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CONTENTS

Botswana's Dominant Party System: Determinants in the Decision to Vote for the Ruling Party <i>Batlang Seabo and Kesaobaka Molebatsi</i>	1
Parties in a Plurality System: Candidate Nomination in Ghana's Minor Parties <i>Ernest Plange Kwofie and George M Bob-Milliar</i>	24
Social Media, Elections and Political Engagement: The 2014 General Election in Mauritius <i>Roukaya Kasenally and Dooshweena Awatar</i>	47
Mozambique's 2014 Elections: A Repeat of Misconduct, Political Tension and Frelimo Dominance <i>Adriano Nuvunga</i>	71
Africa's West Meets its South: A Comparison of Democracy in Nigeria and South Africa, 1993–2016 <i>Dorcas Ettang and Oladapo Kayode Opasina</i>	95
Youth, Protest and the 2014 National Elections: The Case of Zamdela, Sasolburg <i>Mahlatse Rampedi</i>	129
Voters' Roll Crises and the Need for Electoral Reforms in South Africa <i>Raynauld D Russon</i>	150

BOTSWANA'S DOMINANT PARTY SYSTEM: *Determinants in the Decision to Vote for the Ruling Party*

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ABSTRACT

The Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) has dominated other political parties in every election since independence in 1966. Debates on factors that account for the dominance of the BDP typically point to weakness of opposition parties, lack of party funding, the electoral system and advantages of incumbency enjoyed by the ruling party. Using performance-based theory, this article contributes to the debate by empirically examining if citizens' vote for the BDP is based on some selected variables. It aims to find out if Botswana's voting intentions are determined by an assessment of the economy, democracy, corruption perception, and institutional trust, among others. The study makes use of the 2014 Afrobarometer data, and logistic regression models were used to analyse the data. Therefore the main contribution of this article is the utilisation of empirical data to explain the vote for the ruling party. Theories of voting behaviour suggest that incumbent governments are likely to be voted back into office when they are perceived as performing well in the economy, are trustworthy and not corrupt. This begs the question why some incumbent governments are voted back into office despite poor performance in the economy, declining institutional trust and rising corruption. The article finds that the BDP's dominance is attributable to its good performance in governance and economic management. The data reveals that Botswana are rational voters, whose voting intentions are based on a careful assessment of the economic performance of BDP government, attitudes towards corruption level and trust in institutions. The paper also

shows that even though Botswana enjoys some good international scores on governance and corruption, citizens perceive that there has been an increase in the number of leaders and organisations involved in corruption. The study has also found that trust is high but decreasing for the ruling party, and low but increasing for opposition parties.

Keywords: Botswana, voting behaviour, voting intentions, political parties, party system, institutional performance theory

INTRODUCTION

Voting behaviour is an area that remains largely unexplored in Botswana's dominant party system. Previous research surrounding the dominant party system of Botswana centres on a weak opposition, focusing on the internal organisation of parties, intra-party democracy and factionalism within parties. The dominance of the BDP has also been attributed to the lack of political party funding and the unfair nature of the electoral system. Although the veracity of these explanatory variables is undeniable, the underlying attitudes determining voting for the BDP have escaped the attention of researchers working on the party system of Botswana. This article acknowledges that research on this subject and its conclusions (reviewed briefly in the next section) are in the main valid, but little has been achieved in terms of individual voter choice. What the article seeks to achieve in this subject is to empirically explain the vote for the BDP based on an assessment of citizens' attitudes on selected variables.

Until the early 20th century, economic models of voting had not been studied and the work of Matsheka and Botlhomilwe (2000) possibly represents the first attempt to explore the relationship between economic evaluations and electoral behaviour in Botswana. In their work, Mattes and Norris (2003) explored the influence of ethnicity on support for governing parties in Africa. They found that ethnicity determines the vote for the governing party in heterogeneous African countries rather than homogenous countries like Lesotho and Botswana. Recent studies include the work of Michael Bratton, Ravi Bhavnani and Tse-Hsin Chen (2012) that focuses on voting intentions in Africa. We note that these studies were conducted at a macro-level of analysis and as such do not sufficiently capture country-specific circumstances.

