabemba C.2003: 7.

⁶⁸⁸ The finding that in Lesotho the *Election Free and Fair* variable is insignificant and in the opposite direction to that in Botswana is probably driven by the widespread dissatisfaction with the elections on the part of opposition supporters *after* the election rather than a factor that played a part in their decision to vote or not. The finding that women and the unemployed are more likely to vote in Lesotho is most likely a result of the migrant labour system which creates structural obstacles to voting for those in paid employment and means that women outnumber men by a ratio of 7:1 at some times of the year (Kabemba C.2003:31-32), whilst the lack of a correlation between contacting politicians and participating is no doubt a result of the low levels of trust in politicians on the part of the population (Kabemba C.2003: 10). The findings do generally bear out the argument that mobilisation is important in Lesotho (Mphanya, N.2004.)

looking to bureaucrats for answers, also remove themselves from this. The prime targets for mobilisation are the poor, primary school educated rural citizens who have most to gain from voting. Of them, it is the male heads of households who vote most, perhaps in part because they are the ones targeted most easily by mobilising agents.

Second voters need to *believe* that the election is free and fair, even if it actually isn't or takes place in a country that is predominantly unfree. Paradoxically, turnout seems to be highest when voters in less free countries believe that the election is free and fair. Here governments can make more effective use of the state machinery to drive turnout, but need to be careful when doing so as the use of measures that are too harsh can radically depress turnout by affecting voters opinions of the fairness of the election.

Third, the two brief case studies show that closeness can be important, predominately at the constituency level. Even in the MMP system in Lesotho, it was the closeness at the constituency level that was most important. This finding is one that cannot be taken any further in the next chapter as data for only two countries is available. We also cannot be sure that it is generalisable across more than the two case studies. That said, it suggests an important area for future research and I will return to it in Chapter 7.

Finally, context is important but the variables we have at our disposal from the standard turnout literature don't help us a great deal. Proportional elections do appear to boost turnout, but no other institutions were important predictors of individual level turnout. In the next chapter the dominant discourses in the African politics literature are incorporated, discourses which have, until now, been left out of studies of voter turnout.

Chapter 6: African Explanations

6.1 Introduction

Thus far a picture of voting in Africa using the strongest available models of political behaviour has begun to emerge. These models fall short of a full explanation however, and significant unexplained variation remains. They also provide patterns of activity that are markedly in contrast to what the theoretical and empirical literature of the developed world has found. This chapter breaks new ground by thinking of the decision to vote as being a function of the broader political institutions, both formal and informal, of Africa's multiparty regimes. These are institutions that could not be fully tested in chapter four and more importantly shape individual preferences and affect incentives that can best be analysed at the individual level. I begin by looking at the effects of ethnicity and clientelistic practices, and then turn at the effects of living under particular regimes and of being in particular generations. The data used throughout this chapter is the same as the data used in chapter five.

Ethnicity is, as discussed in chapter three, integral to both the acquisition of material benefit and the process of identity construction of many African people.⁶⁸⁹ Elections have been seen as nothing more than an "ethnic census"⁶⁹⁰ in Africa, but the ethnic dimension of the turnout puzzle has not been analysed at all.⁶⁹¹ Building on the work of Eifert,⁶⁹² Norris and Mattes⁶⁹³ and Bratton and Bhavnani⁶⁹⁴ on the salience of ethnicity in preference formation it is hypothesised that co-ethnics of the President and of presidential candidates will be more likely to vote than those who do not have co-ethnics running for election or in

⁶⁸⁹ Nnoli O. 1998 *Ethnic conflicts in Africa*; Young, D. 2009. "Support you can count on? Ethnicity, Partisanship and Retrospective Voting in Africa." *Afrobarometer Working Paper No. 115*.

⁶⁹⁰ Horowitz D. 1993. "Democracy in divided societies." *Journal of Democracy* 4(4): 18–38; Johnson R and Schlemmer L (eds). 1996. *Launching Democracy in South Africa: The First Open Election, April 1994*.

⁶⁹¹ Baker B. 2000. *Escape from Domination in Africa*.

⁶⁹² Keefer P. 2010. "The Ethnicity Distraction? Political Credibility and Partisan Preferences in Africa." *Afrobarometer Working paper 118*.

⁶⁹³ Norris P and Mattes R. 2003. "Does Ethnicity Determine Support for the Ruling Party?" *Afrobarometer Working Paper 25*.

⁶⁹⁴ Bratton M and Bhavnani R. 2009. "Voting in Africa: Ethnic, Economic, or Strategic."

office. In addition, those who feel that their ethnic group is discriminated against vote at lower rates than those who never feel discriminated. This hypothesis is tested against the alternate proposal based on the Minimax-Regret thesis that those ethnic groups with the most to win or lose vote most. It is expected to be the case that people living in countries with high numbers of politically relevant ethnic groups will vote more if the electoral system is proportional than if it is majoritarian given the greater representation provided by proportional systems. Finally, I expect to find that the higher the ethnic polarisation of the governing party in a country, the higher the probability that an individual will vote.⁶⁹⁵

Set against the claim that ethnicity matters as voters attach themselves to prospective winners, voting for parties that they think will channel rewards and prevent the incumbent getting angry or violent, especially in dominant party regimes, is the argument that it is actually economics which drives voting in Africa. Voters will vote for the incumbent if the economy is good and vote against him if it is doing badly.⁶⁹⁶ Bratton and Bhavnani argue that both of these things happen in Africa.⁶⁹⁷ Voters kick out representatives that fail to deliver.⁶⁹⁸ If these punishment theories are true then higher turnout should be found at times of poor economic performance when citizens turn out to punish incumbents at the polls. A negative relationship between the interaction of presidential performance and support for a party should also be found as those setting out to punish the president and who also have a rival party to vote for will be more likely to vote.

⁶⁹⁵ Cheeseman N and Ford R. 2007.

⁶⁹⁶ Key, V.O. 1964. *Politics, Parties and Pressure Groups*; Tufte, E.R. 1978. *Political Control of the Economy*; Lewis-Beck M and Stegmaier M. 2000. "Economic Determinants of Electoral Outcomes." *Annual Review of Political Science* 3: 183-219.

⁶⁹⁷ Bratton, Michael, and Ravi Bhavnani. 2009.

⁶⁹⁸ Hyden G and Leys C. 1972. "Elections and Politics in Single-Party Systems: The Case of Kenya and Tanzania." *British Journal of Political Science* 2:389-420; Barkan J. 1984. "Legislators, Elections and Political Linkage," in Barkan (ed.), *Politics and Public Policy in Kenya and Tanzania*: 71-101.

Along with ethnicity, clientelism is the dominant defining feature of African elections in the literature.⁶⁹⁹ It is a way of doing politics dependent on voters valuing materialistic rewards more than ideological commitments, a very similar calculus to the cost-benefit calculation of the rational choice School. It is hypothesised that Clientelistic practices like offering bribes and gifts will boost turnout but only marginally due to the difficulties involved in monitoring the actions of clients by patrons. As these practices work best in small communities, clientelistic practices will be most effective in small, rural communities where the possibility of monitoring is greatest.

Even taking both these features of African politics into account, and bearing in mind that only multiparty regimes are under consideration in this chapter, it is still expected to be the case that people living in different types of regimes will have differing propensities to vote due to the differing incentives of mobilising elites in different regimes. It is expected that Electoral Authoritarian Regimes will have citizens with the highest predicted probabilities of voting but that ethnic discrimination will be used as a tool to suppress turnout amongst rival ethnic groups most effectively here.

Finally, this chapter tests the claim that the most important group of individuals when finding the causes of turnout variation are the group that has not yet acquired the habit of voting,⁷⁰⁰ the young. Those who have negative experience in their first election will be socialised into a negative relationship with voting with knock on effects that last over the lifetime of that generation.⁷⁰¹ It is hypothesised that young people will vote least but that closeness will not be the key variable in determining the type of experience young

⁶⁹⁹ Bates R. 1982. *Markets and states in Tropical Africa*; Bratton M and van de Walle N. 1994. "Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa." *World Politics* Vol. 46

⁷⁰⁰ Blais, A. 2000. *To vote or not to vote: the merits and limits of rational choice theory*; Miller, Warren, and Merrill Shanks. 1996. *The New American Voter*; Lyons W and Alexander R. 2000. "A Tale of Two Electorates", *Journal of Politics* Vol. 62: 1014-1034

⁷⁰¹ Plutzer E. 2002. "Becoming a Habitual Voter: Inertia, Resources and Growth in Young Adulthood", *American Political Science Review* Vol. 96:41-56; Franklin M. 2004. *Voter Turnout and the Dynamics of Electoral Competition in Established Democracies since 1945*.

people have in their first election. This thesis cannot be tested conclusively due to the lack of time series data, but significant differences in the determinants of turnout for colonial, postcolonial and multiparty generations today would add a great deal of weight to the argument.

6.2 Ethnicity

6.2.1 Operationalisation

To test ethnic fractionalisation the *PREG* variable discussed in the introduction is used. In the sample it ranges from 0 for the least fractionalised countries of Botswana and Lesotho to 0.71 for Zambia. Ethnic polarisation is tested separately for government and opposition parties using the data and operationalisation of Cheeseman and Ford.⁷⁰² *Ethnic Polarisation of Government Party by Country* ranges from 0.068 in Senegal to a high of 0.44 in Namibia whilst *Ethnic Polarisation of Opposition Party by Country* ranges from 0.096 in Mali to 0.72 in Uganda.⁷⁰³ After consulting a wide variety of data sources I constructed two dichotomous measures of the importance of ethnicity in relation to those in power. *Ethnicity Matches President (at election)* and *Ethnicity Matches President (winner)*. The first is coded one when the ethnicity of the respondent matches the ethnicity of the leader in power during the election, and the second is coded one when the ethnicity of the respondent matches that of the winner of the election. The first is used to assess whether those in power during the election use their incumbent advantage to mobilise co-ethnics, whilst the second tests whether those who win elections do so because of their ability to mobilise co-ethnics. In the data set 25% of respondents were coded one for the first variable and 24% for the second; the highest proportion of co-ethnic voters were in Burkina Faso, Namibia and Senegal at around 50% and the lowest in Tanzania at 0.25%. *Ethnic Discrimination* ranges from one "never" to

⁷⁰² Cheeseman N and Ford R. 2007. "Ethnicity as a Political Cleavage" *Afrobarometer Working Paper No. 83*

⁷⁰³ The "ETHPOL" measure of polarisation used by Cheeseman and Ford was also tested in the 12 available countries but was not significant and as it adds nothing to the explanation and is only available for 12 countries is left out of further discussion.

five "always" and measures the extent to which respondents feel that their ethnic group is discriminated against. Of those who answered the survey 43% were coded as one and 8% as five.⁷⁰⁴

6.2.2 Results

Table 6.1: Ethnicity

	<i>Model E1</i>	<i>Model E2</i>	<i>Model E3</i>
Variable	B (s.e.)	B (s.e.)	B (s.e.)
<i>Level 1: Individuals</i>			
Age	0.02 *** (0.00)	0.02***(0.00)	0.01***(0.00)
Gender	-0.01 (0.04)	-0.02 (0.04)	0.02 (0.08)
Lived Poverty Index	0.04 * (0.02)	0.04** (0.02)	0.02 (0.04)
Rural	0.08** (0.04)	0.11*** (0.04)	-0.05 (0.08)
Education : Tertiary	-0.13 * (0.06)	-0.13** (0.06)	-0.17 (0.11)
Education : Primary	0.20** (0.05)	0.18*** (0.05)	0.08 (0.09)
Education: None	0.19*** (0.07)	0.15** (0.06)	0.02 (0.12)
Employed	0.07 * (0.04)	0.08** (0.04)	-0.10 (0.08)
Head Of Household	0.10 ** (0.04)	0.08* (0.04)	0.08 (0.09)
Political Knowledge	0.32*** (0.03)	0.29*** (0.03)	0.05 (0.06)
Broadcast News	0.14* (0.07)	0.15** (0.07)	0.35** (0.15)
Newspaper News	-0.18 *** (0.07)	-0.17** (0.07)	-0.10 (0.13)
Close To Political Party	0.61*** (0.47)	0.62*** (0.04)	0.55*** (0.07)
Member Religion	0.17*** (0.07)	0.19*** (0.06)	0.36*** (0.13)
Politically Active	1.03*** (0.09)	0.93*** (0.09)	1.03*** (0.18)
Contact Politician	0.71 *** (0.12)	0.63*** (0.11)	0.67*** (0.23)
Contact Government Official	-0.35*** (0.10)	-0.30*** (0.10)	-0.44** (0.20)
Interest In Politics	0.34*** (0.05)	0.35*** (0.05)	0.20** (0.09)
Election Free and Fair	0.98 *** (0.07)	0.96*** (0.06)	0.86*** (0.13)
Prefer Alternatives	-0.32*** (0.10)	-0.39*** (0.10)	-0.14 (0.21)
How Often Attacked	-0.57 *** (0.11)	-0.54*** (0.11)	-0.51** (0.20)
Ethnicity Matches President (At Election)	0.01 (0.05)		
Ethnicity Matches President (Winner)		-0.03 (0.05)	-0.03 (0.05)
Ethnic Discrimination	-0.06*** (0.01)	-0.06*** (0.01)	-0.05* (0.03)
<i>Level 2: Country</i>			
PREG	11.63*** (1.43)	12.33*** (1.31)	1.60** (0.77)
Electoral System	1.24*** (0.13)	1.23*** (0.13)	
PREG*Electoral System	-5.85*** (0.56)	-5.85*** (0.56)	
Ethnic Polarisation of Government Party			2.48*** (0.77)
Ethnic Polarisation of Opposition Party			-1.53** (0.74)
Constant	-4.42*** (0.80)	-4.57*** (0.77)	-0.23 (0.36)
<i>Random Effects</i>			
Sd	2.67*** (0.57)	2.66*** (0.51)	0.27*** (0.07)
-2Log Likelihood	21572.48	22354.95	6324.139
No. of Groups	18	19	12
No. of Individuals	33104	34214	13900

Reference Category for Education is Education: Secondary *** = p < 0.01; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.1

⁷⁰⁴ Cape Verde was excluded from this section as given the lack of ethnic divisions of the sort on the rest of the continent it did not make sense to include it and the Afrobarometer does not ask some of the questions on ethnic identification in Cape Verde.

The results show, as hypothesised, that ethnicity is an important variable when it comes to the individual voting decision in Africa. First, throughout this chapter the higher the number of politically relevant ethnic groups (*PREG*) the higher the turnout. Second those who feel their ethnic group is discriminated against (*Ethnic Discrimination*) vote at lower rates than those who never feel discriminated against, confirming the hypothesis on the effects of ethnic discrimination. Further evidence for this is found in the failure of the Minimax-Regret hypothesis. The Minimax Regret hypothesis (that those ethnic groups with the most to win or lose vote most)⁷⁰⁵ was tested by including dummy variables for high, low and medium ethnic discrimination (not shown), and none were significant. This casts a great deal of doubt on the application of Minimax Regret to ethnic voting in the sample, and provides support for the idea that groups who feel discriminated against remove themselves from political activity. As such two rather interesting possibilities emerge. The first is that ruling elites have room to play with. Discrimination is a potential tool to remove rival ethnic groups from the political playing field. The second possibility, which cannot be ruled out, is that those groups who vote least are the most discriminated against. In other words, if a group does not vote it opens itself up to being discriminated against. It loses the ability to influence politics. Either way there does appear to be evidence to support the idea that low turnout and high ethnic discrimination are correlated.

The third hypothesis, that co-ethnics of the President are more likely to vote, does not appear to be supported by the evidence here. Incumbent Presidents do not appear to be able to mobilise larger proportions of their own ethnic group. Co-ethnics of the President vote at very similar rates to the rest of the population. Moreover, the winner of the presidential election does not appear to have been victorious on the back of higher turnout from his own

⁷⁰⁵ Kimenyi M and Gutierrez Romero R. 2008. "Tribalism as Minimax-Regret Strategy: Evidence from Voting in the 2007 Kenyan Elections" Afrobarometer Working Paper No. 103

ethnic group. Co-ethnics of the winning candidate are actually marginally less likely to vote than the rest of the population, though this finding is not statistically significant.

The fourth hypothesis from chapter three was that the higher the ethnic polarisation of the governing party in a country, the higher the probability that an individual would vote. The opposite was expected for opposition parties. Both of these hypotheses are supported by the data. Cheeseman and Ford's⁷⁰⁶ suggestion that when governing parties appeal across ethnic boundaries the space for opposition parties is limited, forcing them to retreat to their ethnic support bases has an interesting corollary in the turnout data in this study. When governing parties decide their best way of staying in power is to appeal to particular ethnic identities (scenario one) this frees up space for opposition parties to secure higher levels of support and mobilise greater numbers of people. In the opposite scenario where governing parties are more hegemonic, securing support from a broad cross-ethnic section of the population (scenario two), opposition parties cannot compete on a national level and as such mobilise fewer people. In scenario one the dominant strategy for the governing party is to ensure that every member of its ethnic group turns out to vote, whilst the dominant strategy of the opposition is to turn out every single non co-ethnic of the ruling party. From a practical point of view not only is space freed up for opposition parties, but it is much easier for the opposition to choose which citizens to target. In scenario two the governing party can afford to be less active in its mobilisation efforts due to the fact that it has a much larger pool of voters. The opposition party, retreating to its small ethnic support base, is only able to mobilise a certain section of the population; a section who already know they are probably going to lose.

⁷⁰⁶ Cheeseman N and Ford R. 2007.

The interaction term between *PREG* and the electoral system casts some doubt on Lindberg's hypothesis that more majoritarian systems have lower rates of participation⁷⁰⁷ and that the electoral system and the ethnic fractionalisation of a country work together when it comes to predicting turnout. The hypothesis was that individuals in countries with a higher *PREG* score would have greater probabilities of voting in countries with proportional electoral systems, which provide more space for small parties to be represented in parliament. It was thought that less fractionalised countries would benefit from the benefits of constituency politics and clientelistic practices in majoritarian systems and vote at higher rates. In fact proportional systems have relatively stable predicted probabilities in the survey across the range of *PREG* scores in the sample. Majoritarian systems also have little variance across the range of *PREG* scores available. In mixed electoral systems higher predicted probabilities of voting at higher levels of ethnic fractionalisation are found and there is thus some evidence to support the idea that more proportional systems have higher rates of turnout in countries with higher levels of ethnic fractionalisation, but no evidence to suggest that the opposite relationship holds for majoritarian systems. This finding is tempered by the fact that the sample size of cases is very small here, and this finding is thus one that needs further research to be confirmed.

The next question to be addressed is whether there is a relationship between the ethnic base of parties and their differing abilities to mobilise their supporters. Whether there is a greater mobilisation effect on the part of ethnic rather than non-ethnic parties is tested amongst those who stated that they supported a political party. Only limited data was available but 8000 voters in nine countries were matched to the five types of party identified by Cheeseman and Ford.⁷⁰⁸ Given that this data does not include all political parties in a

⁷⁰⁷ Lindberg S. 2005. "Consequences of electoral systems in Africa: a preliminary inquiry" *Electoral Studies* Vol. 24: 41-64.

⁷⁰⁸ See Chapter three and Cheeseman N and Ford R. 2007.

country and only covers round three of the Afrobarometer we need to be careful about generalising from it, but it is still useful in helping to begin to understand the mobilisation potential of different types of party and party systems. Of the relevant party supporters 32% supported a *Non Ethnic Party*, 16% a *Multi Ethnic Party without a Majority Ethnic Group*, 12% a *Multi Ethnic Party with a Majority Ethnic Group*, 23% a *Potentially Ethnic Party* and 17% an *Ethnic Party*. Dummy variables were created for these 5 groups and the results are displayed in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: For party supporters, do more ethnic parties generate higher turnout?

<i>Model E5</i>	
Variable	B (s.e.)
<i>Individual Level</i>	
Age	0.02*** (0.01)
Gender	0.23* (0.13)
Lived Poverty Index	-0.05 (0.06)
Rural	-0.11 (0.14)
Education : Tertiary	-0.34* (0.19)
Education : Primary	-0.08 (0.16)
Education: None	-0.05 (0.22)
Employed	-0.18 (0.13)
Head Of Household	0.38** (0.15)
Political Knowledge	0.09 (0.10)
Broadcast News	0.13 (0.26)
Newspaper News	-0.02 (0.21)
Member Religion	0.64*** (0.21)
Politically Active	0.90*** (0.32)
Contact Politician	1.32*** (0.39)
Contact Government Official	-0.87*** (0.32)
Interest In Politics	0.18 (0.18)
Election Free and Fair	0.67*** (0.23)
Prefer Alternatives	0.06 (0.35)
How Often Attacked	-0.68* (0.35)
Ethnicity Matches President (Winner)	0.09 (0.19)
Ethnic Discrimination	0.01 (0.05)
Ethnic Party	-0.29 (0.39)
Potentially Ethnic Party	-0.55* (0.33)
Multi Ethnic Party without a Majority Ethnic Group	-0.51* (0.30)
Non Ethnic Party	-0.28 (0.40)
<i>National Level</i>	
PREG	1.80*** (0.63)
Constant	0.53 (0.57)
<i>Random Effects</i>	
Sd	0.31 (0.14)
-2Log Likelihood	2306.3878
No. of Groups	9
No. of Individuals	6680

Reference Category for Education is Education: Secondary. Reference category for ethnic profile of party supported is Multi Ethnic Party with a Majority Ethnic Group *** = $p < 0.01$; ** = $p < 0.05$; * = $p < 0.1$

Whilst two of the variables representing *multi-ethnic parties without a majority ethnic group* and *potentially ethnic parties* are both significant, the substantive effects are relatively

similar. Individuals close to *multi-ethnic parties with a majority ethnic group* appear to have the highest predicted probabilities of voting and are three percentage points more likely to vote than those close to potentially ethnic parties or multi-ethnic parties without a majority group.⁷⁰⁹ This result appears to suggest that being right in the middle, or at the extremes, of the ethnic base of the party continuum results in slightly higher propensities to vote than in being somewhat ethnically based, or somewhat non-ethnically based. Without wanting to make too much of these findings it does look like there is some evidence to suggest that parties do best at mobilising supporters when the dynamics of ethnic competition within a party are clear cut and easily observable by the population. Where it is unclear whether the parties are truly multi ethnic, or strongly devoted to one ethnic group or none those parties find it relatively difficult to mobilise.

6.2.3 Ethnicity versus Economic Performance, Assessments of presidential Performance and delivery to Constituencies

This section tests three hypotheses. It tests whether economic and presidential performance is an important predictor of turnout, asks whether the "punishment" motive to punish poorly performing administrations is a motivator of turnout, and finally looks at the effects of constituency size on voting. This chapter is the only one where we are able to properly analyse constituency size. Due to a lack of data the average constituency size is calculated on the basis of the number of constituency MPs and the voting age population.

⁷⁰⁹ For an employed, young, female, rural voter of average means with only a Primary school education and all other values at their mean.

Table 6.3: Ethnicity versus Economic Performance, Assessments of presidential Performance and delivery to Constituencies

Variable	Model D1 ⁷¹⁰	Model D2: Constituency Size
	B (s.e.)	B (s.e.)
<i>Level 1: Individual</i>		
Age	0.02*** (0.00)	0.02*** (0.00)
Gender (1=Female)	0.04 (0.07)	0.04 (0.07)
Lived Poverty Index	0.03 (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)
Rural	-0.00 (0.07)	-0.00 (0.07)
Education : Tertiary	-0.19* (0.10)	-0.19* (0.10)
Education : Primary	0.14* (0.09)	0.14* (0.09)
Education: None	0.01 (0.11)	0.01 (0.11)
Employed	-0.08 (0.11)	-0.08 (0.07)
Head Of Household	0.10 (0.07)	0.10 (0.07)
Political Knowledge	0.04 (0.05)	0.05 (0.05)
Broadcast News	0.23* (0.13)	0.23* (0.13)
Newspaper News	-0.00 (0.11)	-0.00 (0.11)
Close To Political Party	0.91*** (0.17)	0.91*** (0.17)
Member Religion	0.32*** (0.11)	0.32*** (0.11)
Politically Active	1.07*** (0.16)	1.07*** (0.16)
Contact Politician	0.58*** (0.20)	0.58*** (0.20)
Contact Government Official	-0.41** (0.17)	-0.41** (0.17)
Interest In Politics	0.23*** (0.09)	0.23*** (0.09)
Election Free and Fair	1.00*** (0.12)	1.00*** (0.12)
Prefer Alternatives	0.04 (0.19)	0.04 (0.19)
How Often Attacked	-0.53*** (0.19)	-0.53*** (0.19)
Ethnicity Matches President (Winner)	-0.09 (0.09)	-0.09 (0.09)
Ethnic Discrimination	-0.04 (0.03)	-0.04 (0.03)
Inter Ethnic Trust	0.03 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)
Ethnic Salience	0.01 (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)
Presidents Performance	0.07* (0.04)	0.07* (0.04)
Government Handles Economy	0.04 (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)
Future Economic Performance	-0.00 (0.03)	-0.00 (0.03)
Close To Political Party*Presidents Performance	-0.11** (0.05)	-0.11** (0.05)
<i>Level 2: Country</i>		
PREG	1.29** (0.56)	1.17* (0.63)
Log Average Constituency Size (Population)		0.04 (0.09)
Constant	-0.67* (0.38)	-1.06 (0.98)
<i>Random Effects</i>		
Sd	0.56*** (0.11)	0.57*** (0.11)
-2Log Likelihood	8379.26	8379.107
No. of Groups	17	17
No. of Individuals	18913	18913

Reference Category for Education is Education: Secondary *** = p < 0.01; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.1

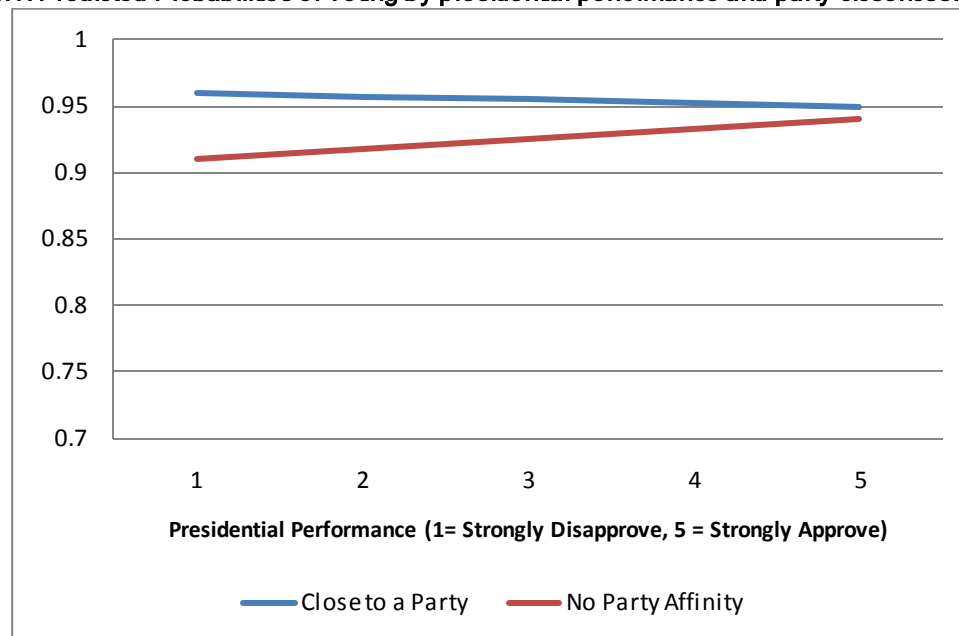
In Model D1 the full battery of variables used by Bratton and Bhavnani⁷¹¹ are tested using round three data as not all of the variables are available for round four. Economic performance appears to be entirely unrelated to the propensity to vote. Neither respondents' assessments' of the future economic trajectory of the country nor their assessments of the governments handling of the economy are statistically significant and both signs are in the opposite direction to those hypothesised. There wasn't enough variation in the GDP growth figures for the seventeen countries to use the figures here, but in conjunction with the finding

⁷¹⁰ Only round three.

⁷¹¹ Bratton, Michael, and Ravi Bhavnani. 2009. "Voting in Africa: Ethnic, Economic, or Strategic." Working Paper. Michigan state University.

in chapter four that *actual* economic performance has no significant effect on turnout, the finding here that *assessments* of economic performance are not drivers of turnout does seem to be robust.