This article therefore departs from the conventional analysis of Botswana's dominant party system to examine the underlying attitudes for voting in favour of the BDP rather than opposition parties. Based on institutional performance theory, and Round 6 of the Afrobarometer survey data, we present the results of regression models of the intention to vote for the BDP on demographic variables

(level of education and employment status), and also an evaluation of economic conditions while controlling for gender, age and locality. The first section of the article is an overview of the literature on voting behaviour in Botswana's dominant party system. The next section reviews the different theories on voting behaviour followed by data analysis and results. The last section discusses the broader implications of the results on voting behaviour and Botswana's party system.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Unlike most African countries that abolished multiparty politics and outlawed opposition parties after independence from colonial rule, Botswana maintained plurality politics and has held free and relatively fair elections since independence in 1966. However, a change of government has yet to occur as the Botswana Democratic Party has dominated every election, with the opposition only coming close to posing a threat to the BDP in 1994 and 20 years later in 2014.

Research on political parties has thus focused mainly on the dominant party system in the face of a weak opposition in Botswana, (Osei-Hwedie, 2001; Selolwane, 2002; Maundeni et al, 2006; Poteete, 2012; Sebudubudu & Botlhomilwe, 2013); party internal democracy; and factionalism within parties (Maundeni & Lotshwao, 2012, Lotshwao, 2011; Lekorwe 2005; Maundeni & Seabo, 2014). This research links the dominance of the BDP to:

- fragmentation of opposition parties
- factionalism and weak intra-party democracy
- unfairness of the first-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral system
- lack of state funding of parties
- economic performance of past BDP governments
- incumbency advantages
- the Seretse Khama factor.

For instance, Taylor (2005) claims that Sir Seretse Khama enjoyed legitimacy because of his former position as chief of the Bangwato and his charismatic leadership, integrity and the system of governance introduced at independence which earned BDP success at the polls. The implication therefore is that the BDP enjoys popular support and votes primarily because of the popularity of the founding president Sir Seretse Khama. It is undisputed that sound governance introduced post-independence (especially after discovery of diamonds) also gained votes for the BDP.

Moreover, political commentators and opposition parties have pointed to the unrepresentative nature of the FPTP electoral system that unduly benefits

the BDP. Much as the FPTP electoral system has produced an alternation of power in countries such as the United States of America (US), United Kingdom (UK), Nigeria and Ghana, in Botswana the system has worked to the advantage of the ruling party, barring other factors at play. As instanced by Poteete (2012, p.75), 'features of the electoral system, fragmentation of the party system, and obstacles to strategic voting behaviour contribute to the BDP's continued legislative dominance'. Botswana operates the FPTP electoral system commonly known as the winner-takes-all or majoritarian electoral system. This confers electoral advantages to the BDP in terms of disproportionate representation in parliament for the popular vote. For Molomo (2000, p. 34), 'the predominant party system that has been evident in Botswana's political practice is a result of the FPTP electoral system and vote splitting between the opposition parties'. Opposition parties have decried the unfairness of the electoral system and made fruitless calls for reforms to make the electoral system more representative. The criticism levelled against the majoritarian electoral system is that the popular vote of a party does not translate into the number of representatives or seats in parliament. It is a winner-takes-all system that does not represent small parties.

For Osei-Hwedie (2001), the dominance of the BDP has more to do with a fragmented and weak opposition that has struggled to wrest power from the ruling party. Osei-Hwedie notes that electoral weakness stems from, among other factors, a lack of organisational capability, inadequate financial resources and a lack of intra- and inter-party cohesion. In 1998, a year before the national elections, all conditions in the political opposition seemed ripe for the Botswana National Front to stage an electoral challenge to the BDP. However, internal political factions split the party leading to the formation of the Botswana Congress Party (BCP). Such a fragmentation, though not the first of its kind, has worked against opposition efforts to unseat the ruling BDP and has helped the ruling party to consolidate its dominance. Lotshwao (2011) thus observed that the weakness of opposition parties provided more justification for the ruling BDP to consolidate its power.

In their work, Lotshwao and Maundeni (2012) blamed the lack of constitutionalism in the Botswana National Front (BNF) as a sign of weakness, arguing that non-adherence to its constitutional rules weakened the party. As such, the lack of constitutionalism in the BNF troubled the party and resulted in suspensions and expulsions of some party members. Ultimately, some observers have argued that BNF troubles affected its vote as some disgruntled members voted for the BDP. Factional divisions have also perpetuated the dominance of the BDP. Unlike opposition parties the BNF and the Botswana Peoples Party (BPP), and prior to its split in 2010, the BDP was able to remain united because it managed intra-party divisions through negotiated compromise resolutions (Maundeni &

Seabo 2014). As a sign of protest, disenchanted factions in opposition either voted with their feet or cast a vote for the BDP.

But besides these cited works, there is scant empirical research on attitudes that explain the vote for the BDP and for opposition. Scholarship should move beyond the common structural explanations of the electoral system, party funding and intra-party dynamics, to explore attitudinal variables affecting the individual's decision to vote for a party. A vote for the BDP may be a function of attitudes on the economy, corruption level, and institutional trust. Against this background, this paper considers:

- whether Batswana are rational voters whose voting decisions are predicated on the assessment of party performance
- why people vote for the BDP and not the other parties
- who and where those voters are who prefer the BDP over other political parties.

Within the framework of institutional performance theory, this article contributes to the dominant party system debate by examining Batswana's underlying attitudes to voting for the BDP. Many studies on dominant parties, particularly in third world countries (for instance De Jager & Du Toit, 2013; Mozaffar & Scarritt, 2005; Bogaards, 2004) focus more on non-attitudinal factors to explain why some parties dominate others. These studies often cite structural reasons such as the relative strength of parties insofar as campaign resources are concerned, the unfairness of electoral system and 'rules of the game', institutional weaknesses of opposition parties, and the fragmentation of parties due to ideological polarisation. Taylor (2003, p. 216) succinctly summarises these mainstream explanations in the case of Botswana thus: 'Opposition parties are generally weak due to interminable intra-party faction-fighting, internal splits, an unfavourable electoral system (i.e. "first past the post"), feeble organisational structures, and poor capacity to promote alternative policies'.

This paper acknowledges that in the literature of dominant parties, there are very few empirical studies that examine the relationship between dominant parties and citizens' attitudes, particularly on the determinants of their intentions to vote for established parties. For instance, a study by Bratton et al. (2012) on voting intentions in Africa was a first attempt to explore the relationship between Africans' intended vote choice and economic performance, ethnic affiliation and partisanship. This paper seeks to make a contribution to dominant party literature from an empirical assessment of the determinants of citizens' intended vote choice in Botswana. More importantly, this paper shows that in some instances party dominance has more to do with voters' reward for performance, which is based on citizens' rational assessment of an incumbent's past performance in governance.

This conclusion must however be viewed with some scepticism as dominant parties do engage in unscrupulous political strategies to retain state power.

VOTING BEHAVIOUR

Lipset and Rokkan's work on party systems and voter alignment in Europe cited in Mattes and Norris (2003, p. 3) represents a classic account of how religious, economic and social cleavages structured Europe's party systems. Their work 'highlighted the regional cleavages of center periphery, the class inequalities of workers-owners, and sectarian cleavages over church and state that split Christendom between Catholics and Protestants'. They posit that Western Europe's party system froze in the 1920s as parties formed along salient social cleavages like class in Britain and religion in France.

Their work undoubtedly carved a path in the analysis of voting behaviour, despite the rise of the de-alignment thesis decades later that challenged the core of Lipset-Rokkan's theory. The de-alignment thesis perceived voters as rational individuals, not party-bound, their voting preferences not determined by alignment to specific social groups. The rise of issue voting in the 1960s based on the individual's evaluation of government performance tended to render group voting irrelevant. This was partly as a result of people's reliance on their own cognitive ability, among other factors. As a result of post-industrial changes in societies there was less need for people to rely on social groups like the church for information. Argues Enyedi (2008, p. 289) comments that 'traditional providers of information, such as, for example, churches and trade unions, have ceased to serve as important points of reference for the contemporary voter who is able to rely on her own cognitive skills, developed by education'. With the decline of group voting, there was a rise in issue voting as people increasingly relied on their own judgement. In this vein, Mattes and Norris (2003, p. 6) state that 'better-educated and more cognitively sophisticated citizens, it is argued, have less need to rely upon the traditional social cues of ethnicity in electoral choices'.