Graph 6.1: Predicted Probabilities of Voting by presidential performance and party closeness: Model D2



Presidential Performance is a good predictor of voting. Interacting *Close To Political Party* and *Presidents Performance* reveals that the "punishment" motive appears to have some support in the data, but only when it comes to political, not economic, performance and only for party supporters. Graph 6.1 illustrates the evidence for this hypothesis. Voters who are close to a political party vote at lower rates when they positively assess *Presidents Performance*. This suggests that there is some truth to the idea that voters are motivated to turn out when they think the President is performing badly, but that they do not reward good performance. It may be that supporters of the ruling party, likely to give the President a high score, become complacent if the President is doing well, whilst those close to opposition parties are motivated to turnout when performance is poor. What is particularly interesting is that presidential performance is a strong driver of turnout for those who aren't affiliated to a political party. For the unaffiliated rather than a punishment mechanism there may be a "reward" mechanism at play, driving higher turnout to support good performance. As such,

party partisans appear to have rather different motivations to non-partisans. For the latter, a President who does well may help to generate more support for the system as evidenced by their decision to vote. For partisans, good performance might generate complacency.

Model D2 shows the hypothesis that constituency size matters is supported in our dataset. This supports research in Costa Rica, which found that it was the most important determinant of turnout in that country.⁷¹² Those respondents who live in countries with fewer voters per constituency are more likely to vote than those who live in bigger constituencies. This supports the importance of the mobilisation variables that were identified earlier and the idea that turnout in Africa is to some degree a function of face-to-face mobilisation and clientelistic practice. In small constituencies politicians are much better placed to effectively contact their constituents (the importance of which was shown earlier) and integrate their constituents into patronage networks. Election agents and communities are also able to monitor turnout more effectively and more effectively punish non-voting and reward voting. Moreover, given that the benefits of voting are conditioned by the probability of gaining a clientelistic reward in patronage driven societies, the smaller the constituency the more likely it is that an individual will be able secure a reward from his patron.⁷¹³ The importance of the direct payment of election related incentives is revealed in the next section. For now we should note the possibility that turnout is about the effectiveness of clientelistic networks.

6.3: Incentives in Elections

In the third Round of the Afrobarometer question 57F asks *"And during the (last) election, how often (if ever) did a candidate or someone from a political party offer you something, like food or a gift, in return for your vote?"* Using this question we are able to

⁷¹² Remmer K. 2010. "Political Scale and Electoral Turnout: Evidence from the Less Industrialised world" in *Comparative Political Studies* Vol. 43 No. 3: 275-303

⁷¹³ Remmer K. 2010.

construct the variable *Election Bribe* which varies from zero "Never" to three "Often". Those with no experience of being offered anything for their vote and who could not remember were recoded as 0. Table 6.4 reflects the results of a multilevel logistic regression run on round three data with countries as the second level unit of analysis. It is worth noting that the respondents are not asked if they *accepted* the gift or whether the gift was offered on the day of the election, before the election, or as part of a long-term clientelistic relationship; all factors which Blaydes finds significantly affect the effectiveness of offering election incentives in Egypt.⁷¹⁴ We also don't know who offered them the gift, whether it was a government or opposition activist, an MP or a community leader.

Table 6.4: Incentives in Elections (Round 3)

	<i>Model B1</i>	<i>Model B2</i>	<i>Model B3: The Determinants of being bribed</i>
Variable	B (s.e.)	B (s.e.)	B (s.e.)
<i>Individual Level</i>			
Age (In Years)	0.02*** (0.00)	0.02*** (0.00)	-0.004*** (0.00)
Gender (1=Female)	0.04 (0.07)	0.04 (0.07)	-0.06 (0.04)
Lived Poverty Index	0.03 (0.03)	0.03 (0.07)	0.15*** (0.02)
Rural	0.00 (0.07)	-0.05 (0.08)	-0.01 (0.04)
Education : Tertiary	-0.19* (0.10)	-0.19* (0.10)	0.01 (0.06)
Education : Primary	0.14* (0.09)	0.14 (0.09)	0.06 (0.05)
Education: None	0.01 (0.11)	0.01 (0.11)	-0.06 (0.07)
Employed	-0.08 (0.07)	-0.08 (0.07)	0.15*** (0.04)
Head Of Household	0.10 (0.07)	0.10 (0.07)	-0.07 (0.05)
Political Knowledge	0.05 (0.05)	0.05 (0.05)	0.07** (0.03)
Broadcast News	0.22* (0.13)	0.22* (0.13)	0.27*** (0.08)
Newspaper News	0.01 (0.11)	0.01 (0.11)	-0.03 (0.07)
Close To Political Party	0.54*** (0.07)	0.54*** (0.07)	0.26*** (0.04)
Member Religion	0.33*** (0.11)	0.32*** (0.11)	0.05 (0.07)
Politically Active	1.05*** (0.16)	1.06*** (0.16)	0.50*** (0.10)
Contact Politician	0.56*** (0.19)	0.55*** (0.19)	0.66 (0.10)
Contact Government Official	-0.43** (0.17)	-0.42** (0.17)	0.06 (0.05)
Interest In Politics	0.23*** (0.09)	0.23*** (0.09)	-0.31*** (0.05)
Election Free and Fair	0.99*** (0.12)	0.99*** (0.12)	-0.31*** (0.07)
Prefer Alternatives	0.06 (0.19)	0.05 (0.18)	0.10 (0.11)
How Often Attacked	-0.53*** (0.19)	-0.53*** (0.19)	0.79*** (0.10)
Ethnicity Matches President (Winner)	-0.08 (0.09)	-0.08 (0.09)	-0.17*** (0.05)
Ethnic Discrimination	-0.04* (0.03)	-0.04* (0.03)	0.06*** (0.01)
Presidents Performance	0.02 (0.03)	0.02 (0.03)	
Election Bribe	0.08** (0.04)	-0.02 (0.13)	
Election Bribe* Rural		0.33** (0.16)	
<i>National Level</i>			
PREG	1.53** (0.73)	1.53** (0.74)	2.02 (1.36)
Log Average Constituency Size (Population)	-0.01 (0.09)	-0.01 (0.09)	-0.10 (0.18)
Electoral System	0.32* (0.19)	0.32* (0.19)	0.13 (0.37)
Status (CL and PR)	-0.28 (0.38)	-0.28 (0.38)	
Constant	-0.21 (0.93)	-0.16 (0.93)	-2.34 (1.80)
<i>Random Effects</i>			
Sd	0.51*** (0.10)	0.51*** (0.09)	1.07*** (0.19)
-2Log Likelihood	8385.55	8381.53	18947.1
No. of Groups	17	17	17
No. of Individuals	18930	18930	23847

Reference Category for Education is Education: Secondary *** = p < 0.01; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.1

⁷¹⁴ Blaydes, L. 2006. "Who votes in Authoritarian elections and why? Determinants of voter turnout in contemporary Egypt". Paper prepared for the 2006 APSA annual meeting, August 31-September 3 2006, Philadelphia PA: 3

The first model in Table 6.4 indicates that being offered a bribe only leads to a very small increase in the chance that an individual will vote, with an effect no larger in size than being employed or being male. The offer of a bribe does not in any way automatically make someone more likely to vote. In fact, just like Bratton finds in Nigeria,⁷¹⁵ it looks like bribers are overwhelmingly wasting their money.

As was expected from the earlier analysis on rural voters the table shows that one variable does increase the efficacy of being offered a bribe: being rural. This shows both why rural respondents were more likely to vote and where and how bribery works most effectively. Clientelistic offers, when targeted, do appear to have some success. Whilst offering a bribe to an urban person actually decreases their likelihood of voting, just *offering* a bribe, not even having it accepted, raises the probability of a rural person voting by 2 percentage points. Given that we don't know anything about the scale of the offer, or whether it was even accepted, this is a noteworthy amount and lends some support to the importance of clientelistic networks as drivers of turnout in rural areas.

To get a better idea of who is targeted, Model M3 shows the results of a multilevel logistic regression using whether or not someone was offered a bribe as the dependant variable. It is interesting to note that studies in South America which show that the lower the level of individual resources the greater the incentives for voting in response to clientelistic inducements⁷¹⁶ are born out in terms of who is targeted in this study. Political actors are more likely to approach those who are younger, poorer and not the heads of their household. This indicates that the actors whom are seen as being the holders of fewest resources are targeted the most. Vote buyers don't just approach poor people at random however. Those who take

⁷¹⁵ Bratton M. 2008. "Vote Buying and Violence in Nigerian Election Campaigns" Afrobarometer Working Paper No. 99

⁷¹⁶ Remmer K. 2010.

part in politics, whether by being close to a party, politically active or contacting politicians, are more likely to be targeted (though the last variable may well be a function of having been approached with a bribe).

Interestingly those who say that they have been physically attacked more often have odds of over 2:1 of being targeted by vote buyers, by far the largest substantive effect. This appears to be a sign of why being offered a bribe is so ineffective. It is unlikely that those offering bribes are also attacking their potential clients. Instead what the result shows is that the group of people being bribed by one party may also be attacked by another group to prevent them from voting. Political parties do not act in isolation. The people judged to be most likely to vote for party A if offered a bribe are also known by party B, who may use violence to prevent those individuals from going to the polls.

6.4: The Effects of Regime type

The differing effects of regime types on turnout is a seriously under researched area in the study of turnout in general and studies of turnout using the Afrobarometer have made no attempt to take into account the effects of differing types of regime classification made possible by current research into Electoral Authoritarian regimes. This is seriously problematic given the countries included in the Afrobarometer. It is also problematic given recent studies that show the importance of the regime type preceding the election in determining the success of transitions.⁷¹⁷ Using the classification mechanism rigorously tested and advocated by Lindberg,⁷¹⁸ itself based upon a slightly modified version of those proposed by Diamond⁷¹⁹ and Schleder,⁷²⁰ countries in the sample were divided into three

⁷¹⁷ Bratton M and van de Walle N. 1994. "Neo-patrimonial regimes and political transitions in Africa". *World politics*. Vol. 46 No. 4

⁷¹⁸ Lindberg S. 2006. "Tragic Protest: Why do Opposition Parties Boycott Elections?" in Schleder A (ed). *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*.

⁷¹⁹ Diamond L. 2002. "Elections without Democracy: Thinking about Hybrid Regimes" *Journal of Democracy* Vol. 13 No.2: 21-35

⁷²⁰ Schleder A. 2002. "Elections without Democracy: The Menu of Manipulation" *Journal of Democracy* Vol. 13 No.2: 36-50

categories. *Liberal Democracies* are regimes that score a maximum of 2 on the combined average Freedom House Civil and Political Rights scales. *Electoral Democracies* are those which have combined average Freedom House Civil and Political Rights scores of between 2 and 3.5 and which have elections classified as free and fair. *Electoral Authoritarian* regimes are all other regimes holding de jure competitive and participatory elections.

Table 6.5: Classification of Regimes in the sample in the year of the election

<i>Election</i>	<i>Liberal Democracy</i>	<i>Electoral Democracy</i>	<i>Electoral Authoritarian</i>
Benin 2003	X		
Benin 2007		X	
Botswana 2004	X		
Burkina Faso 2007			X
Cape Verde 2002	X		
Cape Verde 2006	X		
Ghana 2004	X		
Kenya 2002			X
Kenya 2007			X
Lesotho 2002		X	
Lesotho 2007		X	
Liberia 2005		X	
Madagascar 2002		X	
Madagascar 2007		X	
Malawi 2004			X
Mali 2002		X	
Mali 2007		X	
Mozambique 2004		X	
Namibia 2004		X	
Nigeria 2003			X
Nigeria 2007			X
Senegal 2000		X	
Senegal 2007		X	
South Africa 2004	X		
Tanzania 2000			X
Tanzania 2005		X	
Uganda 2002			X
Uganda 2006			X
Zambia 2001			X

Table 6.5 shows that of the sample universe of elections, only 6 took place in regimes that would be classified as Liberal Democratic, 12 in Electoral Democracies and 11 in Electoral Authoritarian regimes. This would not be a problem if all three regimes were expected to have very similar patterns of turnout. This is not, however, expected to be the case. Chapter four showed that there are significant differences in patterns of turnout and the determinants of turnout across countries depending on regime type. Those countries making use of the institutional facades of democracy, including regular multiparty elections, to conceal and reproduce authoritarian governance are expected to mobilise voters in very different ways.⁷²¹ Given that this chapter focuses on responses to the Afrobarometer it does

⁷²¹ Schleder A. "The Logic of Electoral Authoritarianism" in Schleder A (ed). 2006. *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*.

not have the same issues with data validity and ballot stuffing that had to be contended with in Chapter four, and thus the hypothesis can be tested with more certainty. For the purposes of this study the effects of regime type at the time of the election are tested followed by the effects of the regime type in the period immediately preceding the election. Lindberg advocates the latter method as he argues that "elections typically start some time before polling day" as parties prepare for campaigns, potential voters start to think about their decision and electoral rolls are consolidated.⁷²²

Table 6.6: Political Regimes

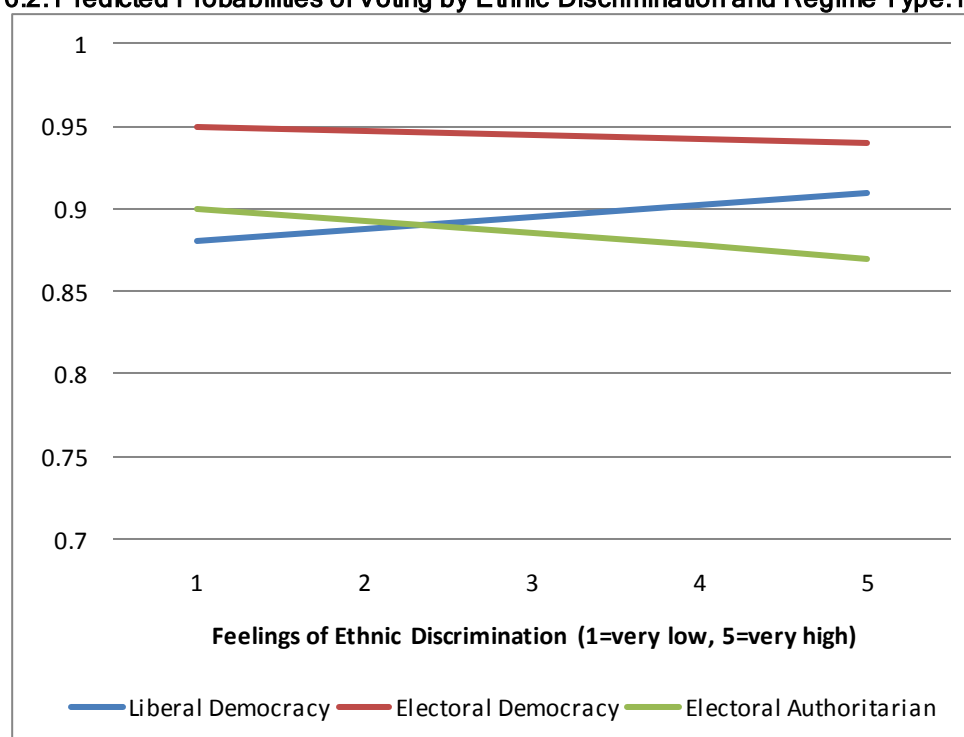
	<i>Model P1</i>	<i>Model P2</i>	<i>Model P3</i>
Variable	B (s.e.)	B (s.e.)	B (s.e.)
<i>Individual Level</i>			
Age	0.02***(0.00)	0.02***(0.00)	0.02***(0.00)
Gender (1=Female)	-0.04 (0.04)	-0.04 (0.04)	-0.04 (0.04)
Lived Poverty Index	0.05***(0.02)	0.05***(0.02)	0.05***(0.02)
Rural	0.12*** (0.04)	0.11** (0.04)	0.11** (0.04)
Education : Tertiary	-0.12** (0.06)	-0.11* (0.06)	-0.12** (0.06)
Education : Primary	0.12*** (0.05)	0.13*** (0.05)	0.12** (0.05)
Education: None	0.07 (0.06)	0.09 (0.06)	0.07 (0.06)
Employed	0.07* (0.04)	0.08* (0.04)	0.07* (0.04)
Head Of Household	0.10** (0.04)	0.09* (0.04)	0.10** (0.04)
Political Knowledge	0.13*** (0.03)	0.13*** (0.03)	0.13*** (0.03)
Broadcast News	0.23*** (0.07)	0.24*** (0.08)	0.28** (0.11)
Newspaper News	-0.18*** (0.07)	-0.19*** (0.06)	-0.19** (0.06)
Close To Political Party	0.62*** (0.04)	0.61*** (0.04)	0.63*** (0.05)
Member Religion	0.20*** (0.07)	0.20*** (0.07)	0.22** (0.09)
Politically Active	1.00*** (0.09)	1.06*** (0.09)	1.06*** (0.09)
Contact Politician	0.70*** (0.11)	0.78*** (0.12)	0.71*** (0.15)
Contact Government Official	-0.32*** (0.10)	-0.37*** (0.11)	-0.37*** (0.11)
Interest In Politics	0.32*** (0.05)	0.33*** (0.05)	0.33*** (0.05)
Election Free and Fair	0.96*** (0.07)	0.97*** (0.07)	0.96*** (0.07)
Prefer Alternatives	-0.32*** (0.10)	-0.30*** (0.11)	-0.30*** (0.15)
How Often Attacked	-0.52*** (0.11)	-0.56*** (0.11)	-0.56*** (0.14)
Ethnicity Matches President (At Election)	-0.12** (0.05)	-0.05 (0.07)	-0.12** (0.05)
Ethnic Discrimination	-0.05*** (0.01)	-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.07*** (0.02)
<i>National Level</i>			
PREG	1.52*** (0.54)	1.96*** (0.62)	1.52*** (0.54)
Electoral System	0.45** (0.18)	0.36* (0.19)	0.43** (0.18)
Electoral Democracy at the Election		-0.02 (0.38)	
Liberal Democracy at the Election		0.57 (0.46)	
Electoral Democracy at the Last Election	0.91** (0.37)		0.19 (0.32)
Liberal Democracy at the Last Election	0.04 (0.70)		0.12 (0.46)
<i>Interactions</i>			
Ethnic Discrimination*Electoral Democracy at the Last Election			0.03 (0.03)
Ethnic Discrimination*Liberal Democracy at the Last Election			0.14*** (0.05)
Constant	-1.31*** (0.35)	-1.43*** (0.44)	-1.26*** (0.35)
<i>Random Effects</i>			
Sd	0.61*** (0.09)	0.67*** (0.10)	0.61*** (0.09)
-2Log Likelihood	21789.41	20847.486	21767.45
No. of Groups	29	29	29
No. of Individuals	34214	34214	34214

Reference Category for Education is Education: Secondary, Category for Regime is Electoral Authoritarian *** = $p < 0.01$; ** = $p < 0.05$; * = $p < 0.1$

⁷²² Lindberg S. 2006. "Tragic Protest: Why do Opposition Parties Boycott Elections?": 151

Table 6.6 shows that the regime type at the previous election does affect the predicted probability of voting for respondents in the sample. The use of the regime type at the time of the election has ambiguous results. This may in part be due to the Freedom House variables not entirely capturing the way that regimes evolve at the time of the election – the time they come under the most stress. The general trend appears to be that the predicted probability of voting is highest in Electoral Democracies, followed by Electoral Authoritarian Regimes with respondents living in Liberal Democratic countries having the lowest predicted probabilities of voting.

Graph 6.2: Predicted Probabilities of Voting by Ethnic Discrimination and Regime Type: Model P3



In graph 6.2 the feeling that your ethnic group is routinely discriminated against also has different effects in different regimes. Whereas feeling discriminated against lowers the propensity to vote in the two less liberal regime types it actually increases the probability of voting from 88 to 91% in Liberal Democracies. When citizens in South Africa, Ghana or Botswana feel discriminated against they do not exit politics, they enter it in greater numbers. One explanation is that these citizens appear to have sufficient faith in the system that they believe that their participation might perhaps change their circumstances as a marginalised

ethnic group or give their group a voice. Despite the higher rates of turnout in more autocratic regimes in general, the introduction of Liberal Democracy fosters participation by those groups who feel discriminated against, giving them a space in the political sphere. It is not enough to transform to an Electoral Democracy with minimal standards for free and fair elections, only Liberal Democracy appears to foster turnout amongst the discriminated.

6.5 Age: Disentangling Cohort and Life Cycle Effects

6.5.1 Method and Operationalisation

There is one final area that needs to be considered before concluding this section on individual level turnout in sub-Saharan Africa: Age. Age is one of the most frequently cited variables in the turnout literature, and it has been consistently significant throughout this section, but it is also one of the most difficult to study. Whilst most studies find a negative correlation between age and turnout there is a profound methodological problem when it comes to disentangling exactly why this is as there are three different effects at play when we look at age. The first is that individuals face life cycle effects due to the costs of voting decreasing over time, making the old more likely to vote. A number of studies have found that even this aspect isn't that simple and that the relationship between age and turnout is actually curvilinear.⁷²³ Electoral participation first increases with age and then gradually declines after middle age when older people begin to face physical infirmities.⁷²⁴ This curvilinear relationship has thus far not been tested in Africa, but we do so now by including a variable *Age Squared* in accordance with the method proposed by Johnston.⁷²⁵ Second, individuals face cohort, or generational effects.⁷²⁶ In rapidly changing countries generations

⁷²³ Gallego A. 2008. "Where else does turnout decline come from? Education, Age, Generation and Period Effects in Three European Countries" *Nordic Political Science Association* Vol. 32 No. 1: 23-44

⁷²⁴ Millbraith L. 1965. *Political participation*; Wass H. 2007. "The effects of age, generation and period on turnout in Finland 1975-2003" *Electoral Studies* Vol. 26: 648-659

⁷²⁵ Johnston R. 1989. "Génération politiques et changement électoral au Canada" in Crête J and Favre P (eds.). *Génération et politique*; Johnston R. 1992. "Political generations and electoral change in Canada." *British Journal of Political Science* Vol. 22: 93-116.

⁷²⁶ Putnam 2000.

grow up in very different circumstances and will develop their own responses to politics and political activity.⁷²⁷ Much of the current debate in the turnout literature in the West revolves around the question of the importance of these effects in explaining turnout decline. According to the theory, people born more recently have had differing socialising experiences to their parents. Franklin, Lyons and Alexander, and Blais all argue that low (or high) participation sticks to a group as a generation faces certain key experiences during its formative years, experiences which have a strong and lasting impact on political orientation and activity.⁷²⁸ In Europe the claim is that the youth lack the key experiences that motivated their parents to vote and that this explains the decline in turnout.⁷²⁹ Generations as a variable are, unfortunately, not particularly easy to construct in cross-national research as not all birth cohorts become generations. As such, dividing African voters into pre-baby-boomers (born before 1945), baby-boomers (born between 1945 and 1959), those born in the 1960s (the "generation X") and those born in the 1970s as Blais et al do for their study of Western voters,⁷³⁰ would make little sense as these categories have little relevance in terms of the lived experiences of Africans.

Finally there are period effects to consider whereby the current social situation means that everyone is less likely to vote.⁷³¹ In the west there has been a drop in participation amongst the elderly, indicating that important *period* effects are at play and that declining turnout may be characteristic of an entire era.⁷³² To test this properly we would need to make use of longitudinal data which we do not have as the Afrobarometer only covers three very closely situated periods in time when it comes to turnout, and the first one asks very different

⁷²⁷ Delli Carpini MX. 1986. *Stability and change in American politics: The coming of age of the generation of the 1960s*. New York University Press, New York; Braungart R and Braungart M. 1986. "Life course and generational politics" *Annual Review of Sociology* Vol. 12:205-301

⁷²⁸ Blais A, Gidengil E, Nevitte N and Nadeau R. 2004; Franklin M. 2004; Lyons and Alexander 2000; Martikainen and Wass 2002

⁷²⁹ Rosentone and Hansen. 2003.

⁷³⁰ Blais A, Gidengil E, Nevitte N and Nadeau R. 2004.

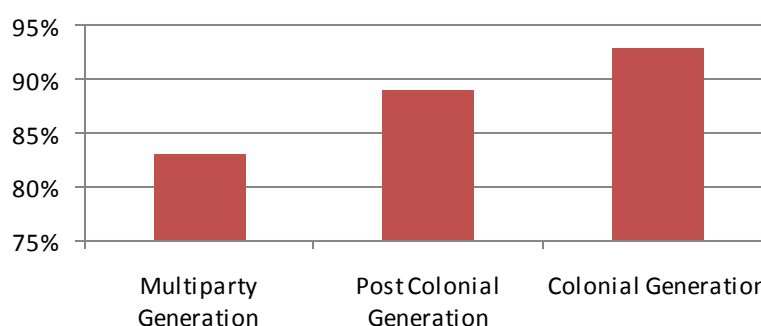
⁷³¹ Tilley, James. Unpublished. "Social and Political Generations in Contemporary Britain". D.Phil Thesis

⁷³² Wass H. 2007.

questions to the other two meaning that only two points in time are comparable properly. As such this is by necessity a very preliminary study when it comes to age.

Period, Cohort and Life Cycle effects are each a linear function of the other two,⁷³³ which makes it very difficult to treat them methodologically. If all of them are treated as linear functions then perfect collinearity will arise if we include life cycle, period and generation effects. As such, and because of the limitations above, life cycle effects are tested as a continuous function in the first set of models with a set of generation dummies, but period effects cannot be tested for. In their extensive work on public opinion and attitudes to democracy Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi provide strong empirical evidence to suggest that the best generation categories are whether an individual came of age during the Colonial, Postcolonial or Multiparty eras in a particular country.⁷³⁴ These are the generations that will be tested for in this section.

Graph 6.3: Percentage of Respondents who said that they voted by Generation



In the second set of models the effects of life cycle stages are tested by including dummy variables for different age groups. "Young" is 17-25 as this is when, according to the Mannheim school, the key experiences that shape generational identity take place.⁷³⁵ "Early Middle Age" includes ages 26-49, "Late Middle Age" 50-65 and "Senior" over 65. I expect these variables to tell us more about life cycle effects than generational effects as they are

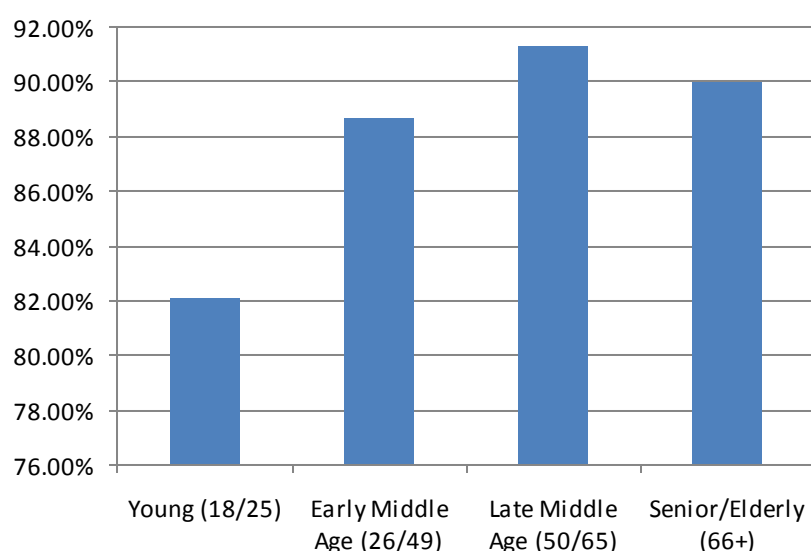
⁷³³ Glenn 2005

⁷³⁴ Bratton, M, Mattes, R and Gyimah-Boadi. 2005.

⁷³⁵ Mannheim K. 1936. *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*; Delli Carpini MX. 1986; Braungart R and Braungart M. 1986.

constructed around stages in an individual's life cycle rather than common generational experiences. Due to the use of life cycle dummies I cannot include generation dummies. These two methods are by no means perfect, and I cannot separate out the effects with complete certainty, but they are an important first step.