Taking the institutional performance based theory as a point of departure, this article examines Batswana's decision to vote for the BDP based on their attitudes towards the economy, institutional trust, levels of corruption, satisfaction with democracy, party identification and views on opposition parties as an alternative to the BDP.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE-BASED THEORY

It is of critical importance to appreciate that at the heart of voting behaviour lies the problem of political agency. Wolfers (2002) argues that voters cannot

observe politician's actions and efforts and this results in the pursuit of personal interests at the expense of constituents. Voters, being principals, are assumed to make rational decisions in their transaction with politicians who are agents in this relationship. In the exercise of rationality during voting, voters, according to the institutional performance theory, evaluate institutions in terms of their performance. Writing on political trust in institutions, Hutchison and Johnson (as cited in Landmark, 2016, p. 36) posit that the performance-based or institutional theory of trust is based on the idea that the citizen's trust in the state is decided by how well public institutions perform to meet their expectations. It is widely recognised that performance bestows legitimacy on institutions. As such it is pertinent for institutions to perform in the delivery of basic amenities such as health care, sanitation, jobs and education. According to Mishler and Rose (2001, p. 32), performance-based theory can be categorised into micro and macro perspectives, wherein the former refers to individual personal preferences and the latter has more to do with government's management of the economy, job creation and low levels of corruption.

Macro-institutional theories emphasize the aggregate performance of institutions in such matters as promoting growth, governing effectively, and avoiding corruption. ... By contrast, micro-institutional theories emphasise that individual evaluations of institutional performance are conditioned by individual tastes and experiences, for example, whether a person thinks that political integrity or economic growth is more important and whether that individual personally has experienced the effects of corruption or the benefits of economic growth.

(ibid)

Accordingly, rational voters will link their vote to observable outcomes that reflect competence and effort (Wolfers, 2002, p. 3).

This leads to the conclusion that poor institutional performance would result in a negative assessment by voters and could by implication even affect their party preference at the polls. In light of this logic, Norris and Newton (2000) contend that when institutions perform well in accordance with citizens' needs and expectations, they will probably gain trust and support, while poor performance and ineffectiveness will generate low trust or even distrust.

Therefore, issue voting based on retrospective evaluations of the performance of the governing parties, the role of party leaders, and policy platforms offered by each party, could all be expected to become a more important component of voting decisions (Norris & Mattes, 2003, p. 10). With this framework in mind, we generate the following testable hypotheses based on citizens' attitudes towards

the economy, political or institutional trust, and democratic performance as well as views on corruption.

Hypotheses

Economic performance

In terms of the theory of institutional performance, voter preference is a function of individual evaluation of past economic performance of government (Key, 1964; Lewis-Beck & Stegmaier, 2000 as cited in Bratton et al, 2012). This argument has been advanced by rational choice theory that views voting as an expression of individual choice amongst available options (Himmelweit, Humphreys & Jaeger, 1985). In this sense, voters are perceived as rational consumers behaving as though they are in a market place where they compare goods and make informed choices. As Brennan and Buchanan put it (1984, p. 194), 'the notion of rational behavior applied by public choice scholars to voting derives from a direct extrapolation of individuals "choosing" within a given market among consumption items in the market, which is – the standard case of consumer choice'. In this instance, citizens tend to vote for the incumbent government if economic times are good; otherwise, they vote against it (Key, 1964; Tufte, 1978; Lewis-Beck & Stegmaier, 2000, as cited in Bratton et al, 2012).

In African societies rapid urbanisation also contributed to a shift from voting based on social cues to individual voting preferences. Norris and Mattes (2003) observed that in Africa, geographic mobility and urbanisation generate crosscutting cleavages based on location, occupation and communication, weakening linkages with local communities, extended family networks, and tribal groups.

In what possibly represents the first account of economic models of voting in Botswana, Matsheka and Botlhomilwe (2000) found that voting behaviour can no longer be explained solely by political and social variables as it has emerged that economic conditions/variables matter during elections. They concluded that the BDP performed well at elections from 1989-1999 due to a healthy economy. But 15 years later in the wake of a global economic crisis, the BDP's popular vote declined while opposition parties made notable strides in popular vote and representation in Parliament. The significant question therefore is whether the decline in popular vote for the BDP was due to people's overall evaluation of the economy or a mere coincidence. We derive the first hypothesis thus: *Individuals who perceive that the economy is performing well are more likely to vote for the BDP.*

Political Trust

When citizens become disillusioned with institutions, turnout is affected or they engage in a protest vote. Schoon and Cheng (2011) define political trust as the

confidence people have in their government and institutions. Therefore citizens would trust political institutions as long as they perceive them performing well. In this sense, Mishler and Rose (2002) write that institutional theories suggest that political trust is a consequence, not a cause, of institutional performance. The expectation then is that there is an inverse relationship between declining political trust and the intention to vote for a ruling party. The decline in public confidence and trust in political institutions may therefore indicate a disconnection between citizens and the state. Norris (1999, p. 7) succinctly states that the populace is increasingly 'mistrustful of political leaders and institutions'.

Declining levels of trust were observed in the US, Canada and Europe as citizens grew disillusioned with their institutions. Bélanger and Nadeau (2005) note that important downward shifts in levels of political trust have been reported and documented since the 1970s in the United States and Western Europe. Africa is no exception to this trend, as Molomo (2006, p. 200) aptly puts it: 'the decline in confidence in the integrity of political institutions and politicians does not emerge in a social vacuum, and it is a result of trying social and economic realities in Africa'. *The second hypothesis is that we expect the decline in trust to reduce the likelihood of voting for the BDP.*

Attitudes on democracy and corruption

More fundamentally, satisfaction with democracy may serve as a yardstick to vote in or reject the ruling party. Growing dissatisfaction with democratic government may produce a decline in electoral turnout and political engagement, but it may also facilitate the rise of protest politics and extreme anti-government parties (Gamson 1968; Muller et al. 1982; Betz & Immerfall 1998 as cited in Bélanger & Nadeu, 2005). Botswana's democracy is widely held as a shining example on the African continent (see Good, 1999; Sebudubudu & Osei-Hwedie, 2006; Molomo, 2000, 2008). But recent media reports on the affront to fundamental freedoms, crises besieging the judiciary, and allegations of elite corruption, put the country's democracy to the test.

Moreover, studies have found that when a regime is perceived to be corrupt, citizens grow weary and reject it at the polls. According to these studies, 'experiences of corruption as well as perceptions of corruption are associated with disengagement from electoral politics and/or defeat of governing parties' (Slomczynski & Shabad, 2012, p. 898). In this vein, Mishler and Rose (2001) caution that institutions ought to refrain from activities that are regarded as negative and unacceptable, for instance corruption.

This trend is worrying in many new and upcoming democracies in post-Communist Europe, Latin America and Africa, where governing parties squander their countries' resources either to maintain power or for the personal gain of

greedy politicians. Botswana is no exception to this trend, as media reports have revealed serious allegations of corruption implicating BDP politicians. Botswana has also lamented the escalating levels of corruption among government officials. Therefore the third and fourth hypotheses are derived as follows: *Higher perceived satisfaction with democracy will increase the odds of voting for the BDP. The higher the perceived corruption levels are among leaders and institutions, the lower the odds are to vote for the BDP.*

METHODOLOGY

This paper uses the Afro Barometer rounds 4, 5 and 6 data collected in 2008, 2012 and 2014 respectively. However, rounds 4 and 5 data sets are used only for examining trends of the variables of interest, where applicable. Afrobarometer is an African-led, non-partisan research network that conducts public attitude surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions, and related issues across more than 30 countries in Africa. Afrobarometer conducts face-to-face interviews in the language of the respondent's choice (Setswana or English in the case of Botswana) with a nationally representative sample of 1,200 respondents and a margin of error of +/-3% at a 95% confidence level. Previous surveys have been conducted in Botswana in 1999, 2003, 2006, 2008, and 2012 maintaining the same methodology (Afrobarometer.org).

Frequencies are reported for categorical variables. For continuous variables, descriptive statistics like mean and standard errors are used for the scores of the constructs created. Table 1 shows in detail how variables have been constructed. Cronbach's alpha statistics are also reported to show the reliability of constructs of interest.

Table 1
Construction of variables

Construct	Questions	Construction of the covariate
Perception of corruption	Q53	Mean (A,B,...,J)
Trust in the ruling party and the president	Q52	Mean (A, F)
Trust in opposition parties	Q52	G
Trust in Parliament	Q52	B
Trust in security agencies	Q52	Mean (H,I)
Perception of current government performance	Q66	Mean (A,B,...,M)
^R Human needs score (food, clean water, etc.)	Q8	Mean (A, B,...,E)

Superscript ^R means questionnaire responses have been reversed.

Logistic Regression

The paper used a simple logistic regression, which is applicable for dichotomous dependent variables as in this case (1 if the individual will vote for the ruling party and 0 otherwise). Simple logistic modelling is necessary in order to avoid the possibility of linear dependencies among predictors. Odds ratios, corresponding confidence intervals, Nagalkerke R^2 and p-values are reported for both unadjusted and adjusted for age, gender and location models to account for possible variations across these variables. The paper adopted a scoring method as indicated in Appendix 1 and regression models were conducted only for Round 6 data.