Graph 6.4: Percentage of Respondents who said that they voted by Age Group



6.5.2 Generations

Table 6.7: Pooled Logistic Regression : Generations

Variable	Odds	B (s.e.)
Age	1.8	0.08***(0.01)
Age2	1.00	-0.00*** (0.00)
Multiparty Generation	1.03	0.03 (0.12)
Postcolonial Generation	1.12	0.12 (0.10)
Constant		0.24 (0.26)
Sd		0.87*** (0.12)
-2Log Likelihood		23225.7
No. of Groups		29
No. of Individuals		34555

Reference Category for Generation is Colonial Generation. *** = $p < 0.01$; ** = $p < 0.05$; * = $p < 0.1$

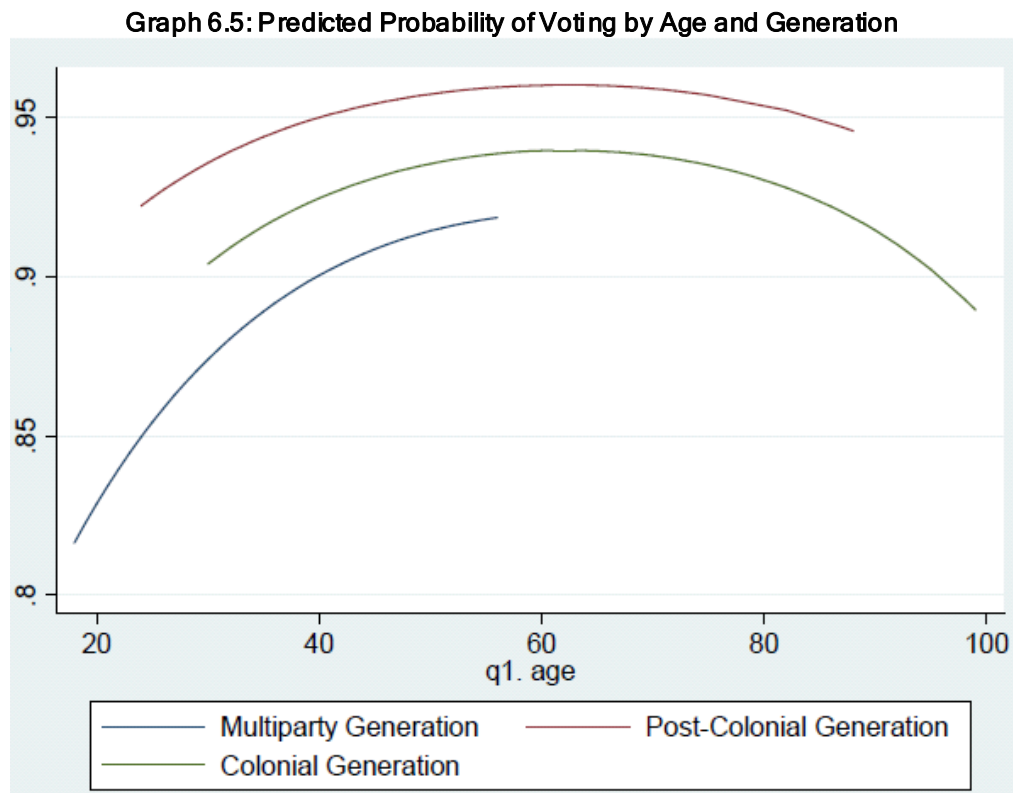
Table 6.7 presents a basic pooled logistic regression model of turnout across Rounds three and four of the survey including only age related variables. It appears to support the curvilinear relationship between age and turnout, but neither of the generation dummies is significant. Given the theoretical strength of their inclusion we retain these variables for use in the multilevel model. Table 6.8 shows the results of a multilevel logistic regression of

turnout including dummy variables for generations. Once again generational dummies are not significant.

Table 6.8: Multilevel Logistic Regression : Generations

Variable	Model G1	Model G2
	B (s.e.)	B (s.e.)
Gender	-0.07*(0.04)	-0.07 (0.04)
Lived Poverty Index	0.04**(0.02)	0.04**(0.02)
Rural	0.12*** (0.04)	0.12*** (0.04)
Education : Tertiary	-0.13** (0.06)	0.30 (0.27)
Education : Primary	0.10** (0.05)	0.48** (0.20)
Education: None	0.06 (0.06)	0.06 (0.06)
Employed	0.03 (0.04)	0.03 (0.04)
Head Of Household	0.05 (0.04)	0.05 (0.04)
Political Knowledge	0.12*** (0.03)	0.12*** (0.03)
Broadcast News	0.22*** (0.07)	0.22*** (0.07)
Newspaper News	-0.17*** (0.07)	-0.16** (0.06)
Close To Political Party	0.62*** (0.04)	0.62*** (0.04)
Member Religion	0.20*** (0.07)	0.20*** (0.07)
Politically Active	0.97*** (0.10)	0.98*** (0.10)
Contact Politician	0.69*** (0.15)	0.68*** (0.15)
Contact Government Official	-0.33*** (0.11)	-0.32** (0.11)
Interest In Politics	0.32*** (0.05)	0.32 (0.05)
Election Free and Fair	0.95*** (0.07)	0.70*** (0.22)
Prefer Alternatives	-0.31*** (0.10)	-0.31*** (0.10)
How Often Attacked	-0.50*** (0.14)	-0.50*** (0.14)
Ethnicity Matches President (At Election)	-0.12** (0.05)	-0.12** (0.05)
Ethnic Discrimination	-0.07*** (0.02)	-0.14*** (0.06)
PREG	1.41** (0.67)	1.42** (0.66)
Electoral System	0.42** (0.18)	0.41** (0.18)
Electoral Democracy at the Last Election	0.86** (0.37)	0.85** (0.37)
Liberal Democracy at the Last Election	-0.16 (0.71)	-0.20 (0.71)
Log Average Constituency Size (Population)	0.02 (0.09)	0.02 (0.09)
Ethnic Discrimination* Electoral Democracy at the Last Election	0.02 (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)
Ethnic Discrimination* Liberal Democracy at the Last Election	0.14*** (0.05)	0.17*** (0.05)
Age	0.06*** (0.01)	0.06*** (0.01)
Age Squared	-0.00*** (0.00)	-0.00*** (0.00)
Postcolonial Generation	0.07 (0.11)	0.73 (0.73)
Multiparty Generation	-0.01 (0.12)	-0.09 (0.61)
Multiparty Generation* Election Free and Fair		0.17 (0.24)
Postcolonial Generation* Election Free and Fair		0.41* (0.24)
Multiparty Generation* Ethnic Discrimination		0.06 (0.05)
Postcolonial Generation* Ethnic Discrimination		0.09* (0.05)
Multiparty Generation* Education : Tertiary		-0.47* (0.28)
Postcolonial Generation* Education : Tertiary		-0.40 (0.28)
Multiparty Generation* Education : Primary		-0.41** (0.21)
Postcolonial Generation* Education : Primary		-0.41* (0.21)
Multiparty Generation* Education: None		-0.12 (0.22)
Postcolonial Generation* Education: None		-0.26 (0.22)
Constant	-2.11** (0.95)	-2.34** (1.07)
<i>Random Effects</i>		
Sd	0.61*** (0.08)	0.61*** (0.08)
-2Log Likelihood	21718.1	21683.2
No. of Groups	29	29
No. of Individuals	34214	34214

Reference Category for Generation is Colonial Generation. Reference Category for Education is Education: Secondary, Reference Category for Regime is Electoral Authoritarian *** = p < 0.01; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.1



6.5.2.1 A Behavioural Explanation

Graph 6.5 illustrates both the life cycle and generational effects in the data. There is a clear curvilinear relationship of predicted probabilities of voting as citizens age, with each generation showing substantial increases in the propensity to vote until age 60 and a decline thereafter. We cannot be sure that this relationship will continue for the Multiparty generation as there are no respondents who came of age in a multiparty generation and are over 60, but given the general trend this seems likely. Of more interest is that there are clear generational effects which cannot be accounted for simply in terms of the age of the members of that generation. If life cycle effects were dominant then I would expect the Postcolonial generation line to be lower than the Colonial generation line given the large number of young people in the Postcolonial sample.

Instead something very interesting emerges. For three otherwise identical citizens aged 40 the predicted probability of voting if they reached the voting age during the

Postcolonial period is 2 1/2 percentage points greater than an identical citizen who reached the voting age during the Colonial period and a further 2 1/2 percentage points greater than one from the Multiparty period.

This seems somewhat difficult to explain. rational choice theory might lead one to expect that the highest turnout would be found in the closest elections. Franklin argues that citizens who grow up when politics is competitive should become habituated into voting at higher rates and that this should have a continuing effect on the voting profile of a generation.⁷³⁶ If either of these hypotheses were substantiated by the data one would expect to see the multiparty generation having the highest predicted probabilities of voting. Growing up in any other period did not provide very many *competitive* elections during which citizens could be socialised into higher rates of voting.

Alternatively, if one thinks that the lower probability of voting for the multiparty generation is in some way linked to them being complacent about democracy whilst their elders value the freedoms that they fought for,⁷³⁷ then why is it that whereas both older generations experienced undemocratic regimes the Postcolonial generation is more likely to participate than the Colonial? What is it about the Postcolonial regimes that create a generation that votes more than its parent or daughter generations for the rest of their lives?

I think that the place to begin to look for the answer is in the Behavioural literature. The problem with Rational Choice, as will be shown in the next chapter, is that it assumes citizens optimise and focus on whether or not they are pivotal. It asks one to believe that potential voters solve very complex strategic problems about the possible turnout of all other

⁷³⁶ Franklin, M. 2004.

⁷³⁷ Marks, Monique. 2001. *Young Warriors*; Dlamini S. 2005. *Youth and Identity Politics in South Africa: 1990-1994*; Karanth G. 1981. *Rural Youth: A Sociological Study of a Kamataka Village*.

agents in ways that are difficult for even the most advanced statistician to contemplate. Instead the behavioural literature points towards the way people learn habits⁷³⁸. These habits may be influenced by prior choices, both those that worked and those that didn't.⁷³⁹ Simon asks one to think of habit as something which permits the conservation of mental effort by withdrawing from the area of conscious thought those aspects of the situation that are repetitive. He gives the example of typing. At first the focus is on every movement of the fingers, their relationship to each key, but after practice a level of skill is achieved that allows the typist to no longer have to think at this level anymore. The "mere desire for the letter to be printed brings about the act without further will". Once the habit has been established the mere presence of the stimulus releases the habitual response. In the same way, a driver who habitually applies the brakes when in danger finds it difficult to do the opposite when sliding on ice.⁷⁴⁰

When it comes to voting some people learn to vote whilst others become averse to it. All actors tend to repeat satisfactory actions and avoid unsatisfactory ones, and Bendor argues that the actions considered to be satisfactory are those which generate outcomes that compare favourably to aspirations, a process he calls "aspirational based adaptation".⁷⁴¹ He argues that in competitive districts losing is dissatisfying and winning is gratifying, regardless of one's individual action. As such, both shirkers and winning voters are more likely to vote next time as the shirkers regret their inactivity when their candidate loses. For voters winning is satisfying and generates future voting and only the smaller number of losers has a negative experience. Thus the shirkers action of non-voting is inhibited, the voters reinforced. Given

⁷³⁸ Simon H. 1947. *Administrative Behaviour: A study of Decision-Making Processes in Administrative Organisation*:88-89

⁷³⁹ Bendor, J. 2010. *Bounded Rationality and Politics*:33-35

⁷⁴⁰ Simon H. 1947.

⁷⁴¹ Bendor, J. 2010:33-35

that in competitive districts there are lots of losing shirkers and winning voters, turnout stabilises at a high rate.⁷⁴²

What does this say about generations and voting in Africa and how does it tie in with the high turnout of those who grew up in Postcolonial regimes? I would argue that, unlike in multiparty regimes where, even in competitive districts, some voters lose and are inhibited from voting and some non-voters "win" and do not feel that they need to vote, in the one party state and in elections with no choice only shirkers lose and most voters win every time.

These are low information, low cost, low stakes elections. Everyone knows very little about the candidates and indeed there is very little to know. There can be no policy differences between candidates, candidates are often barred from talking about national issues,⁷⁴³ and ethnicity and language are usually deliberately excluded from the equation by the party.⁷⁴⁴ A case in point is the 1965 "houses and hoes" election in Tanzania where randomly allocated symbols were the best predictor of electoral success. To help illiterate voters choose between candidates, each constituency had one candidate with a hoe (*jembe*) symbol and another with the house (*nyumba*) symbol. The house was shaped like a western rather than a traditional house, and in the end 59 candidates won with the house symbol and 42 with the hoe. These symbols became the basis of election campaigns with successful "house" candidates campaigning as modernisers against outdated agricultural techniques.⁷⁴⁵

This example illustrates the central idea quite well. In regimes where you can be punished for not supporting the right party it is important to always choose the winner, but in

⁷⁴² Bendor, J. 2010: 33-35

⁷⁴³ Good K. 1989. "Debt and the One-Party state in Zambia" *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 27 No. 2: 297-313

⁷⁴⁴ Oyugi W & Gitonga A (Eds.). 1987. *Democratic theory and practice in Africa*.

⁷⁴⁵ Tordoff W. 1966. "The general election in Tanzania" in *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* Vol. 4 No. 1: 47-64

the elections of the late 1960s, 70s and 80s you were always in some way voting for a winner as the party always won and the individual candidates had been preselected by the party,⁷⁴⁶ eliminating the possibility of voting for a non-approved candidate. If, in competitive one party elections such as those in Kenya, Zambia and Tanzania, you happened to vote for the individual candidate that won, your aspiration matched the outcome and a positive feedback was generated, creating a self reinforcing behaviour. If you voted the "wrong" way there were no real costs. You also tended to have less invested in the candidate given the low information nature of the election. Patronage was still generally dispersed and your ethnic or community group was not targeted for punishment; as long as you turned out and voted. Indeed in these systems unpopular incumbent MPs were regularly evicted from office without any resulting punishment for those who evicted them as this in no way threatened the survival of the regime, instead functioning as a safety valve of sorts, allowing for personnel change without regime change.⁷⁴⁷ In fact, reactions to participation in the early one party state elections were overwhelmingly positive.⁷⁴⁸ This applies to an even greater extent in the elections for President where there was usually only one candidate. These elections were not about winning or losing, voting was not a process of deciding between rival candidates to run the state; it was an affirmation of citizenship and a celebration of independence from colonialism.

Non-voting on the other hand was often punished severely and direct intimidation of voters by those in authority frequently occurred. In Zambia for example, the Secretary of state for Defence and Security, Alex Shapi, told a rally in October 1988: "*Those who will not vote.....don't cheat yourselves that you will not be known... For me, you will be regarded as an enemy*".⁷⁴⁹ The one party state aspired to control everything and given that elections in

⁷⁴⁶ Good, K. 1989.

⁷⁴⁷ Baylies C and Szeftel M. 1984. "Elections in the One Party state" in Getzel CJ, Baylies CL, Szeftel M (Eds). *The Dynamics of the one party state in Zambia*.

⁷⁴⁸ Cliffe L (ed). *One Party Democracy: the 1965 Tanzanian General Elections*.

⁷⁴⁹ Good K. 1989.

authoritarian regimes are, as shown earlier, predominantly about increasing legitimacy for the government it is crucial that everyone votes. Regimes paid particular attention to punishing abstention.

In multiparty regimes the relationship is not that simple. One could end up voting for a winner or a loser. If the previous ruling party or leader is still around at the time of the election this adds a significant amount of fear to the equation: fear of making the wrong choice. Doing so could have very negative effects for one's community and oneself: reducing patronage benefits to the area and raising the spectre of being personally punished. The voting decision becomes complex. Parties themselves are no longer focussed on mobilising everyone. Unlike in the postcolonial setting where the party aims to maximise turnout, the multiparty ruling party seeks to maximise its own vote. Shirking may well be encouraged, by force if necessary, amongst those groups whose support the ruling or dominant party cannot be sure of. It is the voters who vote the "wrong" way who are punished, not those who fail to vote, turning the experience of voting on its head compared to that within the postcolonial regime. One example of this is provided by Klopp who shows how an entire community of 30,000 people in the Narok District in Kenya were ordered to leave the Enosupukia hills after voting for the opposition in 1992.⁷⁵⁰ Voting is only a dominant strategy for a voter when the winner is clearly identifiable or where the danger of a rival ethnic group or party getting into power is assessed as being so great that the potential punishment for voting for the wrong party becomes less significant.

These experiences of regimes are felt most by new voters as they are still developing an understanding of what voting is and what the "right" response is, i.e. a habit has yet to be

⁷⁵⁰ Klopp J. 2001. "Ethnic Clashes" and Winning Elections: The Case of Kenya's Electoral Despotism" in *Canadian Journal of African Studies/Revue Canadienne des Études Africaines* Vol. 35 No. 3: 473-517

learned.⁷⁵¹ For voters from the postcolonial generation living in multiparty regimes they may, like the driver in icy conditions, find themselves applying a learned, habitual reflex in response to similar seeming stimuli. In other words, they vote even when the cost-benefit equation is tilted firmly to the left.

6.5.2.2 Problems with the Behaviouralist account

An alternate account could be based on postcolonial generations being more supportive of democracy and thus more likely to vote due to the repression they experienced when growing up under the one party state, teaching them that they need to defend the liberties they have won.⁷⁵² There is a slightly greater level of support for democracy amongst this generation with 67% of the postcolonial generation thinking that democracy is always preferable as opposed to 65% of the multiparty generation and 61% of the Colonial generation. The problem with this argument though is that it doesn't really explain why the Colonial generation, who experienced oppression under both domestic and foreign leaders have the least support for democracy. Whilst supporters of this argument might claim that this is due to some sort of "independence fatigue," Colonial generations still vote more than multiparty generations casting doubt on the link between support for democracy and participation that is the basis of this argument. The reasons for the difference in voting rates make more sense if one thinks of them in terms of *socialisation* rather than just in terms of *experiences*.

Perhaps the largest problem with the theory outlined above is the low rates of turnout often experienced by the one party state during the formative period when the postcolonial generation was growing up. For the habit model to work one would expect that elections in the one party state to have been very high turnout elections. Many were not. In Zambia in

⁷⁵¹ Mannheim K. 1936; Delli Carpini MX. 1986; Braungart R and Braungart M. 1986.

⁷⁵² Bratton, M, Mattes, R and Gyimah-Boadi. 2005:167

1973, the first one party state election, there was a sharp drop in turnout.⁷⁵³ In the 1969 Kenyan elections turnout was only 44.6%.⁷⁵⁴ Authors like Baylies and Szeftel⁷⁵⁵ and Chazan⁷⁵⁶ noted this at the time, blaming disorganisation on the part of the ruling party and the administration, a lack of polling stations and general apathy.

This is indeed a problem for the theory, but there are two responses which shore up the argument significantly. The first is that whilst these high profile cases do exist, participation in many states rose over this period. In Tanzania for example, the introduction of the one party state boosted turnout to levels sustained until now.⁷⁵⁷ Moreover, an analysis of the data in Chapter four shows that whilst there was lower turnout in Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria and Senegal over the postcolonial period, Benin, Lesotho and Tanzania saw no real changes and all the other countries in this chapter had markedly higher turnout rates in the postcolonial period than today. Moreover, in Zambia in 1978 turnout rose back up to the high 60s after the party adapted to the new political system.

The second, and more important reason which applies as much to Senegal and Ghana as to Kenya and Zambia is that even when there was a period of reduced participation in formal politics, Chazan noted the rise in importance of participation in non-formal politics in the late 70s and early 80s.⁷⁵⁸ These networks, many of which had originated as fairly poorly attended networks in the Colonial period grew into increasingly politicised, highly attended networks of participation. In areas where the political system was able to channel the demands of these groups into low-level political participation via patronage, such as in Kenya, Senegal and Ghana, the groups that have already been shown to be particularly

⁷⁵³ Chazan N. 1982. "The New Politics of Participation in Tropical Africa" *Comparative Politics* Vol. 14 No. 2

⁷⁵⁴ <http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/kenoneparty.htm>

⁷⁵⁵ Baylies C and Szeftel M. 1984.

⁷⁵⁶ Chazan N. 1982.

⁷⁵⁷ <http://africanelectionstripod.com/tz.html>

⁷⁵⁸ Chazan N. 1982.

important for participation began to benefit from the low cost/high benefit involvement in elections noted above. In other countries like Zambia, governments created trade unions, community organisations and civil structures to back up the party and the state.⁷⁵⁹ These groups, being the sum of individuals, elites and followers, can learn behaviour just like individual voters can. By the onset of the multiparty regime these groups and their supporters had learnt the habit of voting, and those of their members who had not participated were mobilised into doing so by habituated groups.

6.5.2.3 Education

Earlier on a rather odd relationship between education and propensity was found. Rather than there being a linear relationship between more education and higher or lower turnout, a little education was associated with significantly higher rates of participation than a lot of education or no education at all. In the data from the table there is no spike in the propensity to vote of primary educated multiparty generation respondents, there is a small increase for the postcolonial generation and a substantial spike for the colonial generation.

I argued that there might be something about the socialisation experiences of only being educated to primary school level that boosted turnout, and it can now be seen that this is something which applies specifically to a generation who grew up being taught in schools run by Colonial authorities or by missionaries subject to Colonial authority. This makes sense. Primary education during the colonial period was largely aimed at creating a subservient, attentive class that obeyed.⁷⁶⁰ Schools were designed not to modernise Africans, but rather so that *"The boy who has passed through primary school, as we recommend it should be, and*

⁷⁵⁹ Sklar R. 1983. "Democracy in Africa" *African Studies Review* Vol. 26 No. 3/4:11-24

⁷⁶⁰ Mwiria K. 1991. "Education for subordination: African education in colonial Kenya". *History of Education* Vol. 20 No. 3:261 — 273

did not go to intermediate school, should have retained his rural attitudes."⁷⁶¹ French authorities further aimed to limit the number of Africans in education to ensure that the number of educated Africans did not surpass the number of available jobs.⁷⁶² Indeed the vast majority of the Colonial population would only experience a primary school education. In Kenya until 1940 (more than four decades after European colonization), there were only two secondary schools for Africans (the Alliance High School and St John Kabaa, started in 1926 and 1930 respectively).⁷⁶³ All in all, a primary school education for this generation meant being taught to do what one was told, to respect and listen to authority. The secondary school educated, the teachers, lawyers and civil servants would've had a markedly different experience, and have more in common as a class with the tertiary educated Africans of the postcolonial and multiparty generations.

6.5.2.4 Regime Type

Given the importance that the type of regime an election takes place in has on the propensity to vote, how does this vary amongst the three generations? The propensity to obey of the colonial generation seems to hold here as well. Whereas the less free political regimes depress the propensity to vote for multiparty and postcolonial generations by about 3 percentage points, they have virtually no effect on the colonial generations, who vote at around the same rates no matter what the regime, if anything voting marginally more the more "unfree" the regime is. It seems to be the case that multiparty and postcolonial generations have the tools to assess the general fairness of the country that they live in, that they care about this when deciding whether or not to vote, and that if they think the election is not free, they vote at lower rates. Whereas an electoral authoritarian leader who acts in a

⁷⁶¹ Colony and Protectorate of Kenya. 1949. *African Education in Kenya*: 35-6

⁷⁶² White B. 1996. "Talk about School: Education and the colonial project in French and British Africa (1860-1960)" *Comparative Education* Vol. 32 No.1:9-26

⁷⁶³ Mwiria K. 1991.

way that may cast doubt on the election may well have fewer people from the younger generations to mobilise, his ability to mobilise the colonial generation appears to be undiminished.

6.5.3 Age Groups

Table 6.9: Multilevel Logistic Regression: Age Groups

Variable	Model A1
<i>Individual Level</i>	
	B (s.e.)
Gender	-0.07*(0.04)
Lived Poverty Index	0.02 (0.02)
Rural	0.10 (0.04)
Education : Tertiary	-0.12**(0.06)
Education : Primary	0.14*** (0.05)
Education: None	0.13** (0.06)
Employed	0.00 (0.05)
Head Of Household	0.13*** (0.05)
Political Knowledge	0.13*** (0.03)
Broadcast New s	0.21*** (0.08)
Newspaper News	-0.20*** (0.08)
Close To Political Party	0.63*** (0.04)
Member Religion	0.24*** (0.07)
Politically Activ e	0.97*** (0.09)
Contact Politician	0.71*** (0.12)
Contact Government Official	-0.34*** (0.11)
Interest In Politics	0.33*** (0.06)
Election Free and Fair	1.02*** (0.08)
Prefer Alternatives	-0.30*** (0.11)
How Often Attacked	-0.54*** (0.13)
Ethnicity Matches President (At Election)	-0.11** (0.05)
Ethnic Discrimination	-0.04*** (0.01)
Closeness (Seats)	0.00 (0.00)
PREG	2.11** (0.76)
Electoral System	0.47** (0.21)
Electoral Democracy at the Last Election	0.27 (0.32)
Liberal Democracy at the Last Election	0.32 (0.46)
Log Average Constituency Size (Population)	-0.05 (0.12)
Young (1=18-25) ⁷⁶⁴	-0.37*** (0.13)
Young*Lived Poverty Index	0.04 (0.04)
Young*Employed	0.04 (0.08)
Young*Closeness	0.00 (0.00)
Young*Election Free and Fair	-0.24* (0.13)
Young*Electoral System	-0.23*** (0.06)
Young*Liberal Democracy at the Last Election	0.44*** (0.15)
Young*Electoral Democracy at the Last Election	0.01 (0.09)
Constant	-0.21 (1.08)
<i>Random Effects</i>	
Sd	0.70*** (0.09)
-2Log Likelihood	21193
No. of Groups	29
No. of Individuals	34214

Reference Category for Age Group is Senior. Reference Category for Education is Education: Secondary, Reference Category for Regime is Electoral Authoritarian *** = p < 0.01; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.1

As explained earlier, whilst the section above tried to ask whether growing up in different regimes played a role in the propensity to vote, this section looks at whether being a particular age creates structural obstacles to participation. This will not be perfect. As is the

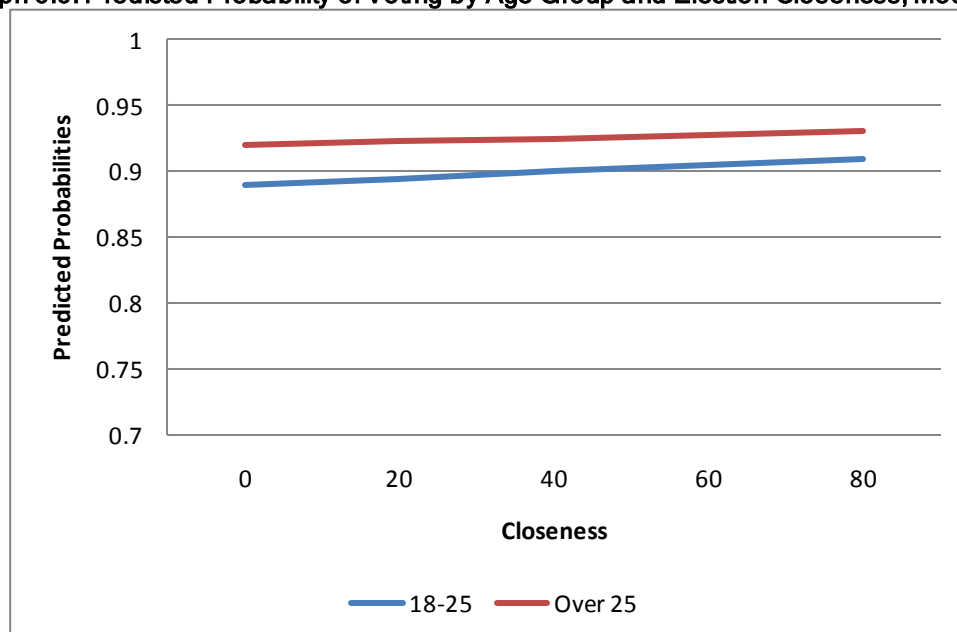
⁷⁶⁴ The regression was also run with the age brackets that Franklin uses and no significant differences to the model shown were found.

case with all research of this type there are statistical problems which mean I cannot control for generations whilst looking at the interaction terms that reveal the specific effects of age. Bearing this in mind, Table 6.9 presents the results of a multilevel logistic regression with a dummy variable representing the Young (18-25) age group.

6.5.3.1 Democracy not Closeness drives Youth Turnout

Franklin in his seminal work on turnout in established democracies argues that it is young people who are the key group affected by variations in the character of individual elections. Whilst the turnout patterns of older voters are mostly set, young voters, who are still learning, are particularly affected by the closeness of elections. Table 6.6 shows that this doesn't appear to be the case in Africa.

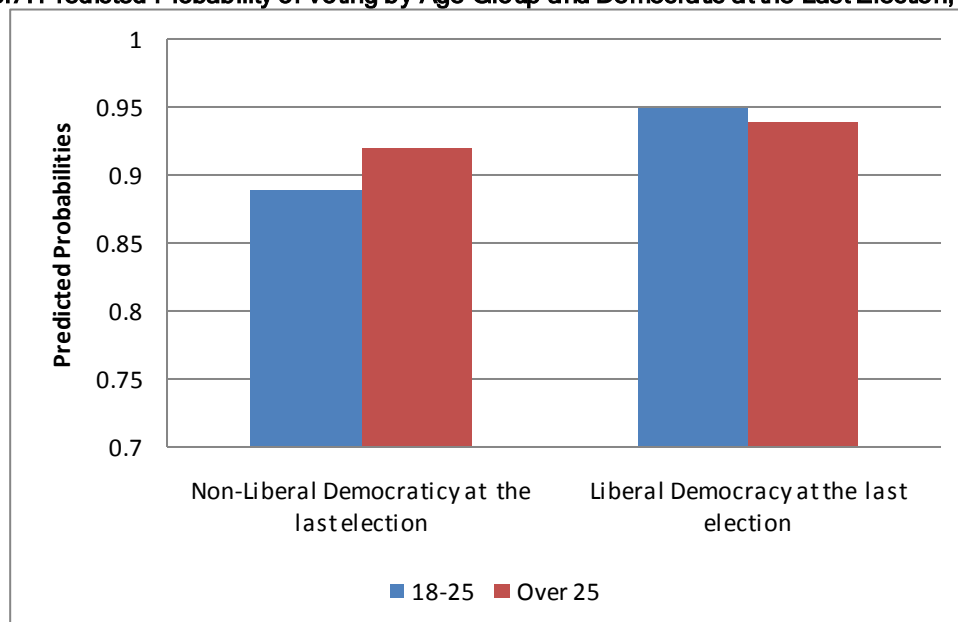
Graph 6.6: Predicted Probability of Voting by Age Group and Election Closeness, Model A1



It is assessments of democracy, not the closeness of an election that appears to define youth turnout. Graph 6.6 shows that both age groups are equally affected by the margin of victory at a national level: both vote at higher rates the less close the election is. Graph 6.7

shows what really separates young and older voters. When the previous election took place in a liberal democratic environment young people have a predicted probability of voting 5.5 percentage points greater than when it takes place in a non-liberal-democratic environment. For older voters the difference is only 2 percentage points. Indeed, young voters have a *higher* predicted probability of voting when the last election was liberal democratic than their elders, an incredibly important finding given that in *all* other situations they vote at substantially *lower* rates than their elders. If we are to look for the "footprints" of turnout that young voters generate in the long term turnout pattern of African democracies we need to look not at how close their first election was, but how democratic it was.

Graph 6.7: Predicted Probability of Voting by Age Group and Democratic at the Last Election, Model A1



6.6 Conclusion

This chapter has uncovered a much richer account of turnout in Africa than any which has been attempted before. We need to look at the specifics of African politics, and to delve deeper to find how seemingly simple associations can affect different groups in very different ways. Unlike what is often suggested in the literature, structural obstacles were not the primary cause of lower turnout participation, whether in terms of registration or voting.

Clientelistic politics is important, but not uniformly so. For rural respondents being offered money or a gift or service does make one more likely to vote and urban respondents are less likely to vote if offered a bribe. Offering a bribe appears to be a bit of a waste of time with other groups. Those targeted with bribes, such as those who have been frequently attacked or discriminated against, not only have lower rates of voting generally, but are unaffected by the bribes offered.

Feeling that your ethnic group is being discriminated against lowers turnout overall, but it actually increases the propensity to vote in liberal democratic regimes. It is clear that the liberal democratic regimes that we are looking at are mobilised differently. Whilst less free regimes have people who opt out when faced with discrimination the opposite hold in the liberal democracies.

Third, African voters do not appear to be economic voters. They don't vote to punish leaders when the economy is doing badly; nor do they retreat from politics. The only assessments that drive their participation are whether the election was free and fair and assessments of the President's performance. The latter isn't straightforward however; partisans vote less when the President does well, and only non-partisans reward effective Presidents.

Fourth, party systems affect turnout by virtue of the degree of ethnic polarisation within parties. The more ethnically polarised the governing party, and the more diverse the opposition, the higher the turnout. Catch all governing parties squeeze out participation by limiting the room for opposition parties to manoeuvre in.

Most importantly, age and generation are important sources of variation. Each generation appears to have a different relationship to participation in today's political dispensation. For those who came of age in the colonial regime the overwhelming incentive is to obey. It is here where I find the boosting effects of a primary education which I hypothesise is due to the nature of that education in the colonial period. Regime type and fairness of the election have almost no effect on their participation, in stark contrast to the others. For the postcolonial generation voting is habitual and they vote more than either other group. Less affected by mobilisation or other factors, they have been effectively incorporated into a pattern of participation that has not been inculcated into the multiparty generation, who vote least. They are more affected by the perceived fairness of an election and need to live in fair systems if they are to participate fully.

Finally, the age of an African citizen is an important factor to take into account. I find that it is not the competitiveness of an election that makes younger people in Africa vote more, but rather how democratic it is. We cannot test that this will create a "footprint" over time in this chapter as we do not have cross-temporal data, but given our other findings about generations we can say with some level of confidence that for the young growing up today, in the multiparty era, the more democratic an election is the longer the positive shadow it will cast.

Section C

Chapter 7: A case study of Turnout in Durban, South Africa

7.1 Introduction

Thus far this thesis has been looking at the big picture, but there are some questions that it has been unable to address. First, it has been impossible to look at local government elections at all. Second, it hasn't been possible to assess rational choice theory on its own grounds, that is, the perceptions of voters with regards to very specific assessments of the character of elections. Third, whilst it has gone some way to looking at the importance of habit the data has not been available to look at the same voter over time and assess how his or her participation fluctuates or remains the same. This chapter will seek to address these questions and test some of the findings derived from the cross-national studies of the previous section in a case study of Durban, South Africa. It is hypothesised that most of the findings in the previous chapters will be confirmed, but given the absence of a period of indigenous authoritarian rule between independence and the multiparty era and the absence of neo-patrimonial politics in much of the country we do expect some differences. To do so I first look at the applicability of rational choice models in the Durban context by applying these models to local and national election data gathered from Durban. Thereafter the socioeconomic and mobilisation models are tested, followed by an analysis of the effects of age and race.

Durban was felt to be a suitable test case to further test the results found using Afrobarometer and cross national data. It is South Africa's second biggest city and, apart from Cape Town, the most electorally contested and most ethnically diverse. Moreover, in Durban and South Africa we are able to look at voting from the first election that most people participated in, something we can't do in other African countries. The ethnic diversity is one of the key reasons why this city was chosen from within South Africa. Unlike many other

South African cities Durban allows us to test the effects of race and ethnicity that we find elsewhere on the continent. The layout of the city also makes carrying out a survey manageable.

It is important to note before beginning that rational choice models of turnout have been most successfully applied to competitions between small numbers of candidates in a constituency system. In South Africa this system is not used. At both a local and national level there is a form of proportional representation. At a local level one would expect this to be less of a problem as constituencies are used, though it is conceivable that, due to the use of PR correction, individuals would think that their vote made more of a difference than in the Westminster system. This should be doubly true at a national level, but one would expect that the benefit term used in rational choice, which as I shall argue later is based on the party of one's choice winning an election, would be less important due to the fact that even parties with small vote shares (0.25% in South Africa) get allocated seats in parliament.

7.2 South African Background

South Africa's first democratic elections occurred in 1994. National elections were held again in 1999, 2004 and 2009.⁷⁶⁵ Local elections were held in 1995/6 but were part of an interim arrangement that allowed for over-representation of minorities in cities based on apartheid boundaries.⁷⁶⁶ The first fully democratic local elections were held in 2000 and the second in 2006. Over time the political situation has stabilised such that while 300 people a month were killed in the run-up to the 1994 election, only 300 were killed in the five months

⁷⁶⁵The 2009 election is not included in this study as it took place after the survey was administered.

⁷⁶⁶ Elections Task Group. 1996. *Local government elections in South Africa : 1995/1996*.

before the 1999 elections, and very few politically motivated deaths were reported before the 2004 elections.⁷⁶⁷

The electoral system used for National and Provincial elections is List-PR (similar to that used in the Netherlands).⁷⁶⁸ The system at a local level is the Mixed Member Proportional system, also used in German national elections and similar to the system in Lesotho which I discussed in chapter five where half of the seats are elected in single member districts and the other half by list proportional representation.⁷⁶⁹ Voters in Durban thus have two votes in the local elections, one for a party and one for a ward councillor. In 1994 all South African residents could vote if they had some form of identification. From 1999 onwards only registered voters with a bar-coded identity document (ID book) have been allowed to vote.

In 1999 the population of South Africa was 73% black, 14% white, 9% coloured and 3% Indian.⁷⁷⁰ Durban forms part of the eThekweni metropolitan municipality and is the second largest city in South Africa. The population in 2001 was 3.1 million and is 68% black, 20% Indian, 9% white and 3% coloured. Half of the population is under 24 and the majority speak English or Zulu.⁷⁷¹

⁷⁶⁷ Piombo J.2004. "Politics in a stabilising democracy: South Africa's 2004 Election" in *Strategic Insights* 3(5)

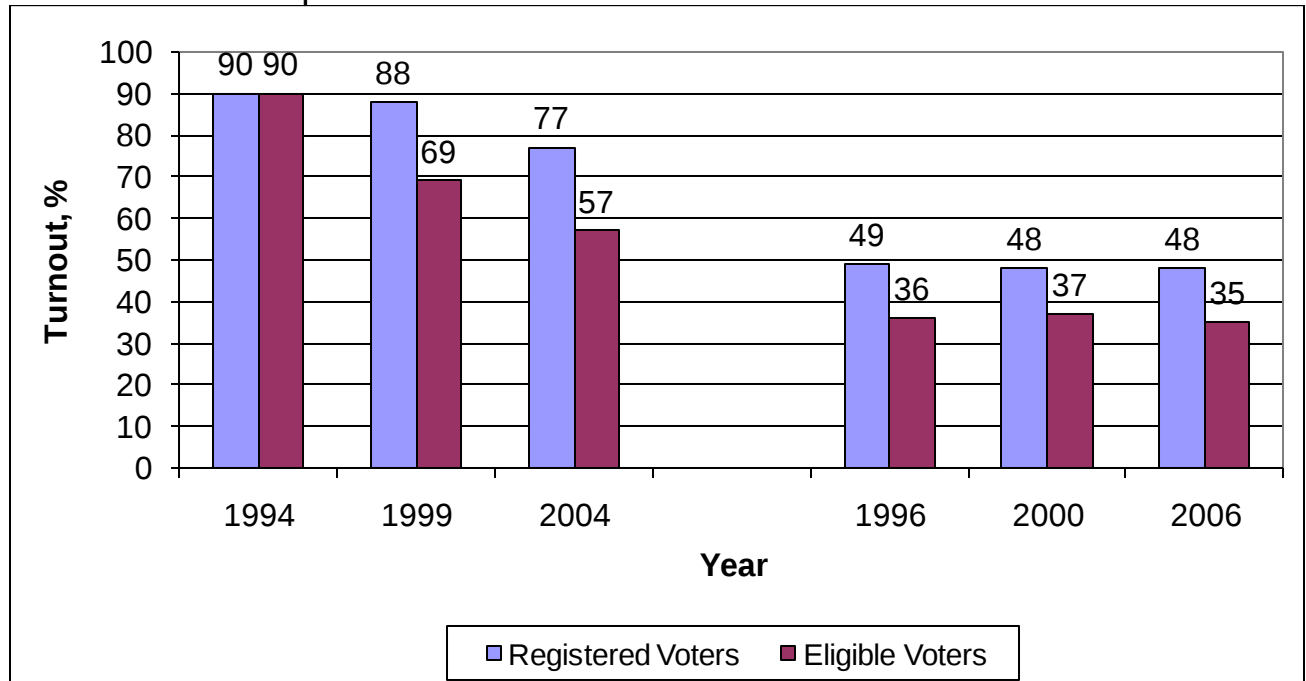
⁷⁶⁸ Van Egmond M, De Graaf N and Van Der Eijk C.1998. "Electoral Participation in the Netherlands: Individual and Contextual Influences" in *European Journal of Political Research* 24:281-300

⁷⁶⁹ Wherever possible previous work from Germany and the Netherlands has been sourced so that some control for the electoral system can be introduced.

⁷⁷⁰ Lodge, T.1999. *Consolidating Democracy*.

⁷⁷¹ The 2001 Census

Graph 7.1: Turnout in South Africa's democratic elections⁷⁷²



Graph 7.1 shows two stories of turnout in South Africa. Turnout has sunk to lower levels than many established democracies,⁷⁷³ but remains higher than African countries like Malawi and Zambia.⁷⁷⁴ In local elections turnout is consistently lower than in national elections, but has stabilised at around 48% of the registered population and 36% of those eligible. At a national level turnout is higher but has consistently declined, and at a particularly dramatic rate if the percentage of eligible voters is considered. Thus 3.5 million fewer people voted in 1999 than in 1994.⁷⁷⁵ Turnout in KwaZulu-Natal and Durban is generally lower than in the rest of the country, with 73% and 72% respectively voting in 2004,⁷⁷⁶ and varies widely and erratically from ward to ward.⁷⁷⁷ Analysis of the 2000 and 2006 elections shows that the wards with the highest turnout were sometimes the safest wards, whether for the DA or the ANC, and those with the lowest turnout were often the most contested, with no clear pattern or correlation with actual closeness.

⁷⁷² The IEC. www.elections.org.za

⁷⁷³ IDEA.1997.

⁷⁷⁴ Electoral Institute of South Africa.2000.“Voter Apathy hits Local Elections in Malawi.”

⁷⁷⁵ Reynolds, A.1999. *Election 99 South Africa*

⁷⁷⁶ Schlemmer, L.2004. “Whatever Happened to the Opposition” in *Focus* (34)

⁷⁷⁷ SABCnews.com.1 March 2006 at 22:15 “Low turnout in first Free state voting district”

There is a particularly large problem with voter registration with 6.76 million eligible voters not registered in 2004. That said, as noted from the beginning this thesis is more concerned with the 5.06 million people who bothered to register but still did not vote in 2004.⁷⁷⁸ Various explanations for the decline in turnout have been suggested. Some have pointed to the reduction in the number of days for voting from three in 1994 to one in all subsequent elections,⁷⁷⁹ disengagement from party politics⁷⁸⁰ and weather in 2006.⁷⁸¹ In local elections most pundits have recently focussed on high levels of community protest over issues of service delivery,⁷⁸² with a number of high profile vote boycotts occurring in 2006 in Khutsong⁷⁸³ and Wentworth and Merebank in Durban.⁷⁸⁴ In 2000 Shangaan resentment in the Malamulele area at being incorporated into the old Venda capital, Thohoyandou, resulted in almost total abstention from the 2000 local elections.⁷⁸⁵ Intimidation of voters⁷⁸⁶ and the murder of councillors and candidates appear to have become a problem in local elections.⁷⁸⁷ There also appears to be very little confidence in local government councillors⁷⁸⁸ and difficulties with mobilisation, especially of white voters.⁷⁸⁹ Lodge argues that, in contrast to the findings in chapters five and six, lower turnout in national elections is primarily due to low voting rates for whites and rural blacks, the former due to political disengagement and the latter to problems with registration and access to voting stations. This turnout decline is seen to mostly harm opposition parties. In local elections he argues that whites are more

⁷⁷⁸ Daniel, Southall and Lutchman (eds).2005.

⁷⁷⁹ Reynolds A.1999.

⁷⁸⁰ Human Sciences Research Council.1999.“Democracy SA: Voter registration and the implications for democracy in South Africa; Important shift in attitude of SA voting population.”

⁷⁸¹ Bleby M. 1 March 2006. “SAfrican voters register disillusionment in local polls”.

⁷⁸² Herzenberg C. 5 March 2006 .“ Parties must work harder to ensure voter turnout”; Keyser, A. 1 March 2006. “South Africans now ‘used to voting’” www.mg.co.za

⁷⁸³ Hodgson T.1 March 2006.“ Durban protests: shack dwellers demand attention.”

⁷⁸⁴ SABCnews.com.22 January 2006. “Distressed Durban communities threaten not to vote”.

⁷⁸⁵ Lodge T 2003. “Chapter 1. South African Politics and Collective Action, 1994-2000.”

⁷⁸⁶ IOL.2 March 2006. “KZN voting station ‘invaded’”; IOL.3 March 2006.“Ballot paper mix-ups have parties fuming”

⁷⁸⁷ SAPA.8 March 2007. “Former Independent Councillor slain”

⁷⁸⁸ Mail and Guardian.7 June 2006. “Mbeki as popular as Madiba in SA”

⁷⁸⁹ Hamel E, Brodie M and Morin R.2006. “A survey of South Africa 10 years into the New Democracy.” *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 18(3)

likely to vote, while urban blacks vote least. This is attributed to dissatisfaction on the part of ANC voters, and predominantly hurts the ruling party.⁷⁹⁰

7.3 Survey Methodology

7.3.1 Strategy of Inquiry and Survey Instrument

The survey incorporates a cross-sectional and a longitudinal element. I chose to conduct my own survey for the following reasons. First, while there is some data available on voter turnout, conducted by the Afrobarometer and the Human Science Research Council, this data does not include many of the variables necessary for a complete rational choice analysis. Conducting my own survey enables me to incorporate questions specific to turnout, and to get detailed data on an under-researched area. Moreover, virtually no data exists on Durban and this survey helped to rectify this gap in the literature.

Throughout the survey process the major aim was to minimise survey error, bearing in mind the practical tradeoffs with regards time and cost. In the following analysis of survey I draw heavily on the work of Groves,⁷⁹¹ Fowler⁷⁹² and Groves and Couper⁷⁹³ and shall not cite them extensively henceforth, unless there is some contention amongst the authors.

7.3.2 Sample, Population and Participants

The population of this study comprises all registered voters in the Durban Metropolitan Area and is made up of 1 233 786 individuals who formed the sampling unit for the project. Non-registered citizens were excluded from this study for reasons mentioned earlier.

⁷⁹⁰ Lodge T.2003.

⁷⁹¹ Groves R.1989. *Survey Errors and Survey Costs*.

⁷⁹² Fowler F.1988. *Survey Research Methods*.

⁷⁹³ Groves R, and Couper M.1998. *Nonresponse in Household Interview Surveys*.

The formula in the Appendix was used to calculate the number of individuals that would need to be sampled in order to obtain a representative sample. It was found that a sample size of 380 would produce a statistically significant sample. A number of similar studies have been done with similar sized groups, amongst them those of Blais, Young, Fleury and Lapp (N=314),⁷⁹⁴ Brady, Verba and Schlozman (N=410),⁷⁹⁵ Bratton and Liatto-Katundu in Zambia (N=116),⁷⁹⁶ Schlemmer in Durban in the 1970s (N=260),⁷⁹⁷ Young and Cohen in Botswana (N=537)⁷⁹⁸ and some of the analysis of Green and Schachar used a sample size of 360,⁷⁹⁹ while Kraut and McConahay use a sample of 104 to look at future vote intentions.⁸⁰⁰

The sampling frame used was the voters' roll of all registered voters in Durban, a resource available on request from the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). The voters roll includes all registered voters and their addresses, thus minimising coverage error as virtually all registered voters (except those who registered after the roll was obtained) were included on the roll. Duplication was not a problem as the IEC does not allow registration in more than one ward and the roll is regularly "cleaned" to ensure that there are no repeats or errors. Ineligibility was also not a problem as only registered voters were included.

To minimise error the best sampling method would have been to randomly select individuals from the entire population on the roll using systematic random sampling. Unfortunately, this would have resulted in unfeasible transport costs and would have been impossible to conduct with the available resources. Therefore multistage cluster sampling

⁷⁹⁴ Blais A, Young R, Fleury C, Lapp M.1995.

⁷⁹⁵ Brady H, Verba S, Schlozman K.1995.

⁷⁹⁶ Bratton, M and Liatto-Katundu, B.1994. 'A Focus Group Assessment of Political Attitudes in Zambia', *African Affairs*, 93

⁷⁹⁷ Schlemmer, L.1973. *Privilege, Prejudice and Parties*.

⁷⁹⁸ Young H & Cohen D.1979. *Voters and Candidates in the 1974 Botswana General Elections*

⁷⁹⁹ Green D & Schachar R.2000. "Habit Formation and Political Behaviour: Evidence of Consuetude in Voter Turnout" in *British Journal of Political Science* 30(4)

⁸⁰⁰ Kraut and McConahay.1973. "How being interviewed affects voting: An experiment" in *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 37:398-406

was used. This generally accepted method manages to still ensure that an approximately random sample is obtained within each ward. First, primary sampling units (P.S.U.'s) were identified. The P.S.U.'s for the study were the electoral wards in Durban. Three wards were selected, Wards 26 (Point), 32 (Morningside, Musgrave, Warwick Triangle) and 84 (Umlazi, AA and BB sections). These wards were selected on the basis that they had:

- The lowest turnout figures in the 2000 Elections.
- Councillors from 3 different parties representing them after the 2000 elections.
- Diverse demographics.
- Practical locations which interviewers could safely get to.

Two other wards, 10 and 51 were also selected to act as controls as Ward 10 had the highest turnout and Ward 51 was the median ward in terms of turnout.

King, Keohane and Verba⁸⁰¹ warn of the dangers of selecting on the dependant variable. One might argue that this study can be thus criticised as it selects the three wards with the lowest turnout when turnout is the subject of this study. This is not a valid criticism for the following reasons. First, due to the relatively small sample size, it was necessary to attempt to maximise the number of non-voters in order to get enough data to analyse. Second, there is still sufficient variation within each ward to capture both voters and non-voters and control wards have also been included. Third as Brady and Collier⁸⁰² show, the absolute “ban” on selecting cases where the dependant variable arises is not universally accepted.

⁸⁰¹ King G, Keohane R, and Verba S.1994.

⁸⁰² Brady H and Collier D(eds.),2004.*Rethinking Social Inquiry*.

Some 167 individuals were selected in each of the three main wards through stratified random sampling. A further 30 individuals were selected in the control wards. Due to time and cost constraints a method used in the Cape Area Survey was used in cases of unit non-response. In these cases interviewers were told to move on to the address to the right and interview the person in the house who answered the door, as long as they confirmed that they were a registered voter. As Durban's residential areas remain overwhelmingly uniform in terms of racial composition, this did not negatively impact on the "randomness" of the sample. This was borne out in the execution of the survey but for one problem. In general individuals from the white community were more likely to turn interviewers away and were thus underrepresented in the data.

7.3.3 Data Gathering

For the choice of a particular mode of data collection a range of different survey types were available, including face-to-face interviews, mail surveys, telephonic interviews or the integration of respondent self-completion in the course of a face-to-face survey. Face-to-face interviews were chosen for reasons outlined below.

First, while as Groves⁸⁰³ points out, telephonic and mail surveys are generally more affordable than face-to-face surveys, they were not feasible as the majority of Durban's poorest residents do not have access to a landline phone. Second, a high degree of interviewer training was incorporated into the project, and experienced interviewers were used. As such, standardised interviewing was possible and the error from interviewer bias was minimised. Third, it was anticipated that complex questions would be asked which would involve some routing which mitigated in favour of face-to-face interviews due to the problem of recall bias.

⁸⁰³ Groves R.1990."Theories and Methods of Telephone Surveys". *Annual Review of Sociology* 16:222

Fourthly, the study required a relatively lengthy questionnaire where all the questions needed to be answered. While Groves and Cooper⁸⁰⁴ argue that survey length has relatively little effect when choosing between face-to-face and telephonic surveys, they concede that it has negative effects on any method where respondents fill in the survey themselves such as mail surveys, and that face-to-face surveys are more effective when there is a need to ensure that the entire survey is completed. They also point out that non-response error is higher in telephonic surveys. Telephonic interactions are generally shorter than those that occur face-to-face, there is a greater likelihood that respondents will reject a telephonic interview by misidentifying it as a sales call, there will be increased measurement error due to the purely audio nature of the medium, and a greater chance that the respondent will simply put down the phone in the absence of social norms that come into operation in a face-to-face interview.⁸⁰⁵ Finally, some individuals were likely to be illiterate, mitigating against self completion.⁸⁰⁶

Interviewers were chosen from applicants from the University of KwaZulu-Natal graduate community. In order to maximise unit response, all interviewers were issued with a uniform, clipboard, nametag and letter indicating who they were and what they were doing. The interviews were timed to take place in late afternoon, early evenings and weekends in order to maximise the possibility of encountering the identified respondent.

Interviews were completed by 13 Interviewers over 20 days in July 2005. There was an 84.77% success rate with the interviewers completing 323 out of the 381 targeted interviews. The failure to complete the required number of interviews was due to the following factors. First, one of the interviewers became ill half way through the process and

⁸⁰⁴ Groves R & Couper M. 1998. *Nonresponse in Household Interview Surveys*.

⁸⁰⁵ Groves R. 1990.

⁸⁰⁶ Fowler F. 1988. *Survey Research Methods*

was unable to complete his interviews. Second, the interviewers found it difficult to access white voters in more established suburbs due to the presence of extensive security arrangements amongst this group. They reported that many white households were unwilling to let them in and that in some cases they could not find any way of communicating with the occupants of these “fortresses”.

Table 7.1: Breakdown of Respondents to Survey.

Sampled Unit	246 (76%)
Replacement Unit	77 (24%)

Table 7.1 shows the breakdown between those who were in the original sample and those who were replacement units chosen in line with the methods referred to earlier in this chapter. A high percentage (76%) was from the original sample.

7.3.4 Collection Instrument: Survey Design

When designing the questionnaire the twins aims of reliability and validity predominated. The questions were designed to be as simple as possible, and were designed to maximise response rates. Questions that have been used and tested in other surveys were used where possible⁸⁰⁷ and the questionnaire was subject to pilot tests.

First, cognitive interviews with four individuals were used to ensure that the questions were understood as intended. Probing questions, paraphrasing and “concurrent think aloud”⁸⁰⁸ significantly improved the questions and design quite significantly. Second, the questionnaire was piloted with five other individuals. These two processes produced two major changes; first, the language was simplified quite dramatically and second a category

⁸⁰⁷ Presser & Blair.1994.“Survey Pre-Testing: Do different methods produce different results?”. *Sociological Methodology* 24:73-104

⁸⁰⁸ Willis GB.2005.*Cognitive Interviewing: A tool for improving Questionnaire Design*. Ch4

for “no response/no opinion” was added. There were potential issues with regards recall bias in relation to the questions on the elections in which individuals had voted, but it emerged from the cognitive interviews and the pilot that these elections were “watershed events” recalled without much difficulty.

Questions were designed so that they could be codified and quantified. The questionnaire was translated into Zulu, and respondents were free to have the survey conducted in Zulu or English. The efficacy of translation was tested by having another translator translate the Zulu copy back into English. The item response rate was generally very high as is shown in Appendix C. Overall, 98.48% of all questions asked were answered, and only 7 questions had a response rate below 95%, with the lowest at 92.26%, which is still very high.

There was a degree of over reporting of turnout in local elections, and underreporting in one of the national elections. This is not surprising. Swaddle and Heath⁸⁰⁹ find that reported turnout in the 1987 British General Election Study was 10 percent points higher than the official rate, but that whether one used official or reported figures this made little difference when determining the causes of abstention. Kivilu et al find an undercount for national elections and an over-count for local elections in South Africa.⁸¹⁰ This could be because acts such as voting which are considered obligatory are often infused with a positive aura that that strengthens professed political behaviour.⁸¹¹ Much of this could also be to do

⁸⁰⁹ Swaddle K and Heath A.1989. “Official and Reported Turnout in the British General election of 1987”.*British Journal of Political Science*, 19(4):537-551.

⁸¹⁰ Kivilu M et al.2006.“Survey on South African voter participation in elections”. Prepared for The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) by The Socio-Economic Surveys Unit of the Knowledge System Group, Human Sciences Research Council.

⁸¹¹ Bratton M, Mattes R and Gyimah-Bodi.2005.

with problems accessing both white and informal households both of whom are seen to vote at lower rates.⁸¹²

7.3.5 Data Handling and Analysis

Each returned survey was allocated a code indicating the ward of origin and a number to indicate the particular individual. All data was then coded and entered into Stata 8, and checked by a third party. It was then checked for reliability and validity using Heath and Martin's four versions of validity.⁸¹³ The data was found to be satisfactory. The data was analysed with logistic regressions as explained in the relevant chapters. Only individuals able to vote in the elections under consideration in each regression were included (the 2000 election for the local government regression and the 2004 election for the national election regression). All the standard diagnostic tests were performed.

7.4 Preliminary Analysis of rational choice models of Turnout in Durban

In chapter two I looked at the theory behind the rational choice model. This chapter will begin by looking at some preliminary findings from the Durban data, starting with responses to the minimax-regret statement also used by Blais et al⁸¹⁴ *"I would feel really terrible if I didn't vote and my candidate/ party lost by one vote."* Table 7.2 shows that 80% of the respondents in the Durban survey agreed or strongly agreed with the minimax-regret statement, with only 10% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. The percentage agreeing is far higher than the 51% recorded by Blais et al in their study of Canadian voters, and the percentage disagreeing is much lower than the 21% that they record. Those respondents that indicated that they agreed with the statement were more likely to indicate that they planned

⁸¹² Hamel E, Brodie M and Morin R.2006."A survey of South Africa 10 years into the New Democracy." *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 18(3)

⁸¹³ Heath A & Martin J.1997."Why are there so few formal Measuring Instruments in Social Science?." Lyberg et al(eds) *Survey Measurement and Process Quality*.

⁸¹⁴ Blais A, Young R & Lipp M.2000."The Calculus of Voting: An Empirical Test." *European Journal of Political Research*, 37(2)

on voting and that they had voted in the past. In the 2004 National elections 79% of those who strongly agreed voted, while 71% of those who didn't strongly agree voted. The figures were 60% and 54% respectively in 2000, and 79% and 65% for those who planned on voting in 2006. It should be noted that the correlations are significantly lower than the 90% correlation between strong agreement and voting recorded by Blais et al,⁸¹⁵ with the highest alpha being 0.19 for planned vote in 2005/6.

Table 7.2: Percentage agreeing with the statement "I would feel really terrible if I didn't vote and my candidate/ party lost by one vote."