The odds of voting for the ruling party will be higher if the ratio of odds is more than 1 and less if less than 1. The odds will be equal if the ratio is 1. A p-value less than 0.05 means the relationship between the outcome and covariate is statistically significant (in other words, the odds of the result being obtained purely by chance or error measurement was less than 5%). This result implies that the corresponding 95% confidence interval for odds ratios does not include 1. However, highly significant results ($P < 0.001$) were also recorded for some variables.

Data Analysis and findings

Table 2
Demographic Characteristics of Afrobarometer Respondents in 2014

Characteristic	Frequency (Percentage)
Sample (N)	1 200
Gender (Female)	600 (50.0)
Age ^a	39.68 (32.16)
Employed	376/894 (42.1)
Unemployed	518/894 (57.9)
At least a post-secondary qualification	266 (22.2)
Completed high school or less	934 (77.8)
Which Party would you vote for?	
BDP	623 (60.8)
Opposition Parties	401 (39.2)
There is another party that can solve the most important problem, other than BDP	434/1049 (41.4)

Opposition presents a viable alternative vision and plan for the country	535/984 (54.4)
Satisfied with democracy	825/1140 (72.4)
Closer to opposition parties/ party identification	315/840 (37.5)
Closer to the ruling party	525/840 (62.5)

Subscript^a means the variable (age) is continuous. Mean (standard error) and frequencies (percentages) are reported for continuous and categorical variables respectively.

According to Table 2, half of the respondents were females (as also dictated by Afrobarometer protocol), the average age was 39.68 years, and only 42.1% were employed. The majority (77.8%) had completed high school or less.

Respondents were asked which party they would vote for if national elections were to be held on the following day. About 60% said they would vote for the ruling party, as opposed to 40% who said they would vote for the opposition. Out of 1 049 individuals who responded to the question about an alternative party that could solve their most important problem (i.e. other than the ruling party), only 41.4% said such a party exists. More than half of the respondents believed that the opposition presents an available alternative vision and plan for the country, while 72.4% were satisfied with democracy in Botswana. Most (62.5%) of the respondents who admitted that they felt closer to a particular party admitted that that is the ruling party (BDP).

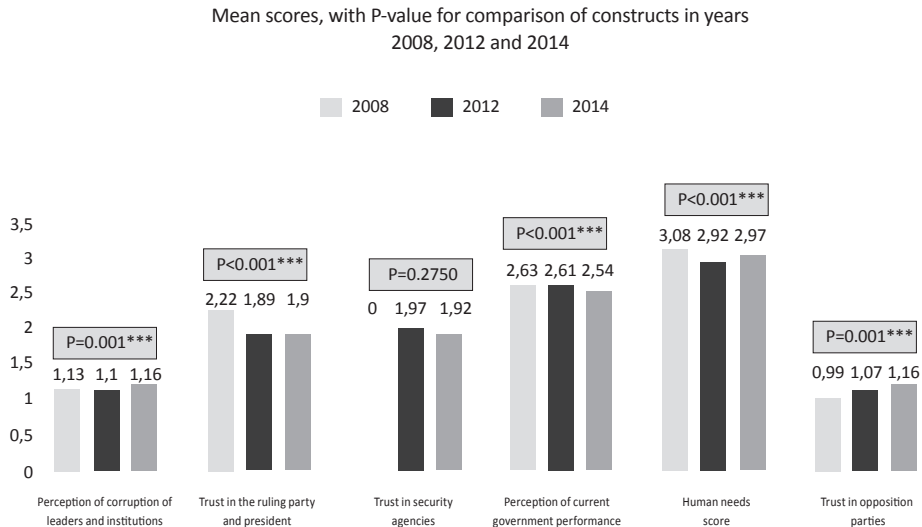
Table 3
Means for Covariates, their standard errors in parenthesis, number of items in the construct and Cronbach's alpha for reliability

Year	Covariates	Mean (Standard Error)	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
2008	Perception of corruption of leaders	1.13 (0.02)	7	0.91
	Trust in the ruling party and the president	2.22 (0.03)	2	0.67
	Trust in opposition parties	0.99 (0.03)	1	NA
	Trust in security agencies	Army not covered in 2008		
	Perception of current government performance	2.63 (0.01)	11	0.82
	Human needs score	3.08 (0.02)	5	0.75

2012	Perception of corruption of leaders	1.10 (0.52)	7	0.87
	Trust in the ruling party and the president	1.89 (0.03)	2	0.74
	Trust in opposition parties	1.07 (0.03)	1	NA
	Trust in security agencies	1.97 (0.94)	2	0.79
	Perception of current government performance	2.61 (0.45)	13	0.81
	Human needs score	2.92 (0.84)	5	0.74
2014	Perception of corruption of leaders	1.16 (1.16)	10	0.90
	Trust in the ruling party and the president	1.90 (0.03)	2	0.78
	Trust in opposition parties	1.16 (0.03)	1	NA
	Trust in security agencies	1.92 (0.97)	2	0.81
	Perception of current government performance	2.54 (0.02)	13	0.90
	Human needs score	2.97 (0.87)	5	0.76

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics for hypothesised predictors (constructs) of a party that people would vote for if general elections were to be held the next day; the number of items used for these constructs; and their corresponding Cronbach's alpha for years 2008, 2012 and 2014. All constructs had alphas greater than 0.60, demonstrating adequate internal reliability.

Since the scales for responses were from 0 to 3 (Appendix 1), we expect scores to be 1.5 or more for higher levels of variables (e.g. trust in the ruling party) and less than 1.5 for all constructs except government performance and human needs, of which their half is 2.



(* = Significant at 10%, $P < 0.10$, ** = Significant at 5%, $P < 0.05$ and *** = Significant at 1%, $P < 0.01$)

Source: Afrobarometer Rounds 4,5 & 6, Botswana (2008, 2012 & 2014)

Figure 1: Mean scores, with P-value for comparison of constructs in years 2008, 2012 and 2014

Figure 1 shows scores for constructs over the three periods. We observe that for all the years, perception of the corruption of leaders scored below 1.5. This implies that respondents believe that few leaders are involved in corruption, even though this perception increased significantly ($p=0.001$) from 1.13 (2008) to 1.16 (2014). Low scores were also obtained for trust in opposition parties (less than 1.5) over the three periods. However, there is a significant increase in this variable, (from 0.99 (2008) to 1.16 (2014), $p < 0.001$). The remaining variables obtained above average scores even though different trends were observed. Trust in the ruling party and the president has significantly decreased (from 2.22 to 1.90, $p=0.001$). Trust in security agencies was not calculated in 2008 because of lack of data for some questions included under the construct. However, available scores depict an insignificant reduction (from 1.97 (2012) to 1.92 (2014), $p=0.275$). Government performance and human needs scores significantly decreased (from 2.63 (2008) to 2.54 (2014), $p < 0.001$) and (3.08 (2008) to 2.97 (2014), $P < 0.001$) respectively.

Table 4
Logistic regression results for adjusted and unadjusted odds ratios & Nagalkerke R² for voting the ruling party (BDP) against opposition parties if National Assembly elections were held the following day

Dependent variable: respondent would vote BDP

Independent Variable	Unadjusted for gender, age & locality			Unadjusted for gender, age & locality		
	OR (95% CI)	Nagalkerke R ²	P-Value	OR (95% CI)	Nagalkerke R ²	P-Value
Level of Education	0.39 (0.28, 0.53)	0.027	P<0.001	0.71 (0.31, 1.63)	0.068	0.4236
Employment Status	0.66 (0.50, 0.89)	0.253	0.0064	0.55 (0.26, 1.18)	0.278	0.1265
Other Covariates						
Partisanship	390.87 (203.39, 751.16)	0.779	P<0.001	369.49 (189.29, 721.23)	0.785	P<0.001***
Age	1.03 (1.02, 1.04)	0.032	P<0.001	1.03 (1.02, 1.04) ¹	0.054	P<0.001***
Gender	1.99 (1.54, 2.57)	0.021	P<0.001	2.04 (1.57, 2.65) ²	0.054	P<0.001***
Perception of corruption of leaders & institutions	0.40 (0.31, 0.52)	0.087	P<0.001	0.47 (0.25, 0.89)	0.1231	0.0203**
Trust in the ruling party & president	2.33 (2.04, 2.66)	0.119	P<0.001	2.23 (1.94, 2.55)	0.140	P<0.001***
Trust in opposition parties	0.54 (0.47, 0.61)	0.085	P<0.001	0.55 (0.49, 0.63)	0.118	P<0.001***