Strongly Agree	49
Agree	31
Neither	11
Disagree	8
Strongly Disagree	2

N=321

7.4.1 Deriving Utility from Voting

One of the fundamental objections to the parameters of the rational choice models is that the *B* term is incorrectly construed and constructed. In the South African context the majority of voters in Durban report that they are happy when their party does "well" even if it doesn't win, providing some proof of the idea that benefits are accrued from supporting a party even if it doesn't achieve office. Table 7.3 shows that 67% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, while only 21% disagreed or strongly disagreed. As the South African electoral system is based on proportional representation, parties do not need to "win" a constituency in order to be represented in parliament, and for voters who choose a party other than the ANC, getting a seat in parliament can be construed as a victory, even if that party comes nowhere near winning the election as whole.

⁸¹⁵ Blais A, Young R & Lapp M.2000.

Table 7.3: Percentage agreeing with the statement “When the party I support does well, I feel happy even if it doesn’t win.”

Strongly Agree	28
Agree	39
Neither	12
Disagree	16
Strongly Disagree	5

N=321

When this support is broken down by race black voters are less likely to support this statement than white, Indian and coloured voters. There is an 11 percentage point difference between the two with 65% of blacks agreeing and 76% of other races. Given that white, Indian and Coloured voters comprise a relatively small minority in South Africa it may be that they have come to accept that their candidates will probably never win an election at a national level, and will do so infrequently at a local level. As such only those who conceive of voting in this way actually register to vote, and thus only these individuals are captured by the survey. Alternatively, minority voters may derive more utility from small gains for their party from a very low base of support, in comparison to ANC voters for whom similar increases from a large level of support are subject to diminishing returns. If support for the statement is broken down by party affiliation 88% of Democratic Alliance (DA) supporters, 73% of African National Congress (ANC) supporters and only 63% of Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) supporters agree.

Apart from conceiving of the benefits of voting in this way, it is plausible that voters in Durban also look to other benefits. For example, the continued turnout of ANC voters in the 1999 and 2004 National Elections in spite of the fact that that party was always going to win could be due to voters deriving utility from the ANC achieving a two-thirds majority. This “magic number” made the ANC (and in the minds of some voters, democracy) a cemented, unassailable feature in South Africa. For these voters there is a quite tangible difference between the hegemonic victory of the ANC and the even remotest possibility of

the return to power of a “white” party like the DA or the old National Party and all the connotations of apartheid that they carry with them. Responses in the survey included that:

“We are obliged to vote, otherwise we will be oppressed again”, and

“If I don’t vote for the ANC then I may end up being ruled by oppressors again. Since I now have freedom I must maintain it.”

Thus, unlike in Franklin’s model,⁸¹⁶ there is a difference in the minds of some voters with regards to who wins an election at the national level, and I can hypothesise that the *B* term should thus be significant. Similarly, at a local level, there are definite benefits from particular candidates winning, and perceived direct benefits from turning out and voting for the winning candidate. While ANC and DA voters claim that they are happy when their party does well, even if it doesn’t win, this is not the case with IFP voters. This is perhaps due to the fact that the IFP has been regarded as a party of direct patronage, whether in the apartheid-era homelands or in post-apartheid KwaZulu-Natal. Thus while ANC voters may plausibly assume that their interests will be looked after at a national level, and while DA voters may look to other benefits in voting for their party (the protection of democracy against a hegemonic ANC); IFP voters look to tangible material benefits that their party may provide. The idea that one actually has to have voted to secure these benefits seems somewhat prevalent in the eyes of some voters at least. In response to the general, open question of why they voted in particular elections, a number of respondents to the survey seemed to think that the ruling party would know whether or not they had voted, and also that they had a quasi-legal obligation to vote. Responses included:

⁸¹⁶ Franklin M.2004.Ch2

“We were told that if you don’t vote then they will see on your ID (Identity Document) that you didn’t vote”,

“We were forced to vote because we were getting grants”.

“I voted because I heard that the government is building houses somewhere so I thought that if I voted for the winner then I was going to get a house.”

It is true that when one votes in South Africa ones ID book is stamped, and officials can see whether you have voted or not. This seems to have indicated to some voters⁸¹⁷ that their access to social grants and housing is in some way dependant on turning out to vote. As such, there are very real, tangible, *perceived* material benefits gained in their eyes from voting for candidates at a local level.

The idea that some voters base their vote upon group rather than individual interests is borne out by the results of the survey. 62% of the respondents indicated that they voted in order to choose a party that made life better for all South Africans (See Table 7.4). The results also provide evidence for other benefits apart from those accruing directly to the individual from party choice, with 9% voting out of a sense of duty, 7% voting to preserve democracy and 3% voting to prevent a one party state.

Table 7.4: Why Durbanites claim they vote

Question: Which of the following statements comes closest to describing why you vote / would vote?	
"By voting I am choosing a party that will make my life better in the future"	15%
"By voting I am choosing a party that will make life better for all South Africans"	62%
"By voting I am fulfilling my obligation as a citizen of South Africa"	9%
"By voting I am preventing the creation of a one party state"	3%
"By voting I am ensuring the success of our democracy"	7%
"By voting I am paying a debt to those who fought for our democracy"	5%

⁸¹⁷ That said, less than 2% of the sample gave this response.

7.4.2 Costs

Whilst I have thus far found that structural obstacles to voting do not have large negative effects on turnout this is not what I initially find here. In spite of excluding non-registered citizens, 13% of respondents to the Durban survey who had not voted listed the reason that they had not voted in 2004 as being that they either had no Identity Document or were not registered. The structural obstacles to voting such as having to register and only being able to vote on one day are significantly greater than they were in 1994 where no registration was necessary and four days were set aside for voting.⁸¹⁸ In both elections in the Durban survey there is a more than thirty percentage point difference in the voting rate between those who thought that the costs of voting were very low and those who thought that they were very high. Cost related responses to why individuals didn't vote included

“I was in labour”, and

“The voting places were full so it was difficult to vote due to long queues”

These results all suggest that the South African electorate may not follow rational choice presumptions entirely as predicted. It can be hypothesised from our earlier discussion that in both local and national elections B should be significant, especially in the local context, but plausibly in the national context as well. I also expect that the D term and possibly the P term will be significant. The C term should also be significant due to the substantial structural costs that some voters face, but neither the $P*B$ interaction nor the minimax-regret variable, are expected to be important.

⁸¹⁸ Reynolds A. 1999.

7.5 Regression Methods

Two sets of regressions were run. One focuses on the 2000 local government elections, the other the 2004 national elections. The dependant variable in each case is whether the respondent said that they voted or not. As the variable is dichotomous, logistic regression analysis will be used. In each case respondents who indicated that they could not remember were recoded as having not voted.⁸¹⁹ This was done for three reasons. First, it is unlikely that respondents would not remember having voted in such recent elections. While the 2000 election occurred five years before the survey was completed, it was an occasion of great national significance as it was the first democratic local government election and can thus be regarded as a pivotal event. Second, if anything, voters should be expected to claim that they have voted when in fact they haven't, not the other way round. It is more than plausible that respondents, embarrassed to admit that they did not vote, would claim not to remember whether they had voted. Finally, whether or not these respondents were included did not change the substantive results, and given the small sample size it was important to maximise the number of cases. In each of the two sets of regressions four different understandings of the rational choice explanation of turnout were tested. First, the simple model which includes only *P*, *B* and *C* was tested. Next the *D* term was added. In model four the minimax regret hypothesis was tested. Finally, model five adds an interaction term, $P*B$.

7.5.1 Probability

The first independent variable is *P*, meant to represent the probability of casting a decisive vote. This turned out to be a particularly difficult variable to operationalise. Green and Shapiro⁸²⁰ and Fischer⁸²¹ argue that using perceived closeness of the election is inappropriate as it implies that people misperceive the probability of affecting the outcome. It

⁸¹⁹ 28 Respondents for the 2000 election, and 10 for the 2004 election.

⁸²⁰ Green, Donald P and Shapiro, Ian .1994. Ch4

⁸²¹ Fisher, SD. 2001.

doesn't test what is being looked for, the perceived probability of being decisive. As such, Blais et al⁸²² ask the following question: "*What do you think the chances were, roughly, that your vote would determine which party won the election in Canada?*" and provide a range of options from 1 in 10 to 1 in 100,000,000. They find that this variable is not significant even when closeness is a good predictor, claiming that this means that closeness is the wrong measure.

I would argue that this is problematic for two reasons. First, it is clear that closeness was a good predictor in their model, and that individuals did have some conception of the closeness of the race and acted according even if they were unclear on the probability score. Second the probability score is not easy for respondents to understand, something revealed when testing my survey. This is not surprising in South Africa given that most citizens will not have done any maths beyond age twelve or thirteen. Moreover, probabilities are particularly hard for anyone to understand or predict, especially when asked the difference of a 1 in a 100 000 chance or a 1 in a 100,000,000 chance. I would argue that this doesn't mean that the model is fatally flawed, on the contrary, if, in spite of their inability to assess probabilities, voters do have a conception of the closeness of a race and the idea that their vote will make a difference, and act in accordance with this, the model is sound.

As such the Blais et al probability question was not used in the final survey. Instead voters were asked how close they thought each election was, whether they believed that their vote would have made a difference in that election and whether they believed that their vote made a difference in general. It was hypothesised that these three questions together would be able to capture the *P* variable. Surprisingly, it was found that answers to the three questions

⁸²² Blais A, Young R & Lapp M.2000."The Calculus of Voting: An Empirical Test." *European Journal of Political Research*, 37(2)

did not correlate.⁸²³ While most people who thought the election was very close also thought that their vote made a difference; 48% of those in 2004 and 40% in 2000 who thought that the election was not close at all, nonetheless thought that their vote made a difference, and 25% of those in 2004 and 36% in 2000 who thought the election was very close thought that their vote would not make a difference. Thus it seems the voters' conceptions of closeness may be quite removed from their conception of what it means to say that their vote makes a difference. In light of the South African electoral system voters may vote on the basis of their vote making a difference with regards the performance of their party, and not on the basis of closeness.

As such, all models were run twice, once with *closeness* in the particular election as the *P* term, and once with *Vote-Made-A-Difference*. The *closeness* term was coded as a 0-2 scale, with 0 being not close at all and 2 very close. The *Vote-Made-A-Difference* term was coded as 0-1, with 0 being that the respondent felt that their vote made no difference in that election, and 1 that it did.⁸²⁴ The model with closeness as the *P* term is model 1, all other models shown were run with *Vote-Made-A-Difference* as the *P* term.

7.5.2 Benefits, Costs and Duty

The other independent variables were less contentious in their operationalisation. *B*, the benefits to the voter from their preferred candidate winning, was tested via a question used by Blais et al.⁸²⁵ Respondents were asked “*How important was it to you personally which individual candidate was going to win the election in your ward in the local government elections in South Africa in 2000?*” and “*How important was it to you personally*

⁸²³ Alpha=0.4 in 2000&2004.

⁸²⁴ A variable combining the responses for “*Did you believe that your vote would make a difference in the 2000/4 National election*”, and “*Whether I Vote or Not makes no difference*” was created and the two answers were found to be correlated. When included in the regressions this combined variable made no substantive difference to the results and thus, in the interests of parsimony and ease of explanation, was not used.

⁸²⁵ Blais A, Young R, Fleury C, Lapp M. 1995.

which party was going to win the election in Durban/South Africa in the local/national government elections in South Africa in 2000/2004?”, where 1 was not important at all, and 10 was very important. In 2004 the response to the pertinent question was divided by 10 to get a 0-1 scale and used as *B* for 2004. In 2000 the two pertinent questions were added and divided by 20 to get a 0-1 scale and used as *B*. The alpha for the two questions used in *B* for the 2000 elections was 0.8 which is very significant.

The questions on which the costs and duty terms were based were similarly drawn from Blais et al.⁸²⁶ For costs, respondents were asked: *How difficult do you think it would be for you to go out and cast your vote?* Responses were recoded as a four point scale where 0 was very easy, and 1 was very difficult. For *D*, a variable was created from the responses to 3 statements “*It is the duty of every citizen to vote*”, “*In order to preserve democracy it is essential that the great majority of citizens vote*” and “*It is important to vote even if my party / candidate has no chance of winning*”. The three questions scale well, with a Chronbachs alpha of 0.7.

7.5.3 Minimax-regret

This hypothesis was tested with responses to “*I would feel really terrible if I didn’t vote and my candidate / party lost by one vote*”. Two variables were created. First, minimax-regret was operationalised as a dummy variable that takes the value of 1 for those strongly agreeing. This is because the assumption is that voters that vote on the basis of minimax-regret are highly risk averse and would have to strongly agree with the statement to be counted as such. Second, the full five category variable that varies according to the strength

⁸²⁶ Blais A, Young R, Fleury C, Lapp M. 1995.

of agreement was used.⁸²⁷ Finally, an interaction term between the *P* and *B* variables was added. If voters do truly make decisions based on the interaction of both these terms then this variable should be significant.⁸²⁸

7.6 Analysis

7.6.1 The 2000 Local Government Election

Table 7.5: rational choice models of Voter Turnout, 2000.

Variable	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.
Closeness 2000	-0.06	0.18								
Vote-Made-A-Difference 2000			0.69**	0.28	0.54*	0.29	0.54*	0.29	0.08	0.59
Costs	-1.06**	0.47	-0.89*	0.47	-0.67	0.49	-0.67	0.49	-0.63	0.49
Benefit 2000	0.36	0.39	0.03	0.41	-0.39	0.44	-0.40	0.44	-0.72	0.57
Duty					2.62***	0.86	2.60***	0.87	2.69***	0.87
Mini-max Regret							-0.01	0.15		
P*B									0.73	0.83
Constant	0.18	0.35	-0.01	0.33	-1.60**	0.62	-1.60**	0.62	-1.49	0.63
Pseudo R ²	0.0217		0.0343		0.0637		0.0638		0.0661	
N of cases	245		245		245		245		245	
LR chi2	7.35		11.62		21.57		21.58		22.36	
Degrees of Freedom	3		3		4		5		5	

*** = $p < 0.01$; ** = $p < 0.05$; * = $p < 0.1$

The most striking result is just how poor the rational choice models are in explaining the choice to vote or not in the 2000 Election. In no case is the Pseudo R squared above 0.067. When perceived closeness is used as the *P* term it is never significant, adding credence to the argument of Ferejohn and Fiorina⁸²⁹ that people are both unable to calculate the closeness of an election and do not take their assessment into account when voting. However,

⁸²⁷ As there were no substantive differences between the model including minimax-regret as a dummy variable, and minimax-regret as a five point scale, only the results from the regressions using the five point scale are shown.

⁸²⁸ In testing, the interaction term was included at earlier stages, without substantive difference to the outcome.

⁸²⁹ Ferejohn J and Fiorina M.1974; Ferejohn J and Fiorina M.1975.

just as Blais et al⁸³⁰ find in their study, this does not help to confirm the minimax-regret hypothesis in this sample. When I control for other variables the minimax-regret variable is never a significant determinant of having voted. Blais et al⁸³¹ find that this is due to the minimax-regret variable being reasonably correlated with *D*, and argue that this is unsurprising as voters with a strong sense of duty would feel guilty because of the first part of the minimax regret-statement (i.e. “I would feel guilty if I did not vote...”) and not necessarily the later part about their candidate losing by one vote. There is a slight correlation in our sample,⁸³² but, minimax-regret was not significant no matter what variables were excluded or added, or what coding was used. It seems clear that, in Durban at least, voters did not vote on the basis of minimax-regret in the local government elections.

When a measure of *P* based on the belief that their vote made a difference is used, *P* is significant. Voters who believed this were 70% more likely to have voted than those who did not.⁸³³ This measure only has a weak correlation with *D*.⁸³⁴ Thus voters do in some sense make an assessment of the value of their vote in an election and vote if they believe that it does make a difference.

Whether a *P* term based on closeness or on the respondent believing that his vote made a difference in the election is used, *D*, when introduced, immediately more than doubles the Pseudo R squared, and significantly increases the LR chi2 of the model, confirming that it greatly improves the strength of the rational choice account. Without the duty term the rational choice explanation has virtually no explanatory power. Duty is always strongly significant and substantive. A unit increase in *D* is associated with an increase in the

⁸³⁰ Blais A, Young R, Fleury C, Lapp M. 1995.

⁸³¹ Blais A, Young R, Fleury C, Lapp M. 1995.

⁸³² Alpha=0.33 when Regret is a zero-one variable.

⁸³³ In model three

⁸³⁴ Alpha=0.25.

odds of a respondent having voted of 700%, controlling for other variables in the model. A potential voter who believes his vote would make a difference, thinks that it was easy to vote, and is indifferent with regards his party's performance has a predicted probability of voting of 21% if he believes that he has no duty to vote, but a predicted probability of 67% if he has a strong sense of duty.⁸³⁵ Duty is thus an important predictor of voting in the 2000 election, which is perhaps unsurprising given the perceived low stakes of any local government election.

B was not significant, and *C* was only weakly significant in the most basic model, though the signs were in the hypothesised direction throughout. In any case, *C* is always significant at the 15% level, and is the right direction which supports keeping it in the model. Finally, the interaction term $P*B$ is not significant.⁸³⁶ This lends credence to the claim made by Blais that voters simply add instead of multiplying the two variables together when deciding to vote.⁸³⁷ As such there is no "paradox of voting" as even if the race is not close at all, this has only limited impact on the $P*B$ term.

Thus, the account that best explains the 2000 local government election is based on one where voters must have a strong belief that it is one's duty to vote. This is without doubt the most important consideration. Thereafter they assess whether they think that their vote will make a difference, whether they will be happy if their party does well, and look at the costs involved, as seen in model three.

⁸³⁵ Model three where $\text{VoteDiff}=1, C=0.33, B=0.5$.

⁸³⁶ This is true whichever measures of P I use.

⁸³⁷ Blais A.2000.

7.6.2 The 2004 National Election

Table 7.6: rational choice models of Voter Turnout 1-5, 2004.

Variable	<i>Model 1</i>		<i>Model 2</i>		<i>Model 3</i>		<i>Model 4</i>		<i>Model 5</i>	
	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	B	s.e.
Closeness 2004	0.09	0.20								
Vote-Made-A-Difference 2004			1.19***	0.31	1.11***	0.31	1.90***	0.31	1.33*	0.69
Costs	-1.21**	0.49	-1.12**	0.50	-0.98*	0.51	-0.98*	0.51	-1.01**	0.50
Benefit 2004	0.97**	0.41	0.70*	0.42	0.55	0.43	0.55	0.44	0.68	0.53
Duty					1.41	0.88	1.39	0.91	1.22	0.86
Mini-max Regret							0.11	0.15		
P*B									-0.29	0.89
Constant	0.86	0.38	0.44	0.37	-0.44	0.66	-0.44	0.66	-0.41	0.66
Pseudo R ²	0.0457		0.0991		0.1077		0.1077		0.1109	
N of cases	286		281		281		281		281	
LR chi2	13.91		30.14		32.64		32.65		32.72	
Degrees of Freedom	3		3		4		5		5	

*** = $p < 0.01$; ** = $p < 0.05$; * = $p < 0.1$

In the 2004 election there are some striking differences to the results obtained in the 2000 election. First, and crucially, the basic model fares much better here than in did for the local one, and the addition of *D* is nowhere near as crucial. While it was significant in the models with *P* as *closeness* it was not significant in the models with *Vote-Made-A-Difference* as the *P* term and added little explanatory power to the model compared to 2000. Whereas the predicted probability of voting tripled when a potential voter had a strong sense of duty in 2000, rising from a mere 20% to almost 70%, in 2004 the predicted probability rises from 65% to 88%,⁸³⁸ a less substantive increase. This makes sense. In 2004 the stakes were higher, and it could be less out of a sense of duty and more to get a particular result that people would vote.⁸³⁹ This seems to be borne out by the fact that the *B* term based on the chosen party winning was significant and in the right direction more often in 2004.

⁸³⁸ Model three where $\text{VoteDiff}=1, C=0.33, B=0.5$.

⁸³⁹ For non-black voters this is not the case. In a regression including only non-black voters, *D* and *P* are both significant at the 10% level while all other variables are not ($N=63$). Duty may be significant for them as minority parties have no chance of winning. For black voters, only *P* and *C* are significant, indicating that there are perhaps greater structural obstacles to blacks voting then for non-blacks ($N=224$).

Vote-Makes-A-Difference and *C* are always significant and are substantively large. Those who think that it is very difficult to vote have a predicted probability of voting of 66% as opposed to 84% for those who think it is very easy,⁸⁴⁰ while those who think their vote makes a difference have a 79% chance of voting as opposed to a 55% chance for those who do not,⁸⁴¹ *ceteris paribus*. The increased importance of these variables at a national level comes from the decreased importance of duty. When voters have a chance of voting irrespective of their belief in whether or not they have a duty to vote then these other variables become important in determining whether or not they plan to vote.

Finally, in 2004, as in 2000 the conception of *P* as *closeness* was never significant. The minimax-regret term and *P*B* were, as in 2000, never significant no matter what measures were used, lending more support to the hypothesis that voters add rather than multiply these two terms.

7.7 Preliminary Conclusions

Two crucial conclusions can be gathered from this chapter thus far. The first is that rational choice models seem to provide only a partial, limited account of the decision making process of registered voters in Durban when it comes to voting or not. The best models provide a Pseudo R squared of only 0.11 in 2004 and 0.06 in 2000, which makes it clear that there are other factors at work here. Moreover, closeness is only intermittently significant, a critical weakness of the rational choice explanation given that it is the only variable excluded from all other models of turnout. This is the best measure of *perceived* closeness that I have been able to use in the thesis so far, and its failure to provide any explanatory weight is a major blow to the theory. It seems that traditional rational choice models have only limited

⁸⁴⁰ Model three where $\text{VoteDiff}=1, B=0.5, D=0.5$.

⁸⁴¹ Model three where $C=0.33, B=0.5, D=0.5$.

explanatory power in this context, whether in a PR-list or Multi-Member-Proportional system. This is also the first time that we have been able to use questions explicitly tailored to the rational choice hypotheses and their failure to account for much of the variance is a major failing.

The second is that the rationale for voting and the type of individual who votes are different in national as opposed to local elections in Durban, and different rational choice models of voter abstention work better at different levels. At a national level having a strong sense of duty is comparatively unimportant when compared to a local level. In the 2004 election the simple model of voter turnout with only costs, benefits and probability of influencing the election is only marginally improved with the addition of the duty variable. Even voters with absolutely no sense of duty whatsoever have a 65% chance of turning out to vote if they think there is a marginal benefit, relatively low costs, and that their vote will make a difference.⁸⁴² In 2000 the same voter has only a 21% chance of voting. As such, the model would be better at predicting fluctuations in turnout in national elections given that the important variables here are ones that change election to election, while the attitudes like duty, which are so important in local elections, are much more static and take longer to change. This may explain the stability of local turnout levels in Durban. I can deduce that in the local election voters with a weak sense of duty had already decided not to vote, while voters with a strong sense of duty will always vote if they can.

This scenario makes sense given the relative importance of national elections compared to local ones, even if just in the public eye. It is, however, somewhat perplexing for two reasons, first in that given the dominance of the ANC, the local sphere is the only realm

⁸⁴² Model three where $\text{VoteDiff}=1, C=0.33, B=0.5, D=0.5$.

where opposition parties can capture power. The second oddity is that it is against local government that most protests have been directed over the past few years,⁸⁴³ and where most action should thus be directed.

7.8 Extending the Model, Alternative Explanations of Abstention

So far the rational choice models on their own provided only a limited explanation of abstention in Durban, with the variables explaining most of the variance, duty and believing that one's vote makes a difference, arguably having more to do with attitudes than a cost benefit analysis of voting in a particular election. I shall now seek to improve the rational choice models by adding other factors that were found to be important in the previous chapters and testing them again in this context.

7.8.1 Socioeconomic Factors

As was the case in chapters five and six in Africa, the youngest age group in the survey (18-25 year olds) generally had lower rates of voting than the oldest. The data reveals very small differences in turnout between genders, with 72% of men and 73% of women claiming to have voted in 2004. In South Africa, where race has been the dominant issue since the creation of the Union, one would expect race to be a key indicator of turnout. It has been shown that race is used as a signifier for group interests when South Africans decide who to vote for,⁸⁴⁴ and that it is the key determinant of party affiliation and voter choice.⁸⁴⁵ The ANC and DA are frequently accused of mobilising along race lines, with the ANC being seen as putting forward a message that voting for a non-African party is morally repugnant so

⁸⁴³ Hodgson T.1 March 2006. "Durban protests: shack dwellers demand attention." www.Sabcnews.com; Mail and Guardian.1 March 2006. "Don't concentrate on Khutsong only" www.mg.com; Schulz-Herzenberg, C.13 March 2006. "Explaining the nature of the 2006 local elections". www.sabcnews.com

⁸⁴⁴ Feree, K.2004. "The Micro-Foundations of Ethnic Voting: Evidence from South Africa." *Afrobarometer* Working Paper No. 40

⁸⁴⁵ Friedman, S.2004. "South Africa: Building Democracy after Apartheid" in Gyimah-Boadi (ed). *Democratic Reform in Africa: The Quality of Progress*.

that black citizens would rather not vote than vote for another party.⁸⁴⁶ The 1999 and 2000 elections were seen as particularly racially polarised.⁸⁴⁷ In 1999 the polarised campaign in the Western Cape meant that whereas white turnout soared to 83% compared to 72% nationally, only 64% of Cape coloureds voted compared to 89% of coloured voters in the Eastern Cape.⁸⁴⁸ It is thus clear that race is likely to play a role in turnout in Durban. It is, however, unclear just what the relation will be. Whites are a minority, but are still significantly more likely to have access to material resources, education and other variables commonly associated with voting. On the other hand, blacks are hypothesised to be more easily accessed by agents of mobilisation.

Preliminary analysis in Graph 7.2 shows that black Durbanites were more likely than any other race to have reported having voted in the 2004 national election, but that whites and coloureds both voted at higher rates than blacks in the 2000 local government elections, confirming the hypothesis that a higher percentage of whites voted in the 2000 elections.⁸⁴⁹ The largest difference between local and national turnout is recorded amongst blacks and Indians who are 21 and 29 percentage points respectively more likely to have voted in the 2004 election, as opposed to whites and coloureds who were respectively only five and seven percentage points more likely to have voted. It appears as if most whites who vote may vote in all elections, local or national, but that the black population is less habitual. Due to the small number of minority respondents I shall henceforth look predominantly at the difference between the black and non-black population as preliminary analysis and theory indicates that with regards income, attitudes and history this is the most appropriate categorisation.

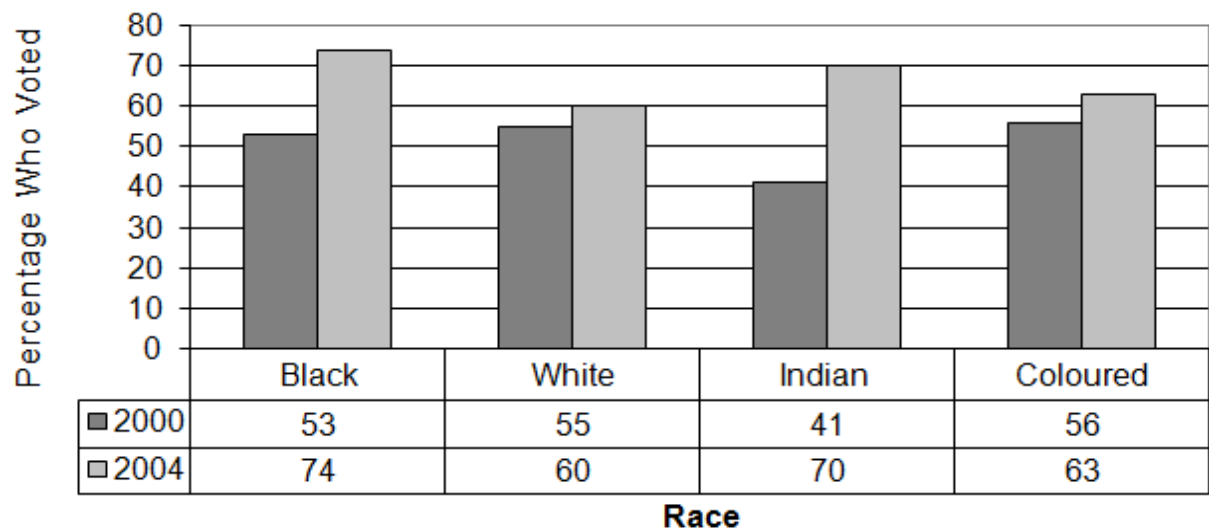
⁸⁴⁶ Johnson, R.1998.

⁸⁴⁷ Friedman, S. 2004.

⁸⁴⁸ Johnson, R.1999. "Can the ANC win the Western Cape" *Focus* 16.

⁸⁴⁹ Lodge T.2003 "South African Politics and Collective Action, 1994-2000."

Graph 7.2: Percentage of Registered Voters who claimed that they voted, by Race



With regards education the Durban results are mixed. In 2000, university educated citizens voted at a rate lower than any other educated group, while in 2004 they voted at a rate higher than that of those with no education, but marginally less than those with other levels of education. The lower turnout in local elections can in part be accounted for by the fact that university educated people are more mobile and often not living in the constituency they registered in at the time of the election, making the costs of voting high. In national elections where one is able to vote in a ward other than the one that you registered in, this is not such a problem. A further explanation is found in the fact that university educated Durbanites are less likely to believe that it is one's duty to vote, a factor that I found was important in determining turnout at a local level in chapter two. This finding is important because it confirms the earlier finding in chapter five that there is a non-linear relationship between education and turnout, that the most educated and the least educated tend to vote less than those with a little education.

Preliminary analysis of the Durban data set reveals no clear pattern between income and turnout, but employment is expected to be significant. In South Africa where 42% of the

population were unemployed by the broad definition of unemployment in 2005,⁸⁵⁰ being employed or not is a major division. In the Durban sample 76% of the employed voted in 2004 as opposed to 66% of the unemployed. In addition, those working in the public sector were more likely to vote than non-public sector workers, with 82% of public sector workers voting in 2004 as opposed to 67% of non-public sector workers.

7.8.2 Psychological and Attitudinal Assessments

Preliminary analysis seems to reveal the familiar pattern between knowledge and voting. In 2004 55% of people who could only answer one or two questions correctly voted, while 86% of those who answered all correctly voted. Almond and Verba argue that talking about politics implies a sense of safety and an ability to take chances and risks which is positively associated with political participation.⁸⁵¹ This seems to be the case in Durban, with 88% of those who discuss politics very often voting in 2004 as opposed to only 61% of those who never discuss politics.

Table 7.7: Voting and Satisfaction with Government: Percentage of those who voted who listed the following responses to "I am generally satisfied with Local/National Government".

Voted/answer	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Voted in 2000	58	57	44	58	31
Didn't Vote in 2000	32	43	56	42	69
Voted in 2004	81	78	67	70	61
Didn't Vote in 2004	19	22	33	30	39

Table 7.7 shows that the relationship between voting and government satisfaction in Durban is not straightforward. Those who strongly disagree or have no opinion on the efficacy of government are, in that order, less likely to vote. Those who disagree are more likely to vote than those who have no opinion and in 2000, then those who agree. It may be

⁸⁵⁰ Daniel, Southall & Lutchman (eds).2005. *state of the Nation: South Africa 2004-2005*.

⁸⁵¹ Almond and Verba.1963:79-80

that those who disagree but not strongly, believe that they can change the system, that it is not irredeemable, while those who strongly disagree have lost hope.

Cover argues that the more perceived corruption there is, the less participation in conventional politics,⁸⁵² and Daniel et al blame this and a distrust of politicians in general as possible reasons for declining turnout in South Africa.⁸⁵³ This is not confirmed in Durban where those who strongly agree that the government is corrupt were as likely to vote as those who strongly disagreed.

7.8.3 Mobilisation

Table 7.8 shows that mobilisation is important in Durban, with large gaps between the voting rates of party members, civil society members, political rally attendees and those who contacted a public representative. These factors seem particularly important at a local level where the gaps are largest. There is a more ambiguous relationship with canvassing. While there is a nine percentage point gap between those who were canvassed in 2000 and those weren't, this drops to four percentage points in the 2004 election. This is important as I was not able to test the effects of being canvassed in the previous chapters.

Table 7.8: Mobilisation and Voting: Percentage of those who voted who listed the following responses

Voted/Mobilising Variables	Member Of Political Party		Member Of Civil Society		Attended a Political Rally		Contacted an MP or Councillor	
	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Voted in 2000	49	77	49	73	44	71	46	72
Didn't Vote in 2000	51	23	51	27	56	29	54	28
Voted in 2004	71	91	71	87	70	80	71	81
Didn't Vote in 2004	29	9	29	13	30	20	29	19

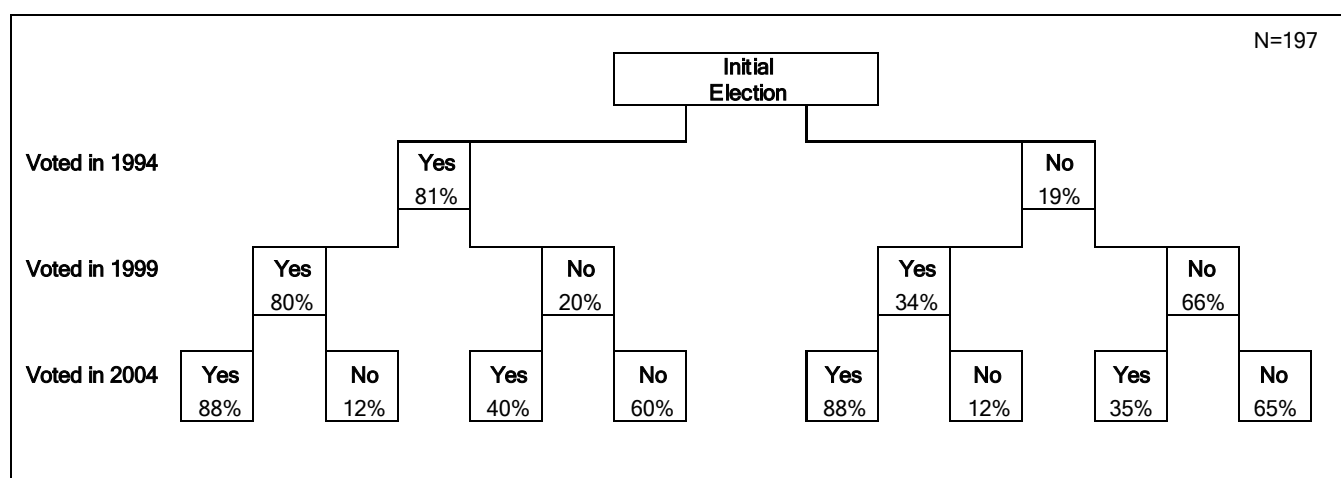
⁸⁵² Cover, O.2005. "Political Corruption and Citizens Behaviour". Oxford M.Phil Thesis.

⁸⁵³ Daniel, Southall and Lutchman (eds).2005.

7.8.4 Habit

In the Durban data the progression of voting based on reported vote for blacks for whom 1994 was their first election can be tracked, something which could not be done in any of the previous chapters.⁸⁵⁴ Only those for whom 1994 was their first election are included so that I can track the full electoral experience of these individuals. Figure 7.1 shows that in the Durban data, 57% voted in all three elections, and only 8% consistently abstained, which compares well to the figures of 55% and 6% respectively which Denny and Doyle find in the British data. These results suggest that individuals who vote in one election, especially their first, are likely to continue to participate while persistent abstainers are rare. The figures also show that those who missed the 1994 election and voted for the first time in 1999 were just as likely to vote in 2004 as those who had voted in 1994 and 1999 suggesting that voting is an absorbing act.

Figure 7.1: Habit



So why does voting appear to be habit forming? It may be due to the initially high transactions costs of registering etc. An alternative explanation is that once individuals have voted they are targeted by parties who seek out those that have voted before, while abstainers

⁸⁵⁴ There were elections in the Homelands before 1994, but as 1994 was such a pivotal moment it can be regarded as the first election for most black people.

are not canvassed.⁸⁵⁵ That said this relationship persists even when mobilisation is controlled for,⁸⁵⁶ something which is also the case with the explanation based on voting changing broad political orientations such as duty.⁸⁵⁷ Other attitudes that could be changed by voting include “conative” attitudes, i.e. positive or negative feelings about the act of voting itself such as knowing where to go, how to vote etc. One learns by doing.⁸⁵⁸ If their first experience of voting is positive that becomes the attitude they develop about voting. Voting could also reinforce one’s image of oneself as civic minded, and become associated with positive feelings so that one can become “addicted to voting”.⁸⁵⁹ In future then, just as was found in the previous chapter, studies should focus on young adults in their first election as voting thereafter can become increasingly path dependant. In this study I shall analyse the difference between new and old voters to determine whether this is the case.

7.9 Regression Methodology

As was the case earlier, two sets of regressions were run, one with data for the 2000 local government elections, and one for the 2004 national elections. The dependant variables and the *P*, *B*, *C* and *D* terms used in this chapter are operationalised in the same way as they were before. In each set of regressions I begin by adding socioeconomic variables to the models developed above to create model A. Model B includes variables based on attitudes and psychological attributes, whilst model C extends the analysis to include mobilisation variables and model D adds indications of previous voting activity. In 2004 two further models, E and F are developed to show the effects of age cohorts.

⁸⁵⁵ Gerber AS, Green DP, Shachar R.2003.

⁸⁵⁶ Green D & Shachar R.2000.

⁸⁵⁷ Denny K & Doyle O.2006.

⁸⁵⁸ Simon H. 1947. *Administrative Behaviour: A study of Decision-Making Processes in Administrative Organisation*.:88-89

⁸⁵⁹ Nickerson, D.2004.

7.9.1 Operationalisation

Age is the age in years for each respondent. For *Gender*, 0 is male and 1 is female, while the variable *Black* represents race where 0 is not black and 1 is black. For *Employed* 0 is unemployed while 1 is employed. For *Income* respondents were asked for their gross household income per month and this was operationalised so that 0 was R0-R1,000 a month; 1 was R1,001-R2,500; 2 was R2,501-R6,000; 3 was R6,001-R12,000; 4 was R12,001-R20,000 and 5 was over R20 000. These categories were based on those used in the Cape Area Survey. *Education* was based on the highest level of education achieved, and 0 was no education, 1 primary, 2 secondary and 3 tertiary.

A number of attitudes and aptitudes were tested but only *Political Knowledge* was ever found to be significant. Respondents were asked to name the President of the United states, the President of South Africa, the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, the Mayor of Durban and their ward councillor. The number of correct scores was divided by five to create the variable, which ranges from 0 to 1.

The most basic form of mobilisation is canvassing and respondents were asked “*Were you personally approached and canvassed for your vote by a political party in the...election?*” with respect to both the 2000 and 2004 elections. These responses were coded as 0-1 (no=yes), with don’t knows recoded as no to create the variables *Canvass-2000* and *Canvass-2004*. Five dichotomous variables were created to reflect being a public sector worker, political party membership, civil society membership, attendance at political rallies and contacting councillors or MPs. These were all coded as 0-1 where 1 indicated that the respondent was a member or participant. *Public Sector Worker* is included as a mobilisation

variable as the hypothesis is that those working in the public sector are mobilised by political incumbents.

It is further hypothesised that individuals who feel close to, or are strongly motivated to vote for particular parties are more likely to vote. This attribute could be included under attitudes, but is included here as it is seen as being a weaker form of party membership, and it is hypothesised that these individuals will be exposed to greater levels of mobilisation, as was the case in the African examples mentioned earlier. The first two variables created in this vein were *Anti-Party* and *Party-Sympathy*. Both were based on answers to the question “*Rate your possibility of voting for the following parties with a score out of 100 where 100 is very likely and 0 is totally unlikely*”. For *Anti-Party* all those who said that they had a 0% chance of voting for any party were coded as 1, the rest as 0. For *Party-Sympathy* those who had a 90% or greater chance of voting for a party were coded as 1, the rest as 0. *Close-Party-Local* was created from the question “*Do you think of yourself as being close to any particular party at a local level?*” where 0 is no and 1 is yes. An alternate measure was used in 2004 as it was hypothesised, and confirmed for reasons mentioned in the text, that *Anti-Party* would not be significant. As such a variable *Party* was created which consisted of answers to “*Do you think of yourself as being close to any particular party at a national level?*” and “*Are you a paid up member of a political party?*”, where the answers were added together to create a variable ranging from 0 to 2, where 0 is neither close to a party nor a member, and 2 is both.

For habit a lagged value for voting in previous elections was used. For generational effects the *Age* variable was recoded to create a variable *New* so that all those eligible to vote in 1994 were coded as 0 for being part of the old, liberation generation, whilst all those not

eligible were coded as 1 for being part of the new, post-liberation generation. I expect to find that habitual voting is present.

7.10 Analysis

7.10.1 The 2000 Local Government Elections

Table 7.9: Logit Models of Voter Turnout, 2000.

Variable	<i>Rational Choice Model 3</i>		<i>Socio-economic Model A</i>		<i>Knowledge Model B</i>		<i>Mobilisation Model C</i>		<i>Habit Model D</i>	
	B	s.e.	B	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.
Vote-Made-a-Difference 2000	0.54*	0.29	0.52	0.34	0.48	0.35	0.47	0.38	0.34	0.41
Costs	-0.67	0.49	-0.58	0.53	-0.45	0.54	-0.93	0.62	-0.86	0.65
Benefit 2000	-0.39	0.44	-0.34	0.50	-0.50	0.51	-0.89	0.59	-1.06	0.63
Duty	2.62***	0.86	3.16***	0.97	3.14***	1.00	3.50***	1.10	2.90**	1.15
Age			0.04***	0.01	0.03**	0.01	0.03**	0.01	0.03†	0.02
Gender			0.06	0.32	0.17	0.33	0.11	0.35	0.11	0.37
Black			0.61	0.40	0.41	0.41	-0.16	0.47	-0.09	0.50
Employed			0.32	0.34	0.27	0.35	-0.10	0.46	-0.14	0.49
Income			-0.26**	0.11	-0.31***	0.12	-0.28*	0.13	-0.32**	0.14
Education			0.11	0.20	-0.06	0.22	-0.07	0.23	-0.08	0.24
Political Knowledge					1.86***	0.64	1.77**	0.72	2.05***	0.77
Canvass-2000							-0.08	0.48	0.18	0.46
Member of a Political Party							0.21	0.60	0.23	0.64
Member of Civil society							0.55	0.57	0.33	0.60
Political Rally							1.00**	0.43	0.99**	0.46
Contacted MP or WC							1.02**	0.43	0.94**	0.45
Anti-Party							1.62**	0.68	1.84**	0.74
Party-Sympathy							1.04**	0.41	1.00**	0.42
Public Sector Worker							0.30	0.45	0.17	0.46
Vote 99									1.77***	0.41
Constant	-1.60**	0.62	-4.01***	1.33	-4.37***	1.36	-5.03***	1.50	-5.52***	1.59
Pseudo R ²	0.0637		0.1208		0.1499		0.2334		0.3002	
N of cases	245		224		224		224		224	
LR chi2	21.57		37.24		46.24		71.61		92.10	
Degrees of Freedom	4		10		11		19		20	

*** = p < 0.01; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.1, † = p close to 0.1 (0.12)

Table 7.9 shows the results of logistic regression analysis using the Durban data. The first model is the model derived earlier. Model A adds socioeconomic variables. The addition of these variables raises the Pseudo R-Squared to 0.12 which is still poor, but double the pure rational choice model. The largest effect remains duty. For a person with no sense of duty the probability of voting is 14%, while for someone with a very strong sense of duty, the

probability rises to 80%.⁸⁶⁰ In addition both *Income* and *Age* are significant. While age operates in the usual hypothesised direction where the propensity to vote increases with time, income is negatively related to turnout as has been found throughout this thesis. In South Africa given that most rich people are white and no longer likely to feel in control of the political terrain, it may be the case that the poor see the ballot box as a means to secure better services. This may be particularly important in local elections as the poor may be more likely to want to take every opportunity to vote to secure a better standard of living. As noted earlier they are also likely to be the easiest to mobilise.

Model B adds *Political Knowledge* which both increases the explanatory power of the model as a whole and is substantively significant, the second largest effect found thus far. A number of other attitudinal variables were also tested, such as political interest and discussion but these were never significant. Considerations about the performance of government, corruption, the economy and support for democratic institutions were also not significant. As there is no strong theoretical reason for them to be included they have been excluded..

Model C adds various factors associated with mobilisation. The addition of these variables produces the biggest change in the LR chi2 value, a change of 25.37, and the Pseudo R squared rises over 8 points to 0.2334. Moreover, four of the variables added are significant, and all of them have large substantive effects. Using values from model D, I see that attending a rally or contacting a public representative increases the probability of voting from 50% to 73 and 72% respectively.⁸⁶¹ These “communing” actions are important for two reasons, first as they indicate interest in politics and a willingness to engage and participate in

⁸⁶⁰ Model A with VoteDiff=1, C=0.33, B2000=0.7, Age=32, Gender=1, Black=1, Employed=1, Income=1, Education=3.

⁸⁶¹ Model D with VoteDiff=1, C=0.33, B2000=0.7, Age=32, Gender=1, Black=1, Employed=1, Income=1, Education=3, Political Knowledge=0.6, Canvass=0, Membership of Political Party=0, Membership of Civil Society=0, Political Rally=0, Contact=0, Anti-Party=0, Party-Sympathy=0, Public Sector Worker=0, Vote99=1

activities which take up time and energy, and secondly because they expose potential voters to individuals who want to mobilise them.

Interestingly, being a member of a political party or civil society are not significant. Upon further investigation I find that if I remove all the other variables of mobilisation and leave only one of them in the model, then both of them are significant and have coefficients of 0.91 and 0.83 respectively. They are not highly correlated with one another though ($\alpha=0.32$). Membership of organisations thus increases turnout in Durban, but the reason for that is less to do with membership per se, and more to do with the fact that they enable greater mobilisation via exposure to other mobilisation avenues such as rallies.

Being canvassed is traditionally meant to be associated with voting but is never significant, and has a sign in the opposite direction to what is hypothesised when the Anti-Party variable is included. Two attitudes related to mobilisation seem to also be important, anti-party feelings and party sympathy. The fact that anti-party feeling is associated with an *increased* likelihood of voting seems bizarre, but isn't. Earlier I noted that in Canada an anti-party feeling is more likely to result in an anti-party vote than abstention. In local elections voters are able to vote for individual ward candidates, small fringe parties and other groups not on the national ballot, allowing anti-party voters to express their opposition to all the major parties, perhaps a reason why this variable is not significant in 2004. An alternate explanation may be that these voters (10%) of the sample, are planning on voting for parties that are not socially acceptable. As the majority of this group was from Umlazi, where voter intimidation has been observed in the past, this may have some credence. *Party-Sympathy* was, as expected positively, substantively and significantly related to turnout.

The final addition is made in Model D with the addition of a variable to represent that an individual voted in the national election of the previous year. The addition of this variable also significantly increases the explanatory power with the Pseudo R-Squared rising to 0.30, a respectable amount given this type of model and the nature and size of the sample. Not having voted in the previous election reduced the likelihood that an individual voted in this election from 50% to 15%.⁸⁶² In this final model the effect of duty has moderated slightly, now raising the likelihood of voting from 2 to 31%; being from the highest income group drops the likelihood of voting from 19% in the lowest income band to 15%; and having the highest possible knowledge score raises the likelihood of voting from 4 to 28%.⁸⁶³

At the local level then, as found earlier, believing that it is ones duty to vote is an extremely important attribute. Moreover, those with more knowledge vote more, and those who are mobilised via active participation are also more likely to vote as are those with strong feelings about the parties. Finally, there is some evidence for the habit thesis, but I cannot rule out that other factors are at play.⁸⁶⁴

⁸⁶² See Note above

⁸⁶³ See Note above

⁸⁶⁴ In order to test the derived model above, a regression based on the Kuenzi and Lambright model was also run, using the Durban Data. The only variables that were significant which are not present in our earlier analysis were one representing rural versus urban location and one based on an economic evaluation of the period prior to the election. Both of these variables fell away, however, when a dummy for race was inserted in the first instance, and mobilisation variables in the latter. The Pseudo R-Squared was 0.1886 as opposed to the 0.3002 obtained in our analysis. It would thus seem that while this particular model, derived from Africa level data, can help us to understand turnout to some degree at a local level in South Africa, the importance of race and mobilisation in Durban mean that it cannot do so as well as this model.

7.10.2: The 2004 National Election

Table 7.10 Logit Models of Voter Turnout, 2004.

Variable	<i>Rational Choice Model 3</i>		<i>Socioeconomic Model A</i>		<i>Knowledge Model B</i>		<i>Mobilisation Model C</i>		<i>Habit Model D</i>	
	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.	β	s.e.
Vote-Made-A-Difference 2004	1.11***	0.31	1.11***	0.34	1.11**	0.34	1.06***	0.35	1.25***	0.39
Costs	-0.98*	0.51	-1.07*	0.55	-1.06*	0.55	-0.95*	0.57	-0.60	0.62
Benefit-2004	0.55	0.43	0.45	0.46	0.45	0.46	0.11	0.50	0.53	0.57
Duty	1.41	0.88	1.74*	0.97	1.73*	0.98	1.78*	1.01	0.70	1.11
Age			0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	-0.02	0.02
Gender			0.32	0.36	0.32	0.36	0.33	0.37	0.36	0.40
Black			0.67†	0.41	0.66	0.42	0.52	0.45	0.37	0.51
Employed			0.60*	0.36	0.60*	0.36	0.30	0.43	0.36	0.49
Income			0.02	0.11	0.02	0.11	0.02	0.12	0.11	0.13
Education			0.06	0.21	0.06	0.22	0.05	0.23	0.10	0.24
Political Knowledge					0.04	0.65	0.03	0.69	-0.41	0.74
Canvass-2004							0.02	0.43	0.40	0.50
Member of Civil Society							0.69	0.69	0.66	0.75
Political Rally							-0.41	0.44	-0.78	0.49
Contact MP or WC							-0.02	0.34	-0.71	0.51
Public Sector Worker							0.78	0.51	0.54	0.57
Party							0.59*	0.34	0.51†	0.38
Vote 00									1.61***	0.48
Vote 99									1.22***	0.42
Constant	-0.44	0.66	-1.97	1.27	-1.97	1.27	-1.88	1.31	-1.52	1.42
Pseudo R ²	0.1077		0.1258		0.1258		0.1501		0.2598	
N of cases	281		258		258		257		257	
LR chi2	32.74		34.91		34.91		41.20		71.32	
Degrees Of Freedom	4		10		11		17		19	

*** = $p < 0.01$; ** = $p < 0.05$; * = $p < 0.1$, † = p close to 0.1 (0.12)

The 2004 election results above confirm that the determinants of voting are different in the national election as opposed to the local one. More people both reported that they voted, and actually voted in the national rather than the local election, and in some regards it seems that the local election results reveal the hardcore participants who vote no matter what, breaking up voters into committed voters, and those who only vote in national elections where the stakes are higher and they think that their vote makes a difference. Common to both is the finding that having voted in previous elections is an extremely important predictor of vote.

Once again the first column is the final rational choice model. In model A, the addition of socioeconomic variables has a marginal effect on the explanatory power of the model as a whole, and *C* and *Vote-Makes-A-Difference* remain just as important. What is interesting is that duty is now significant, and has a major substantive effect, raising the probability of voting from 71 to 93 % when *D* changes from 0 to 1. Of the socioeconomic variables only being employed is an important predictor of vote, but is much smaller substantively than any of the other significant variables changing the probability of voting from 81 to 89%.⁸⁶⁵ As in 2000 most attitudinal variables were not significant, with *Political Knowledge* having no effect on the model unlike in 2000, perhaps due to the decreased need for information when only voting for a party as opposed to a candidate.

The addition of mobilisation variables in model C also make little difference. The three main rational choice variables remain significant and don't change substantively, while being employed is now no longer significant. The only new variable which is significant is *Party* which raises the likelihood of voting. The reason for why this is important in 2004 but not 2000 may have something to do with the fact that none of the measures of active participation are significant. In the national elections people seem to vote if they think their vote will be important, a decision they seem to make independent of face to face mobilisation. All of those who are going to vote will do so whether mobilised or not, as opposed to the local election where even party members may not vote unless they have a high sense of duty and are mobilised.

When I add variables representing the previous two elections all of the previously significant variables except *Vote-Makes-A-Difference* are no longer significant, perhaps

⁸⁶⁵ Model A with *VoteDiff*=1, *C*=0.33, *B2004*=0.7, *D*=0.67, *Age*=32, *Gender*=1, *Black*=1, *Employed*=1, *Income*=1, *Education*=3

reflecting that these opinions were formulated in previous periods. The disappearance of costs is probably to do with the fact that people who think that costs are high think that for most elections. Finally, the fact that the lagged elections are significant lends credence to the idea that voting is habitual.

In Table 7.11 there is evidence to support the contention that there are (a) important generational differences, and (b) that as suggested by Franklin, most of the “action” and variance occurs amongst the younger generation before voters get set in their ways and begin to vote habitually. I can only really do this analysis for the 2004 election as, in line with Franklin, the older cohort are those who have been able to participate in three or more elections. The dummy variable *New* is significant and the effects are large and compelling.

Being employed as opposed to unemployed is associated with an increase in the probability of voting to 95% from 65% for the new generation, while a commensurate change has no significant effect for the old, rising from 54 to 56%.

Table 7.11 Logit Models of Voter Turnout, 2004

Variable	Generations Model E		Generations: Model F	
	B	s.e.	β	s.e.
Vote-Made-A-Difference 2004	1.01**	0.40	1.41***	0.48
Costs	-0.57	0.63	0.09	0.73
Benefit-2004	0.36	0.59	0.39	0.60
Duty	0.75	1.13	0.16	1.18
Gender	0.48	0.41	0.70	0.43
Black	0.30	0.49	0.49	0.52
Employed	0.52	0.50	0.06	0.56
Income	0.08	0.13	0.09	0.13
Education	0.14	0.23	0.08	0.23
Political Knowledge	-0.34	0.78	-0.17	0.82
Canvass-2004	0.32	0.51	0.29	0.54
Member of Civil Society	0.67	0.77	0.72	0.82
Political Rally	-0.58	0.51	-0.48	0.51
Contact MP WC	-0.69	0.51	-0.63	0.55
Public Sector Worker	0.75	0.59	0.80	0.63
Party	0.59	0.39	0.52	0.41
Vote 00	1.52***	0.48	1.42***	0.49
Vote 99	1.49***	0.43	1.61***	0.44
New	1.54***	0.50	3.23***	1.12
New*C			-3.35**	1.71
New*Employed			2.21*	1.31
New*VoteDiff04			-1.68	1.01
Constant	-2.97	1.19	-3.07	1.23
Pseudo R ²	0.2903		0.3265	
N of cases	257		257	
LR chi2	79.67		89.60	
Degrees of Freedom	19		22	

*** = $p < 0.01$; ** = $p < 0.05$; * = $p < 0.1$

The most compelling effect is that of costs. For the older generation costs have no significant effect, and the chance of voting hovers around 53 to 56% no matter what the costs. For the new cohort however, costs are not only significant but have a dramatic effect on voting. Young people who think that costs are low have an 84% probability of voting, while those that think costs are high have only a 17% chance of voting.⁸⁶⁶

These effects make sense when the literature on ageing and habit is considered. Being employed ties a person to the community where they are employed, and provides a space for mobilisation. Employed young people are, moreover, less likely to have the sense of hopelessness that many of the jobless youth in South Africa have. Some of the unemployed youth will also be students, and may be studying away from home, increasing the costs of voting. The importance of costs reflects the higher costs that the youth face in terms of registration and the like, but also the fact that they often do not have independent means of transport and may also be studying or working outside the area they registered in. Thus a combination of rational choice and habit variables produces the best explanation of why the older generation votes in national elections in Durban, while resources are important for understanding why the young vote.⁸⁶⁷

7.11 Race

One final variable which I expected to be significant, but which never was, was race. As I have a strong theoretical reason to assume that it does have some effect, and as there may well be effects that would only become clear when only one race was included in the regression, logistic regressions were run on the 2000 and 2004 data with either only black

⁸⁶⁶ Model F with VoteDiff=1, C=0.33, E2004=0.7, Duty=0.67, Gender=1, Black=1, Employed=0, Income=1, Education=3, Political Knowledge=0.6, Canvass=0, Party=0, Membership of Civil Society=0, Political Rally=0, Contact=0, Public Sector Worker=0, Vote99=0, New=1, New*C=0.33, New*Employed=0, New*VoteDiff=1, Vote99=0, Vote00=0

⁸⁶⁷ As was the case with the 2000 data, the model developed here was tested against the Kuenzi and Lambricht model, and it was also tested against the Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi model using the Durban data. Both of these models had Pseudo R-squared's lower than the model developed above (0.1441 and 0.1538 respectively as opposed to 0.3265) and lower LR chi-squareds. The explanatory power of both these models is limited by their failure to incorporate variables for voting in previous elections and interaction terms for younger cohorts.

respondents, or all other respondents. This method has previously been used by Thomas and Young to analyse gender differences in Canada,⁸⁶⁸ We need to be careful about reading too much into these regressions as the sample size of the non-black group is very small. Nonetheless, these regressions can give us an indication of plausible differences between races in Durban and can also provide a basis for further research.⁸⁶⁹

Table 7.12: Logit Models of Turnout, by race, 2000 and 2004

Variable	B	<i>Black 2000 s.e.</i>	β	<i>Not Black 2000 s.e.</i>	B	<i>Black 2004 s.e.</i>	β	<i>Not Black 2004 s.e.</i>
Vote-Made-A-Difference					1.02***	0.34	2.07**	0.82
Duty	0.95	0.86	4.42*	2.37				
Age	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02	-0.00	0.02	-0.04*	0.02
Vote 99	1.45***	0.32	3.10***	1.12	1.40***	0.41	2.26**	0.96
Vote00					1.18***	0.42	2.70**	1.24
Constant	-2.21***	1.01	-6.60***	2.97	-0.47	0.53	-0.69	1.01
Pseudo R ²	0.1255		0.3451		0.1961		0.4560	
N of cases	204		59		224		65	
LR chi2	35.45		28.22		51.05		37.94	
Degrees Of Freedom	3		3		4		4	

*** = $p < 0.01$; ** = $p < 0.05$; * = $p < 0.1$

There are two major substantive differences between blacks and non-blacks in Table 7.12. First, in both local and national elections non-blacks were found to be more affected by the rational choice variables. In the local election having a high level of duty raised the likelihood of voting for non-blacks from 5 to 83%, and from 47 to 70% for blacks.⁸⁷⁰ In 2004 thinking that one's vote made a difference raised the likelihood of having voted from 72 to 88% for blacks, and from 57 to 91% for non-blacks.⁸⁷¹ It may be that for whites in particular, holding this belief is likely to signal a continued belief in the system and their role therein, thus being an important predictor of whether they vote.

⁸⁶⁸ Thomas M and Young L.2006.

⁸⁶⁹ In the interests of parsimony only the pertinent variables are shown here. Regressions run with all the variables found earlier in the chapter produced no substantive differences.

⁸⁷⁰ Table3.14 with Duty=0.67, Age=32, Vote99=1

⁸⁷¹ Table3.14 with VoteDiff=1, Age=32, Vote99=1, Vote00=0

The other major difference is that it appears that non-blacks are more habitual non-voters or voters as shown by the strength of the lagged vote variables. Non-blacks who voted in 1999 had a 53% chance of voting in 2000 as opposed to a 5% chance for those who hadn't voted in 1999. The figures were 63 and 28% respectively for blacks. The explanations for this factor may be tied to that for the duty variable. Whites have had the right to vote since before the Union, while Indians and coloureds have had this right since the 1983 referendum. It is thus far more likely that the values that influence their current decisions to vote could have formed in a previous period, while for blacks 2000 was their first democratic local government election and only their third election. As such the strong duty variable may reflect repeated encounters with mobilising agents in previous elections. In addition, whites are less likely to be affected by circumstantial costs such as a lack of transport, having to work during an election or not having child care due to their advantaged socio-economic position. They are thus more likely to be able to vote on a constant basis should they wish to do so.

7.12 Determinants of mobilisation

In this section I shall briefly look at the determinants of attendance at rallies and contacting an MP or councillor which I found to be the most important mobilising forces. The only variables used in this section not

Table 7.13: Determinants of Mobilising Variables

Variable	Political Rally B	s.e.	Contact B	s.e.
Age	0.03**	0.01	-0.01	0.02
Gender	-0.18	0.36	0.07	0.38
Black	1.80***	0.54	-0.94*	0.50
Employed	1.32***	0.37	-0.17	0.42
Income	-0.07	0.13	-0.18	0.14
Education	0.25	0.24	0.46*	0.27
Political Knowledge	-0.82	0.70	2.66***	0.88
Member of Political Party	1.66***	0.57	0.77	0.53
Member of Civil Society	0.98**	0.49	0.06	0.52
Political Rally			0.62	0.41
Contact MP WC	0.53	0.42		
Close Party Local	0.60	0.36	1.61***	0.40
Political Interest	0.14***	0.06	-0.08	0.06
Strong-DA	1.21	0.95	-1.08	1.22
Strong-ANC	0.07	0.36	-0.37	0.37
Constant	-5.94	1.46	-3.90***	1.81
Pseudo R ²	0.2451		0.1784	
N of cases	237		237	
LR chi2	72.52		47.21	
Degrees Of Freedom	14		14	

*** = p < 0.01; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.1

used before are *Political Interest*, *Strong-DA* and *Strong-ANC*. The first variable reflects

answers to the question “On a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 means no interest and 10 means a great deal of interest how would you rate your interest in politics generally?”. The variable was not rescaled. The latter two variables are based on responses to “Rate your possibility of voting for the following parties with a score out of 100 where 100 is very likely and 0 is totally unlikely”, recoded so that those who had a 90% or greater chance of voting for the party were coded as 1, and the rest as 0.

Table 7.13 shows regressions run to determine the key determinants of those variables. Older people, blacks and the employed are all more likely to attend political rallies. Being black increases your likelihood of attending a rally from 5 to 25%, while being employed increases it from 8 to 25%. In addition those with more interest in politics, members of political parties and members of civic society are also more likely to attend such events. Black members of political parties have a 64% chance of attending a rally as opposed to black non-party members who have a 25% chance. Those with the greatest interest in politics have a 40% chance; those with no interest have only a 14% chance.⁸⁷² All of this is in line with what one would expect. Rallies appear to be used by parties to primarily excite activity on the part of their members who already have some propensity to vote. What is particularly interesting is the greater propensity of blacks to attend these events, as well as the fact that being a member of either a party or any other civic group is important.

The act of contacting representatives has rather different determinants. Here blacks are less likely to make use of this form of engagement. They have only a 5% chance of contacting a representative whereas non-blacks have a 13% chance.⁸⁷³ Upon further testing it was found that most of this effect came from whites as opposed to Indians or coloureds.

⁸⁷² Table 4.1 Age=32, Gender=1, Black=1, Employed=1, Income=1, Education=3, Political Knowledge=0.6, Membership of Political Party=0, Member Civil Society=0, Contact=0, Close Party=0, Political Interest=5, Strong-DA=0, Strong-ANC=1

⁸⁷³ See Note 344

Education is positively associated with contacting, as is the case in Botswana,⁸⁷⁴ perhaps reflecting the greater confidence that comes with higher education. The most educated have a 19% chance, whereas the least have a mere 5% chance. Being a member of a party or civil society are not important determinants, but feeling close to a party is, indicating that this activity appeals to a less politically engaged, but still politicised group. That group has a 42% chance of contacting, as opposed to those not close to a party who have a 13% chance. Finally, those who pursue this activity have much higher levels of political knowledge than those who don't. In order to contact your councillor you first need to know who he is, and both of these variables were found to be important determinants of turnout. Contacting an MP thus appears to be doubly important.

It thus appears that these two activities are important primarily for those who already have a propensity to vote, but appeal to different sectors of the electorate. Encouraging one and not the other can thus have markedly different effects depending on who is targeted.

7.13 Conclusion

This chapter has revealed two general conclusions. First, there are significant differences between the determinants of turnout in local and national elections, whether rational choice or other models are used. Second, given the failure of models developed either in the West or in the African context to comprehensively predict abstention in Durban shows that context is extremely important in determining the causes of abstention, and that individual level case studies are a necessary component of that explanation.

The first task set was to test rational choice explanations of turnout in a new context, and add to the body of relevant empirical literature. This chapter has found that rational

⁸⁷⁴ Holm J, Hayward F, Ross MH & Graeser M. 1978.

choice explanations on their own provide a very limited account of turnout in Durban. No support was found for the interaction of probability and benefits which is the basis of the calculus-of-voting model, the minimax-regret thesis, or for an account where individuals make assessments based on the closeness of elections. That said, in both local and national elections the use of a measure based on whether individuals thought that their vote made a difference to analyse P was significant. In national elections costs were also important, while duty was a major predictor in local elections.

These results indicate that there is little evidence to suggest that voters in Durban analyse voting in the manner suggested by rational choice theorists, though it is also clear that a number of the variables used in rational choice analysis are important. This chapter has reinforced the finding that duty provides much of the explanation for the empirical success of the models in systems where constituencies or second order elections occur. Just as importantly thanks to the use of the same panel of individuals over two elections it has shown that the same people conceptualise voting in different ways depending on whether a national or local election is occurring.

The second task was to extend the rational choice model by adding alternate conceptions of turnout to the earlier account. Once again there were significant differences between local and national elections, but in both cases voting in previous elections was a strong predictor of voting in the current election, especially for non-black voters who were also more inclined to vote out of duty or because they thought that their vote made a difference. In national elections it was only by looking at different generations that the causes of abstention could be isolated. When I did so I found that young voters were strongly affected by the costs of voting and employment status, whereas their elders had

predominantly become habitual voters or non-voters, adding strength to the voting as habit forming thesis.

In local elections those who voted were predominantly those who had a strong sense of duty, or who had been mobilised. It appears as if parties have to do a great deal more work to get individuals to vote in local elections. The chapter also found that participatory acts, like attending rallies or contacting an MP, have a greater boosting effect on the propensity to vote than passive acts, such as being canvassed or being a member of a party or community organisation.

Part E

Chapter Eight: Conclusion

8.1 But what about all those people who didn't register?

This thesis has focussed on the determinants of whether or not *registered* citizens vote. From the outset the lack of accurate census data meant doing cross-national institutional work on the unregistered was impossible and the Durban survey was designed to exclusively target registered voters. This presents a possible objection to the project. Could the lack of support that this thesis finds for structural obstacles being *the* major cause of abstention in Africa (in sharp contrast to Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi)⁸⁷⁵ be due to its failure to incorporate the unregistered? Could it be that rural voters are more likely to vote simply because they are the few eager politically conscious ones who overcame the huge costs of registration? If this is the case then many of the findings in this thesis would need serious reconsideration.

To test this Table 8.1 shows the results of a regression involving all voters in the Afrobarometer data used, the only part of this thesis where that is possible. Using the data from rounds three and four and the variables from chapter six it uses *Registered* as the dependent variable, where being registered is coded zero and being unregistered is coded zero, in a multilevel model with countries at level two.

Crucially, there is actually very little difference between the determinants of registration and the determinants of turnout. Being the Head of a Household and being employed have larger substantive effects on registration than turnout, but we do not find evidence of the massive structural obstacles to registration that are often claimed to exist

⁸⁷⁵ Bratton M, Mattes, R and Gyimah-Boadi. 2005.

amongst the poor, the rural and the poorly educated. In fact the poor and rural are *more* likely to be registered in line with the earlier findings on propensity to vote.

Table 8.1: Multilevel Logistic Regression: Determinants of Registration

Variable	Model R1	Model R2
<i>Individual Level</i>	<i>B (s.e.)</i>	<i>B (s.e.)</i>
Gender	0.09** (0.05)	0.20*** (0.04)
Lived Poverty Index	0.01 (0.02)	0.04* (0.02)
Rural	0.22*** (0.05)	0.16*** (0.04)
Education : Tertiary	0.24*** (0.08)	0.60*** (0.07)
Education : Primary	0.00 (0.06)	0.16*** (0.05)
Education: None	-0.06 (0.08)	0.27*** (0.07)
Employed	0.25*** (0.04)	0.44*** (0.04)
Head Of Household	0.31*** (0.06)	0.62*** (0.05)
Political Knowledge	0.43** (0.19)	0.25*** (0.03)
Broadcast News	0.26*** (0.09)	0.19** (0.08)
Newspaper News	-0.14* (0.07)	-0.19*** (0.07)
Close To Political Party	0.69*** (0.05)	0.63*** (0.04)
Member Religion	0.12 (0.08)	0.09 (0.07)
Politically Active	1.09*** (0.11)	1.21*** (0.09)
Contact Politician	0.89*** (0.16)	0.98*** (0.13)
Contact Government Official	-0.37*** (0.15)	-0.32*** (0.12)
Interest In Politics	0.33*** (0.06)	0.23*** (0.05)
Election Free and Fair	0.88*** (0.08)	0.83*** (0.07)
Prefer Alternatives	-0.38*** (0.12)	-0.43*** (0.11)
How Often Attacked	-0.50*** (0.14)	-0.43*** (0.11)
Ethnicity Matches President (At Election)	-0.00 (0.06)	0.02 (0.05)
Ethnic Discrimination	0.01 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)
Closeness (Seats)	0.00 (0.05)	0.02 (0.05)
PREG	1.19 (5.77)	-1.84 (6.32)
Electoral System	-0.06 (1.45)	0.24 (1.61)
Electoral Democracy at the Last Election	-3.26 (2.97)	-0.33 (2.65)
Liberal Democracy at the Last Election	0.21 (3.33)	-0.97 (3.76)
Young (1=18-25)	-1.27*** (0.19)	
Early Middle Age (1=26-49)	-0.53*** (0.18)	
Late Middle Age (1=50-65)	-0.10 (0.21)	
Multiparty Generation		-1.45*** (0.7)
Postcolonial Generation		0.03 (0.08)
Constant	10.10 (7.44)	9.10 (8.28)
<i>Random Effects</i>		
Sd	4.48*** (0.94)	5.03*** (1.03)
-2Log Likelihood	15022.3	19007
f Groups	29	29
No. of Individuals	37295	37295

Reference Category for Age Group is Senior. Reference Category for Generation is Colonial Generation. Reference Category for Education is Education: Secondary, Reference Category for Regime is Electoral Authoritarian *** = p < 0.01; ** = p < 0.05; * = p < 0.1

The three key areas which do differ between registration and turnout are age, gender and education. The young and those coming of age in multiparty systems are much less likely to be registered than other generations. Whilst this is the same direction of correlation that we found for turnout, the substantive effect is larger. Secondly, rather surprisingly, women are more likely to be registered than men and the tertiary educated are more likely to be registered than any other educational group. I would suggest that this shows that the tertiary educated are keeping their options open, registering shows that they have not given up on the system, not voting shows that they aren't happy with the available choices. When it comes to

gender the data appears to be suggesting that women may either be actively prevented from voting or that they face very different structural obstacles to registration than voting. This does seem unlikely. Registration is a more arduous process, usually administered at fewer venues and without the support of mobilising agents. This is a question that I have been unable to answer and which might only be answerable with more qualitative questioning of women in Africa.

This thesis has thus shown that whilst the obvious answer that structural obstacles are what deter voters from taking part in voting might initially seem appealing, it isn't borne out by the data, whether in terms of the determinants of registration or of voting. Yes, those who do not register cannot vote, and that is in itself a structural obstacle to participation, but citizens in the Afrobarometer sample do not fail to register predominantly because of the costs of registration. Rather the reasons that they do not register are much the same as the reasons for why they do not vote. The rest of this chapter concludes the thesis by drawing together those reasons.

8.2 Rational choice models in an African context

This has been the first study to systematically test the explanatory power of the rational choice model of turnout across the African case and has found that the model has only limited explanatory power. Whether we use proxies or direct questions on rational choice variables as we do in the Durban case study, P (the decisiveness of your vote), C (costs) and B (benefits) are only intermittently significant and not always in the hypothesised direction.

Close elections nationally do not increase turnout whether we look at national level closeness or at the individual case. This is true for both new and established voters which contrasts sharply with the situation uncovered by Franklin in established democracies.⁸⁷⁶ In fact there is far less variation between elections than between countries, suggesting that it is not the *individual election* that is paramount, but rather the *type of system one lives in*. When we looked at the case of Durban we used a question that measured ex-ante closeness in the most direct way, by asking people how close they thought the election would be. Even when this was done the variable was not significant, casting a great deal of doubt on the idea that potential voters weigh up close the election will be when deciding whether or not to vote. That said the evidence is not straightforward. I do find that constituency level closeness in parliamentary elections in Lesotho and Botswana does matter. Other variables that increase the *perceived importance* of each vote also increase turnout. Countries with low populations, proportional representation, many political parties and those that have parliamentary executives all have higher rates of turnout. Countries that have a close correlation between the national percentage of votes obtained by a party and the seats obtained also have higher turnout, even when the electoral system is controlled for. As shown in the Durban case, it may be that it isn't the closeness of the national election that matters as the information may well not be available to the individual voter to predict it. Rather, there is evidence to suggest that it is the *feeling that your vote makes a difference* that is important for the African voter, and some evidence to suggest that closeness at a constituency level may be important. More work on constituency level closeness will need to be done and future surveys should pay more attention to sampling within constituencies as it has been impossible to test this in all cases.

⁸⁷⁶ Franklin M. 2004.

There is little evidence to suggest that most Africans think about voting primarily in terms of material benefit, but there are some groups who do. In Durban perceived benefit is important in the national elections, and particularly for supporters of the Inkatha Freedom Party which has traditionally had a more clientelistic relationship with its supporters. Across Africa the socioeconomic variables that in the West signal increased costs of voting are turned on their head. Low life expectancy and gross national income at a national level and poverty and being rural at an individual level are associated with higher rates of turnout and propensity to vote respectively. These indicators of costs in the West are better thought of as indicators of benefit in Africa. It is those who have the most to benefit from the national government that vote most. This is interesting because, unlike in the West, benefit isn't linked to a particular party winning but rather to a need for resources from whomever is in power. It also isn't linked to effective economic performance on the part of the government, and only non-partisans are affected by presidential performance, rewarding good performance. Chapter six narrows this down even further showing that it is the postcolonial generation in particular who are thus affected. Whereas offers of clientelistic benefits have little or no affect on other generations, the mere offer of a bribe raises the propensity to vote of a postcolonial voter.

The costs of voting were hypothesised to be important in the African case, with much of the variance in voting propensity explained by differential access to the money and resources needed for political activity. Whilst the employed and the entirely uneducated do vote at lower rates across the continent, and having more time between elections can raise turnout, the Durban case finds that only new voters are influenced by costs. A similar result is not found at a cross-national individual level for young voters. As mentioned above, those most affected by costs, the rural and poor, actually vote most. As such, whilst this explanation does have some theoretical justification, it is not backed up by the empirical evidence.

Finally there is the most contentious of the rational choice variables, *Duty*. This is a variable which has no proxy at a national level, but two different measures can be used at an individual level. In chapter five that support for democracy, a weak proxy, does increase the predicted probability of voting. The better measure, used throughout the literature, is the question asked in chapter seven on whether the respondent felt that they had a duty to vote. Here the variable raises the propensity to vote by 45 percentage points in local elections, by far the strongest indicator of voting anywhere in this study. This is to some degree linked to local elections being seen as less important, making *Duty* a more important defining factor, but the effect is also substantive at a national level. This seems clear cut, future cross national surveys should include a question on this most effective of predictors. One really important finding casts some doubt on this however. In Durban when a variable to indicate past voting is added duty is no longer significant. Rather than indicating some additional belief or attitude that influences the decision to vote the Durban data suggests that the findings on duty may be linked to whether or not someone is a habitual voter, whether they have been socialised into voting. Indeed, in Durban, the predicted probability of voting for people who have not voted before, new voters just entering the electorate, has no statistical relationship with *Duty*. These voters who haven't yet been socialised into voting appear not to have learned to see voting as a duty. This finding contradicts a great deal of the literature on rational choice and further research is needed, but it leads us to seriously question the importance of *Duty* as an explanatory variable.

8.3 Socialised into voting

African voters are habitual voters. Our best test of this is in the Durban sample where those who vote in their first election have an 80% probability of voting in the next one, whilst those who miss it have only a 35% chance. This way of thinking about voting is confirmed by

the findings on the generational differences across Africa. They are socialised into voting by the regime that they grow up in, and their attitudes towards voting and democracy are similarly shaped by regime type. Chapter six showed that growing up in colonial regime created a cohort of voters who, if they have been educated up to a primary school level, vote pretty much consistently irrespective of the fairness of an election or the current regime. The postcolonial generation, whatever their education levels, vote consistently whilst those who grew up in the multiparty era are least likely to vote and are especially affected by considerations of whether or not the election is free and fair. Growing up before the onset of multiparty democracy makes one significantly more likely to vote than growing up in a multiparty democracy. Hard as it is to disaggregate the effects of age groups and generation this thesis has found evidence to suggest that across Africa people who are young today are very affected by their own assessments of whether or not an election is free and fair. In Durban this is not found to be the case, instead personal assessments of the costs involved in voting are the most significant determinants of youth vote. This latter variable is not one that we could properly test in the larger sample, and it is suggested that future surveys might need to incorporate such a question which incorporates subjective assessments of costs.

8.4 Regime Type

Given the importance of socialisation it becomes even more important to acknowledge the importance of the regime in which a potential voter is socialised. Chapter four showed that the presence of the incumbent or former leader in the election lowers turnout whilst a turnover of leaders also reduces turnout and that turnout is lower in first elections. Chapter six showed that individuals are affected by different variables and in different ways depending on the current regime type. In Liberal Democracies ethnic discrimination reduces turnout and frequent consumption of the opposition press boosts

turnout. Both these variables work in the opposite direction outside of Liberal Democracies. These alternate voting strategies are important and reveal that some very important causes of turnout variation within African democracies have been missed in the small amount of work that has been done on turnout on the continent due to the failure to account for the differences between Liberal Democratic, Electorally Democratic and Electoral Authoritarian regimes.

8.5 African voting is mobilised voting

Across all these regime types, African voters are not predominantly the westernised elites of towns and cities. It is the rural voters who are most likely to vote. Crucially though, their votes appear to be mobilised rather than autonomous. Bratton, Chu and Lagos⁸⁷⁷ distinguish between "autonomous" turnout, where voters are cognitively involved in the political world and vote out of a "spontaneous" choice, and "mobilised" turnout where the voter is a simply responds to campaigning and canvassing. This thesis has found that mobilisation is very important in Africa. In countries with low population density and low populations where it is easier to contact people, turnout is higher. In Durban local elections, contacting politicians, accessing the media, being close to political parties and attending political events all boost turnout. This is generally also found in the earlier chapters but more analysis shows that these effects are predominantly felt by the young. More reflective voters who read newspapers and have a lot of education and wealth generally look to bureaucrats rather than politicians for answers. Rather than voting out of a "rational" assessment of predicted probabilities and cost-benefit analyses, African voters vote because they have been asked to do so, told to do so, or offered money to do so.⁸⁷⁸

⁸⁷⁷ Bratton M, Chu Y and Lagos M. 2010. "Who votes? Implications for New Democracies"

⁸⁷⁸ If they are Rural.

8.6 Contribution to the field

This thesis did not set out to say everything there is to say about turnout in Africa. Given the exploratory nature of much of the research that was undertaken and the limitation of data and time a number of questions remain, some of which arise out of the thesis itself. Perhaps most important is that this thesis has not attempted to analyse how elites view their role in the process, how they try to boost or suppress the turnout of certain groups (whether or not this is successful), and how important they think turnout is as a measure of their legitimacy. Qualitative work on this aspect would help to deepen our understanding of this question. Second, more and better data is need to begin to address the question of how exactly variation in turnout affects the specific outcomes of elections.

When it comes to the overarching question that this thesis sought to address, "who votes in Africa and why?" this thesis has broken new ground and significantly advanced the understanding of this question filling a substantial gap in the literature. It has generated a unique and significant dataset of institutional variation across African countries over time and rigorously analysed that data. It has generated the first ever purpose-built survey results aimed at testing rational choice turnout models in an African case study which was designed, administered and analysed by the author. It has used a full battery of statistical methods to test comprehensively the determinants of voting in pooled and multilevel, logistic and linear, individual and national level models and it has broken new paths by comparing rational choice, socioeconomic, mobilisation, and habitual models of turnout generated in the electoral studies of European and North American countries with factors specific to the African case and proved the importance of analysing contextual factors like ethnicity and regime type unique to the continent.

Crucially, it has confirmed that voting is to a large degree habitual and that voters are socialised by formative experiences in their youth, especially the nature of the regime that they grow up in. This has confirmed the importance of young voters as being the key group of voters to be studied and targeted, and shown that for voters coming of age in Africa today it is not the competitiveness of election but how democratic they think the country is that makes the major difference as to whether or not they vote. Whilst their elders have been shown to have become frequent participants in the voting process, the young will need to be given the opportunity to take part in elections which are free, fair and perceived to be so if they are to become regular participants in Africa's multiparty regimes.

Table 8.2: Summary of Major Findings in each chapter

Variable/ Theory	Chapter 4: Cross National Institutions	Chapter 5: Classic models at the Individual level across countries	Chapter 6: Extended models at the Individual level across countries	Chapter 7: The Durban case study
P - Closeness/ Decisiveness of Vote	- Closeness is not a consistent predictor of turnout at the National Level. - Even in presidential elections, closeness isn't significant - Countries with proportional systems have higher turnout in parliamentary elections than countries with majoritarian electoral systems. - Countries low populations and lots of parties have higher turnout. - The less reflective the seat distribution is when compared to the vote distribution the lower the turnout. - Parliamentary systems have higher turnout	- The closer the elections at the constituency level the higher the turnout. (Tested in Lesotho and Botswana) - proportional representation boosts turnout. - Variation between countries is more important than variation between elections at the second level, casting some doubt on the importance of election related variables like closeness.	- Closeness is not more important for new voters than other groups. It isn't important for any groups when national level closeness is used.	- Closeness is not more important for new voters than other groups. It isn't important for any groups when perceived closeness is used. - Feeling that your vote makes a difference is not important local level, but is at a national level in South Africa.
B - Benefits	- presidential elections have higher rates of turnout. - When life expectancy and gross national income are high, turnout is lower	- The poor and rural vote most.	- Little evidence is found to support the idea that clientelistic practices boost political participation - Only in rural areas and amongst the postcolonial generation are clientelistic variables relevant. - African voters are not economic voters. - When a President is seen to be doing a good job party partisans vote less, non-partisans vote more frequently.	- Perceived Benefit is not important at the local level, but is at the national level.
C - Costs, structural obstacles.	- The lower the population and the population density the higher the turnout. - The longer the time between elections, the higher the turnout.	- Those who face the biggest costs seem to vote most (the poor and the rural) - The unemployed and entirely uneducated do vote less than the employed and slightly educated.	- Costs are not important.	- Perceived costs are not that important for most people, but are very important for new voters.
D - Duty		- Those who prefer other systems of government, who don't have a duty to the current system, will vote least.		- Having a strong sense of Duty raises the propensity to vote in local elections by over 45 percentage points. - Duty is less important in national elections and the effects that it does have are cancelled out by the addition of habit.
Mobilisation	- Low literacy boosts in turnout in authoritarian regimes, but lowers it in democracies. - The lower the population and the population density the higher the turnout.	- More reflective voters generally have a lower propensity to vote. This includes those who read newspapers, have lots of education, are wealthy and who look to look to bureaucrats rather than politicians for answers. - Political Activity and Contacting Politicians raises the propensity to vote.	- The effects of mobilisation variables are felt by all voters, but especially the young.	- Mobilisation is very important for local elections. Those who have most access to the media, who are close to parties, who contact politicians and who attend political events vote more.

Variable/ Theory	Chapter 4: Cross National Institutions	Chapter 5: Classic models at the Individual level across countries	Chapter 6: Extended models at the Individual level across countries	Chapter 7: The Durban case study
Regime Types	- More autocratic regimes have higher turnout - The presence of the incumbent or former leader in the election lowers turnout. - A turnover of leaders reduces turnout. - Turnout is lower in first elections.		- The lowest propensity to vote is found in Liberal Democracies, followed by Electoral Authoritarian regimes with Electoral Democracies having the highest. - Ethnic Discrimination increases participation in Liberal Democracies and decreases it in other regimes. - The Colonial generation has a slightly higher predicted probability of voting in Electoral Authoritarian regimes, all other generations vote much less frequently the less free the political regime.	
Culture	- Muslims vote at lower rates than other religions.	- Religious people vote more.		
Groups versus Individuals			- Ethnic Discrimination increases participation in Liberal Democracies and decreases it in other regimes. - Those ethnic groups with the most to win or lose vote do not vote most - Co-ethnics of the President are not more likely to vote - People living in countries with high numbers of politically relevant ethnic groups will vote more if the electoral system is Mixed, but there isn't a clear relationship in other electoral systems.	- Black voters have a lower sense of duty and vote less habitually than white voters.
Age. Generation. Habit			- The Colonial generations is unaffected by regime type or the fairness of an election, if they are have a primary school education the vote consistently. - The Postcolonial generations votes the most and is most supportive of democracy - The Multiparty generation votes least and is most deterred from voting by unfair elections. - For young voters it is democracy, not closeness that is the key determinant of propensity to vote.	- New voters are most affected by the costs of voting. - Voting is habitual. Those who vote in their first election have an 80% chance of voting in the next one. Those who miss one election have only a 35% chance of voting. - The addition of the habit variable lowers the explanatory power of the Duty variable.

Appendix

Appendix A: Fixed Effects Model for Chapter Four

Table A1: General Model with Fixed Effects

	<i>General Model</i>		<i>Fixed Effects</i>		<i>Fixed Effects (2)</i>	
Variable	β	s.e.	B	s.e.	B	s.e.
Illiteracy Rate	-0.06	0.09	-1.04**	0.43		
Life Expectancy	-0.22	0.19	-0.27	0.33		
Log of Population	-10.00***	1.92	-88.75*	53.67		
Population Density	0.03**	0.01	0.21**	0.09		
Log GNI per capita	-6.27	4.18	-5.09	7.51		
Growth of GNP	-0.01	0.10	-0.003	0.11	0.14	0.10
Year	0.17	0.17	-0.42	0.73		
Percent Muslim	-0.09**	0.04	0.61	0.63		
Voting Age	1.26	0.95	0.51	1.22	1.01	1.02
Pres/ Parlia	12.37***	4.64	-42.55	36.67	-20.79**	9.50
Electoral System (3)	2.02	1.37	-1.67	4.94	-2.36	2.50
Autocracy	9.37***	2.64	10.03***	2.79	12.68***	2.52
presidential Election	5.89***	1.96	5.10***	1.81	5.32***	1.70
Closeness of Election	0.02	0.04	-0.08**	0.04	-0.05	0.04
Number Of Parties	0.36**	0.15	0.10	0.17	0.05	0.14
Time Since Last Election	1.27***	0.30	1.19***	0.29	0.97***	0.28
First Democratic Election	-4.70**	2.17	-5.86***	2.26	-5.30***	2.01
Turnover	-1.79	1.39	-2.90**	1.42	-3.31***	1.32
Incumbent	-8.47***	1.58	-4.78**	2.04	-5.17***	1.84
Benin			36.50*	17.82	-6.36	12.26
Burundi			18.78	27.08	6.51	13.20
Burkina Faso			25.21	25.97	-35.21***	13.24
Cameroon			36.91	29.07	-12.43	13.06
Cape Verde			-106.44*	59.52	-11.67	12.54
Central African Republic			5.73	17.55	-24.31*	12.69
Chad			11.83	17.56	-21.22*	12.79
Comoros			-179.56**	75.20	-14.83	11.95
Congo Brazzaville			-11.45	27.37	-9.42	12.61
Cote D'Ivoire			35.65	28.68	-18.44	11.96
Djibouti			-130.82*	67.19	-20.27	12.93
Equatorial Guinea			-80.91	61.34	5.50	14.05
Ethiopia			159.43*	89.92	17.51*	9.83
Gabon			-40.50	42.64	-4.41	12.73
Gambia			-84.71*	50.24	-19.44	12.19
Ghana			19.90	33.25	-25.72**	12.29
Guinea			39.46	24.15	-3.75	12.80
Guinea Bissau			-31.87	31.26	0.96	13.54
Kenya			31.70	45.14	-37.29***	11.19
Lesotho			-6.86	13.39	14.93	12.00
Liberia			-5.78	17.14	-11.10	12.90
Madagascar			47.14	34.29	-12.78	12.11
Malawi			20.85	24.38	12.14	12.54
Mali			10.35	31.38	-28.93**	11.79
Mauritania			-58.56	45.76	-11.60	11.91
Mauritius			-114.73**	50.00	28.39***	8.06
Mozambique			60.16	38.30	-22.49	13.88
Namibia			-30.31	36.06	-3.56	13.77
Niger			18.65	38.08	-19.37	12.16
Rwanda			-33.09	32.48	1.25	14.54
Nigeria			65.50	73.83	-38.11***	12.26
Senegal			-0.05	35.44	-19.87	12.17
Seychelles			-183.81*	99.62	-4.10	12.48
Sierra Leone			15.71	15.66	-3.23	13.49
South Africa			130.47*	76.08	24.23**	12.11
Sudan			39.70	45.82	-12.30	13.78
Tanzania			55.41	42.34	-10.01	12.14
Togo			0.65	12.28	-12.01	12.09
Uganda			28.42	42.14	-30.82**	13.03
Zambia			14.5	9.39	12.00	7.36
Constant	-208.32	355.24	1537.70	1225.19	62.55***	22.76
R ²	0.42		0.6		0.57	
Adjusted R ²	0.38		0.51		0.50	
N of cases	315		315		315	
Degrees Of Freedom	19		59		55	

*** = $p < 0.01$; ** = $p < 0.05$; * = $p < 0.1$

Appendix B: Formula for determining the sample size of the Durban survey

The following formula was used:

$$ss = \frac{Z^2 * (p) * (1-p)}{c^2}$$

where:

Z = Z value (e.g. 1.96 for 95% confidence level)

p = percentage picking a choice, expressed as decimal
(.5 used for sample size needed)

c = confidence interval, expressed as decimal
(e.g., .04 = ±4)

with the following formula used to correct for the fact that a finite population was considered:

$$\text{New ss} = \frac{ss}{1 + \frac{ss-1}{pop}}$$

where:

pop = population

Appendix C: Questionnaire

SURVEY QUESTIONARE OF ABSTENTION IN THE DURBAN METROPOLITAN AREA

JAMES DRAY
Mansfield College, Oxford

james.dray@politics.ox.ac.uk
Enquiries: Tel 031 260 2627; 072 246 0311

Interviewer Name	Interviewer's Signature	Supervisor Signature	Interview Checked	
			Yes	1
			No	2

Interviewee Selection

You have been provided with a list of registered voters and addresses. Approach the first address on the list. If you are unable to interview the person concerned move on to the address to the right. Continue until you make a successful interview, recording your reasons for unsuccessful approaches.

Reasons for Unsuccessful attempts	House	House	House	House	House	House	House	House
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Declined to be interviewed	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Was not at home	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Was not a registered voter	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Other	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

Address of Original Interviewee :

Section 1: Interview Record

Good Morning / Afternoon/ Evening Sir/Madam. My name is _____ and I am a Researcher at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. We are currently conducting research into voting patterns in Durban, specifically why people refrain from Voting and we would like to survey what you think on a number of issues. We selected a random sample of voters living in Durban and you happen to be in this group. I wonder if I could take a short amount of your time to ask you some questions. The survey is totally anonymous and won't take longer then 25 minutes. We only ask for your name so that we can check if information has been correctly recorded. All names and addresses will be discarded and will not be recorded on our computers.

First, can we confirm that you are a registered voter?

(If respondent answers no, do continue with the interview. Thank the person, and move on to the next Address)

1.1	Name of Interviewee	
1.2	Ward	
1.3	Address	
1.4	Work Telephone	
1.5	Home Telephone	
1.6	Cellular Phone	
1.7	Email	

1.8- 1.14 to be filled in by the Interviewer

1.8	Date of Interview		
1.9	Time of Interview		
1.10	Is this the interviewee selected in the original sample or is it a substitute interview?	Sampled Interviewee	
		Substitute Interviewee	
1.11	If this is a substitute interviewee, how many people were approached before this one?		
1.12	Ward		
1.13	Type of Dwelling	Temporary Shack	1
		Permanent Shack	2
		House	3
		Flat	4
		Other _____	5
1.14	Interviewer name		

Section 2: General Political Interest and Involvement

Let's begin by looking at some questions about politics in general.

2.1	On a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 means no interest and 10 means a great deal of interest how would you rate your interest in politics generally?									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2.2	How often do you discuss politics with your friends and family?									
	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often		Very Often	
2.3	We'd like to know how well known some prominent Politicians are? Who is:									
		Answer: Do not read out					Correct	Incorrect		
	The President of the USA	George Bush					1	0		
	The President of South Africa	Thabo Mbeki					1	0		
	The Premier of KwaZulu-Natal	Sbu Ndebele					1	0		
	The Mayor of Durban	Obbed Mlaba					1	0		
	Your City Councillor	Ward 10: Phillida Ellis Ward 26: George Devenish Ward 32: Trevor Prince Ward 51: Managi Johnson Ward 84 : Kenneth Mavundla					1	0		
I'm going to read a series of statements, please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree										
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree				
2.4	I don't think that Government officials really care what people like me think									
2.5	People like me don't have any say in what Government does									
2.6	Government wastes a lot of the money I pay in taxes									
2.7	The People running our Government are corrupt									

2.8	Whether I vote or not it will not make much of a difference					
2.9	I trust the people that are elected to look after my best interests					
2.10	I trust the party that is elected to look after my best interests					
2.11	All parties are basically the same, there isn't really a choice					
2.12	Political parties keep their promises					

Section 3: Political Involvement :Voting

I'm now going to ask you some specific questions about voting and non-voting

3.1	Did you vote in the 1994 Provincial and National Elections? <i>(If yes go to 3.2, if no go to 3.3)</i>	Yes	No	Cant Remember
		1	2	9
3.2	Could you please tell us why you chose to vote?			
3.3	Could you please tell us why you didn't vote?			
3.4	Did you vote in the 1999 Provincial and National Elections? <i>(If yes go to 3.5, if no go to 3.6)</i>	Yes	No	Cant Remember
		1	2	9
3.5	Could you please tell us why you chose to vote?			
3.6	Could you please tell us why you didn't vote?			
3.7	Did you vote in the 2000 Local Government Elections? <i>(If yes 3.8, if no go to 3.9)</i>	Yes	No	Cant Remember
		1	2	9

3.8	Could you please tell us why you chose to vote?
3.9	Could you please tell us why you didn't vote?

3.10	Did you vote in the 2004 Provincial and National Elections? <i>(If yes go to 3.11, if no go to 3.12)</i>	Yes 1	No 2	Cant Remember 9
3.11	Could you please tell us why you chose to vote?			
3.12	Could you please tell us why you didn't vote?			
3.13	Do you plan on voting in the 2005/6 Local Government elections? <i>(If yes go to 3.14, if no go to 3.15)</i>	Yes 1	No 2	Cant Remember 9
3.14	Could you please tell us why you chose to vote?			
3.15	Could you please tell us why you didn't vote?			

3.16	How close did you think the 2000 Local Government election would be?		
	Very Close 2	Close 1	Not close at all 0
3.17	Did you believe that your vote would make a difference	Yes	1

	in the 2000 Local Government election?		No	0
3.18	How close did you think the 2004 National Government election would be?			
	Very Close		Close	Not close at all
	2		1	0
3.19	Did you believe that your vote would make a difference in the 2004 National Government election?		Yes	1
			No	0
3.20	How close do you think the 2005/6 Local Government election will be?			
	Very Close		Close	Not close at all
	2		1	0
3.21	Do you believe that your vote will make a difference in the 2005/6 Local Government election?		Yes	1
			No	0
3.22	Do you think of yourself as being close to any particular party at a national level?	Yes	No	Don't Know
		1	0	9
3.23	If yes, which one?			
	African Christian Democratic Party			1
	African National Congress			2
	Azanian People's Organization			3
	Democratic Alliance			4
	Freedom Front			5
	Independent Democrats			6
	Inkatha Freedom Party			7
	Minority Front			8
	Pan Africanist Congress			9
	Other (specify)			10
	Don't know			99

3.24	Do you think of yourself as being close to any particular party at a local level?	Yes	No	Don't Know
		1	0	9
3.25	If yes, which one?			
	African Christian Democratic Party			1
	African National Congress			2
	Azanian People's Organization			3
	Democratic Alliance			4
	Freedom Front			5
	Independent Democrats			6
	Inkatha Freedom Party			7
	Minority Front			8
	Pan Africanist Congress			9
	Other (specify)			10
	Don't know			99

3.26	Rate your possibility of voting for the following parties with a score out of 100 where 100 is very likely and 0 is totally unlikely:		
	African Christian Democratic Party		
	African National Congress		
	Azanian People's Organization		

	Democratic Alliance	
	Freedom Front	
	Independent Democrats	
	Inkatha Freedom Party	
	Minority Front	
	Pan Africanist Congress	
	Other (specify)	
3.27	If for some reason you found yourself unwilling / unable to vote for your party of first choice, which of the following comes closest to what you would do	
	Not Vote	Vote for my second favourite party
	Vote for the party best placed to beat the ANC	Other (write in)
	0	1
	2	3
3.28	How important was it to you personally which party was going to win the National election in South Africa in 2004? Please indicate on a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 means it made no difference to you and 10 means it made a great deal of difference.	
3.29	How important was it to you personally which individual candidate was going to win the election in your ward in the local government elections in South Africa in 2000? Please indicate on a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 means it made no difference to you and 10 means it made a great deal of difference.	
3.30	How important was it to you personally which party was going to win the election in Durban in the local government elections in South Africa in 2000? Please indicate on a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 means it made no difference to you and 10 means it made a great deal of difference.	
3.31	Were you personally approached and canvassed for your vote by a political party in the 2000 election?	Yes 1 No 0 Cant Remember 9
3.32	Were you personally approached and canvassed for your vote by a political party in the 2004 election?	Yes 1 No 0 Cant Remember 9
3.33	How difficult do you think it would be for you to go out and cast your vote?	
	Very Easy	Easy
	Difficult	Very Difficult
3.34	Are you a paid up member of a political party?	Yes 1 No 0
3.35	Are you a member of any other community based organisation like the TAC, the Landless Peoples Movement or Rotary?	Yes 1 No 0
3.36	Did you attend any political rallies or events in the run-up to an election	Yes 1 No 0
3.37	Have you ever contacted a City Councillor or Member Of Politician when you've had a problem that needed solving?	Yes 1 No 0

Section 4: The Political System

I'm now going to ask you some questions about your belief in the Political system.

4.1	Which of the following statements comes closest to describing why you vote / would vote?
-----	--

	"By voting I am choosing a party that will make my life better in the future"	1
	"By voting I am choosing a party that will make life better for all South Africans"	2
	"By voting I am fulfilling my obligation as a citizen of South Africa"	3
	"By voting I am preventing the creation of a one party state"	4
	"By voting I am ensuring the success of our democracy"	5
	"By voting I am paying a debt to those who fought for our democracy"	6

I'm going to read a series of statements, please indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4.2	I would feel really terrible if I didn't vote and my candidate / party lost by one vote					
4.3	Democracy is the best possible system for South Africa					
4.4	I am generally satisfied with the National Government					
4.5	I am generally satisfied with the Local Government					
4.6	The more people who don't vote the more threatened our democracy will be					
4.7	When the party I support does well I feel happy even if it doesn't win					
4.8	It is the duty of every citizen to vote					
4.9	In order to preserve democracy it is essential that the great majority of citizens vote					
4.10	It is important to vote even if my party / candidate has no chance of winning					
4.11	Voting is so important that it should be compulsory in South Africa, just like in Brazil and Australia					
4.12	Do you think that local Government is more important, as important or less important than National Government?					
	More Important	As Important		Less Important		
	2	1		0		
4.13	Does the fact that you are voting for an individual city councillor as opposed to a political party make you more likely to vote, less likely to vote or have no difference in your likelihood to vote in local government elections?					
	More Likely	Less likely		No Difference		
	2	1		0		
4.14	Would you be more likely to vote, less likely to vote or would it have no difference in your likelihood to vote if you were voting for an individual member of parliament rather					

	then a political party in the national elections?		
	More Likely	Less likely	No Difference
	2	1	0

Section 5: Demographic and Economic factors

Finally, here are some questions about you, what you do and so on.

5.1	Interviewer Record Gender	Male	0
		Female	1
5.2	How old are you?	(in completed years)	
5.3	What is your population group?	African	1
		White	2
		Indian	3
		Coloured	4
		Other	5
5.4	What is the highest level of education that you have attained?	None	1
		Primary	2
		Secondary	3
		Tertiary	4
5.5	Are you working at the moment?	Yes	1
		No	0
5.6	If you are working, which sector are you employed in?	Public	2
		Private	1
		Self Employed	0
5.7	Do you consider yourself to be :	Very Religious	2
		Religious	1
		Non-Religious	0
5.8	Do you regularly attend Church or another place of worship?	Yes	1
		No	0
5.9	Do you have access to a motor vehicle?	Yes	1
		No	0
5.10	Do you own the residence you currently live in?	Yes	1
		No	0
5.11	What is your Gross Household Income per month? This should include all money coming into your household.	0 – 1 000	
		1 001 – 2 500	
		2 501 – 6 000	
		6 001 – 12 000	
		12 001 – 20 000	
		20 001 +	
5.12	Financially are you better off, worse off or about the same as before the last election?		
	Better Off	The Same	Worse Off
	2	1	0
5.13	Do you think that a year from now you will be financially better off, worse off or about the same?		
	Better Off	The Same	Worse Off
	2	1	0
5.14	Has South Africa's economy gotten better, worse or stayed the same since the last election?		
	Better Off	The Same	Worse Off

	2	1	0
5.15	Do you think that a year from now South Africa's economy will get better, worse or stay the same?		
	Better Off	The Same	Worse Off
	2	1	0

Section 6: After the Interview

6.1	Time at end of interview	
-----	--------------------------	--

6.2	Language used	English	1
		Zulu	2
		Afrikaans	3
		Other	

6.3	In general, how did the respondent act towards you during the interview?	Hostile	1
		Neither hostile nor friendly	2
		Friendly	3

Appendix D: Item Response Rates

Question Number	Number of Non-Responses (Responses/Possible Responses when sample was not the entire sample.)	Response Rate (%)
2.1	1	99.69
2.2	0	100
2.3	0	100
2.4	0	100
2.5	1	99.69
2.6	0	100
2.7	0	100
2.8	0	100
2.9	0	100
2.10	0	100
2.11	0	100
2.12	0	100
3.1	0	100
3.2	142 (181/183)	98.91
3.3	191 (132/135)	97.78
3.4	0	100
3.5	151 (175/178)	98.31
3.6	195 (128/131)	97.71
3.7	0	100
3.8	185 (138/145)	95.17
3.9	178 (145/150)	96.67
3.10	0	100
3.11	105 (218/227)	96.04
3.12	241 (82/86)	95.34
3.13	0	100
3.14	120 (203/220)	92.27
3.15	234 (89/89)	100
3.16	20	93.81
3.17	23	92.88
3.18	9	97.21
3.19	14	95.66
3.20	7	97.83
3.21	6	98.14
3.22	3	99.07
3.23	192 (126/129)	97.67
3.24	3	99.07
3.25	188 (131/133)	98.49
3.26	3	99.07
3.27	2	99.38
3.28	4	98.76
3.29	3	99.07
3.30	4	98.76
3.31	2	99.38
3.32	2	99.38
3.33	25	92.26

3.34	2	99.38
3.35	2	99.38
3.36	2	99.38
3.37	2	99.38
4.1	7	97.83
4.2	2	99.38
4.3	2	99.38
4.4	2	99.38
4.5	3	99.07
4.6	2	99.38
4.7	2	99.38
4.8	2	99.38
4.9	2	99.38
4.10	2	99.38
4.11	3	99.07
4.12	2	99.38
4.13	2	99.38
4.14	2	99.38
5.1	0	100
5.2	22	93.19
5.3	4	98.76
5.4	3	99.07
5.5	174 (131/140)	93.57
5.6	4	98.76
5.7	3	99.07
5.8	2	99.38
5.9	10	96.90
5.10	12	96.28
5.11	2	99.38
5.12	2	99.38
5.13	2	99.38
5.14	2	99.38
5.15	2	99.38

Appendix E: Variables used in Chapter7

Variable	Question/ s	Question coding	Variable Coding
Vote00ZeroOne	3.7 Turnout 2000		0 - No 1 - Yes Don't remember recoded as No.
Vote04ZeroOne	3.10 Turnout 2004		0 - No 1 - Yes Don't remember recoded as No.
Mini-Max Regret	4.2 I would feel really terrible if I didn't vote and my candidate / party lost by one vote		5-1 (Strong Agree - rest)
Closeness 2004	3.18 How close did you think the 2004 National election would be?		2 - very close 1 - close 0 - not close at all
Vote Made A Difference 2004	3.19 Did you believe that your vote would make a difference in the 2004 National election?		1 - yes 0 - No
Closeness 2000	3.16 How close did you think the 2004 National election would be?		2 - very close 1 - close 0 - not close at all
Vote Made A Difference 2000	3.17 Did you believe that your vote would make a difference in the 2004 National election?		1 - yes 0 - No
Benefits 2004	3.28 How important was it to you personally which party was going to win the election in your ward in the National elections in South Africa in 2004?	0 to 10 where 0 means it made no difference to you and 10 means it made a great deal of difference	The Question was recoded to a range between 0 - 1. B2004 can take any value between 0 and 1, where: 0 - No Benefit 1 - Big Benefit
Benefits 2000	3.29 How important was it to you personally which individual candidate was going to win the election in your ward in the local government elections in South Africa in 2000?	0 to 10 where 0 means it made no difference to you and 10 means it made a great deal of difference	Each Question was recoded to a range between 0 - 1. B2000 was constructed by adding the recoded variables together and dividing by 2. B2000 can take any value between 0 and 1, where: 0 - No Benefit 1 - Big Benefit $\alpha = 0.8432$
	3.30 How important was it to you personally which party was going to win the election in Durban in the local government elections in South Africa in 2000?	0 to 10 where 0 means it made no difference to you and 10 means it made a great deal of difference	
Costs	3.33 How difficult do you think it would be for you to go out and cast your vote?	0 - very easy 1 - easy 2 - difficult 3 - very difficult	C was recoded so that: 0 - very easy 0.33 - easy 0.66 - difficult 1 - very difficult
Duty	4.8 It is the duty of every citizen to vote	0=strong agree; 1= agree; 2=neither;3=disagree;4=strong disagree	Each Question was recoded to a range between 0 and 1. D was constructed by adding the recoded variables together and dividing by 3. D can take any value between 0 and 1, where: 0 - low Duty score 1 - high Duty score $\alpha = 0.6622$
	4.9 In order to preserve democracy it is essential that the great majority of citizens vote	0=strong agree; 1= agree; 2=neither;3=disagree;4=strong disagree	
	4.10 It is important to vote even if my party / candidate has no chance of winning	0=strong agree; 1= agree; 2=neither;3=disagree;4=strong disagree	
Age	5.2 How old are you?		Age in Years
Gender	5.1 Record gender		0 - Male 1 - Female
Black	5.3 What is your population group?	1- Black, 2 - white, 3 - Indian, 4 - coloured	Recoded as 0 - not Black 1 - Black
Employed	5.5 Are you working at the moment?		0 - Unemployed 1 - Employed

Income	5.11 What is your Gross Household Income per month? This should include all money coming into your household.		0 0-1000 1 1001-2500 2 2501-6000 3 6001-12 000 4 12 001 - 20 000 5 20 000 +
Education	5.4 What is the highest level of education that you have attained?		0 - none 1 - Primary 2 - Secondary 3 - Tertiary
Political Knowledge	2.3 We'd like to know how well known some prominent Politicians are? Who is: The President of the US The President of SA The Premier of KZN The Mayor of Durban Your Ward Councillor	Each answer was coded 0 for incorrect and 1 for correct	The variable was constructed by adding the recoded variables together and dividing by 5. D can take one of 5 values between 0 and 1, where: 0 - low Knowledge score 1 - high Knowledge score alpha = 0.6430
Canvassed in 2000	3.31 Were you personally approached and canvassed for your vote by a political party in the 2000 election?		0 - no 1 - yes don't know recoded as no
Canvassed in 2004	3.32 Were you personally approached and canvassed for your vote by a political party in the 2000 election?		0 - no 1 - yes don't know recoded as no
Member of a Political Party	3.34 Are you a paid up member of a political party?		0 - no 1 - yes
Member of Civil society	3.35 Are you a member of any other community based organisation like the TAC, the Landless Peoples Movement or Rotary?		0 - no 1 - yes
Political Rally	3.36 Did you attend any political rallies or events in the run-up to an election		0 - no 1 - yes
Contacted MP or WC	3.37 Have you ever contacted a City Councillor or Member Of Politician when you've had a problem that needed solving?		0 - no 1 - yes
Anti-Party	3.26 Rate your possibility of voting for the following parties with a score out of 100 where 100 is very likely and 0 is totally unlikely:		0 - 0% chance of voting for any party 1 - some chance of voting for any party
Party Sympathy	3.26 Rate your possibility of voting for the following parties with a score out of 100 where 100 is very likely and 0 is totally unlikely:		0 - less then 90% chance of voting for any party 1 - 90% or greater chance of voting for any party
Public Sector Worker	5.6 If you are working, which sector are you employed in?		0 - not a public sector worker 1 - a public sector worker
Umlazi	1.12 Ward		0 - not Umlazi 1 - Umlazi
Trust	2.9 I trust the people that are elected to look after my best interests	0=strong agree; 1= agree; 2=neither;3=disagree;4=strong disagree	Trust was constructed by adding the variables together and dividing by 3. D can take any value between 1 and 5, where: 0 - low Trust score 1 - high Trust score alpha = 0.6739
	2. 10 I trust the party that is elected to look after my best interests	0=strong agree; 1= agree; 2=neither;3=disagree;4=strong disagree	
	2.12 Political parties keep their promises	0=strong agree; 1= agree; 2=neither;3=disagree;4=strong disagree	
DemocBestSa	4.2 Democracy is the best possible system for South Africa	0=strong agree; 1= agree; 2=neither;3=disagree;4=strong disagree	Question was recoded so that : 5-1 (Strong Agree - rest)
EcBetterLastElec	5.14 Has South Africa's economy gotten better, worse or stayed the same		1 - worse 2 - the same 3- better

	since the last election?		
Sat local Gov	4.5 I am generally satisfied with the Local Government	0=strong agree; 1= agree; 2=neither;3=disagree;4=strong disagree	Question was recoded so that : 5-1 (Strong Agree - rest)
Sat Nat Gov	4.4 I am generally satisfied with the National Government	0=strong agree; 1= agree; 2=neither;3=disagree;4=strong disagree	Question was recoded so that : 5-1 (Strong Agree - rest)
Gov Corrupt	2.7 The People running our Government are corrupt	0=strong agree; 1= agree; 2=neither;3=disagree;4=strong disagree	Question was recoded so that : 5-1 (Strong Agree - rest)
Pol Discuss	2.2 How often do you discuss politics with your friends and family?	0=never 1= rarely; 2=sometimes;3=often;4=very often	Question was recoded so that : 5-1 (Very Often - never)
Pol Int	2.1 On a scale of 0 to 10 where 0 means no interest and 10 means a great deal of interest how would you rate your interest in politics generally?		0 to 10 where 0 means no interest and 10 means a great deal of interest
Close party nat	3.22 Do you think of yourself as being close to any particular party at a national level?		0 - no 1 - yes
Close Party Local	3.24 Do you think of yourself as being close to any particular party at a national level?		0 - no 1 - yes
Religious	5.7 Do you consider yourself to be : Very Religious, Religious, Not Religious at all		1 - Not Religious 2 - Religious 3 - Very Religious
Church	5.8 Do you regularly attend Church or another place of worship?		0 - no 1 - yes
Party	3.22 Do you think of yourself as being close to any particular party at a national level?	0 - no 1 - yes	Variables were added together so that : 0 - Neither a member of a party nor close to one 1 - Either close to, or a member of, a party 2 - Both close to and a member of a party
	3.34 Are you a paid up member of a political party?	0 - no 1 - yes	
Vote 99	3.4 Turnout 1999		0 - No 1 - Yes Don't remember recoded as No.
New	5.2 How old are you?	Age in Years	0 - eligible to vote in 1994 1 - not eligible to vote in 1994
Strong-DA	3.26 Rate your possibility of voting for the following parties with a score out of 100 where 100 is very likely and 0 is totally unlikely:		0 - less than a 90% chance of voting for the party 1 - a 90% or greater chance of voting for the party
Strong-ANC	3.26 Rate your possibility of voting for the following parties with a score out of 100 where 100 is very likely and 0 is totally unlikely:		0 - less than a 90% chance of voting for the party 1 - a 90% or greater chance of voting for the party

Appendix F: Ethical Issues arising from the Durban Survey

To ensure that all subjects within this study were treated ethically, and to ensure that the knowledge collected was not used to the detriment of those who agreed to take part in the study, a number of ethical guidelines drawn from the American Sociological Association's Code of Ethics⁸⁷⁹ and from Creswell⁸⁸⁰ were used.

All interviewers were told to ensure that potential participants were in no way coerced into taking part in the study, and they were to be free to leave the study at any time. Participants were also informed of the purpose of the study before they agreed to take part therein. No-one under the age of 17, which is the legal age for voter registration, was interviewed and interviews did not take place in a context where individuals could feel coerced into taking part due to being in a restrictive environment such as prison or school. In order to ensure that the participants retain anonymity, the names of the participants have not been recorded electronically, and were only recorded on the front page of each questionnaire, which was removed and has been stored separately. All participants received the contact details of both myself and the Politics Department. In addition all participants shall receive, where possible, a summary of the results when the project has been completed.

All Interviewers were trained in the presence of a third party from the University Of KwaZulu-Natal in Durban so that they could take the above criteria into account, and so that they did not influence the answers of the participants. They were told to ensure that they placed their own safety above all other considerations, and were paid at market rates⁸⁸¹.

With regards the project itself, all effort was paid to approach the project free of bias. An active attempt was made to ensure that biased language is not used and that no parties are unfairly hurt by the results of the research. I further undertook not to falsify any data, and have had data entry checked. Paper copies of the interviews remain the property of the Researcher and shall not be handed to any third party. The paper copies shall be kept in a safe and will be destroyed after 2 years.

⁸⁷⁹ American Sociological Association, "Code of Ethics". Accessed at www.asanet.org

⁸⁸⁰ Creswell, J. 2003. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Sage, London.

⁸⁸¹ As determined by the University of KwaZulu-Natal

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