Trust in security agencies	1.44 (1.26, 1.65)	0.025	P<0.001	1.25 (0.87, 1.80)	0.073	0.2199
Perception of government performance	4.41 (3.35, 5.80)	0.106	P<0.001	2.70 (1.46, 5.00)	0.146	0.0015***
Human needs score (food, clean water, etc.)	0.93 (0.80, 1.08)	0.001	0.3257	1.20 (0.82, 1.77)	0.054	0.3442
An alternative to solve the most important problem of the economy	0.20 (0.15, 0.27)	0.194	P<0.001	0.40 (0.19, 0.83)	0.234	0.0140**
Opposition as a viable alternative vision & plan	0.18 (0.13, 0.24)	0.254	P<0.001	0.41 (0.15, 0.28)	0.293	0.0134**
Satisfaction with Democracy	4.49 (3.31, 6.08)	0.115	P<0.001	1.54 (0.71, 3.35)	0.156	0.27747

(* = Significant at 10%, P<0.10, ** = Significant at 5%, P<0.05 and *** = Significant at 1%, P<0.01).¹Age is a covariate so the model is not adjusted for age. ²Gender is a covariate so the model is not adjusted for gender.

Table 4 shows the results of unadjusted and adjusted models for gender, age, and locality for voting between the ruling party and opposition parties in 2014. All unadjusted models show significant relationships except for human needs score, which remained insignificant even after adjusting. All models also scored low R^2 (less than 0.5) except for partisanship (which obtained very large odds ratios); however, the statistic improved for all adjusted models.

When adjusting, predictors attributable to a significant increase in the odds of voting for the BDP in the next elections are partisanship, higher trust in the ruling party and the president, as well as a positive perception of current government performance. By contrast, respondents were less likely to vote for BDP when they have a higher perception that corruption exists in government, when trust in opposition parties increases, when opposition parties are considered an alternative to solving the most important problem of the economy, and when the opposition presents a viable alternative vision and plan for the country.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this article was to examine the underlying attitudes of citizens determining their intention to vote for the BDP in Botswana's dominant party system. In addition the article examined the trends of selected variables in 2008, 2012 and 2014. Binary logistic regression models were used to estimate the odds ratios of voting for the ruling party in preference to opposition parties, with adjustment for gender, age and locality. The results show that Batswana are more likely to vote for the BDP when they trust the party and its president. Further, Batswana are more likely to vote for the party when they feel that the party has performed well in managing the economy. Management of the economy specifically considered the following questions: managing the economy, improving living standards of the poor, creating jobs, keeping prices low, narrowing gaps between rich and poor, reducing crime, improving basic health services, addressing educational needs, providing water and sanitation services, ensuring everyone has enough to eat, fighting corruption in government, maintaining roads and bridges, and providing a reliable supply of electricity.

On the other hand, the BDP will realise a lower number of votes when individuals believe that there is widespread corruption in government including the president and most officials in his office, members of parliament, the Independent Electoral Commission, Botswana Unified Revenue Services, individual local government council, the ruling party, and courts of law. An increasing perception that opposition parties are an alternative to solving the most important problem of the economy will also crowd out votes from the BDP. In this regard the majority of respondents mentioned unemployment,

poverty/destitution, education and health as the most important problems. Also important is an increase in the trust in opposition parties and when opposition parties present a viable alternative vision and plan for the country. The results hold regardless of gender, age and locality of respondents; hence we conclude that Botswana's voting intentions are based on an evaluation of economic performance, attitudes towards corruption level and trust in institutions, among others. Theoretical implications of the results therefore suggest that Batswana are economic voters and critical citizens who base their vote on an assessment of public interest issues as analysed in this paper. On this basis, we conclude that the BDP has been dominant because it performed well in governance and the economy.

The following conclusions can be derived concerning the trends of selected variables over the years covered by the study: Citizens generally feel that more leaders (the president and officials in his office, members of parliament, tax officials, judges, magistrates and others) were involved in corruption in 2014 than in 2008. This shows that even though the country is doing well in terms of corruption and governance relative to other countries (Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance 2015), citizens perceive corruption to be increasing. We also observe that trust in the ruling party and the president has decreased. Batswana also feel that both the current performance of government and human needs scores have decreased between 2008 and 2014 even though they are still above average. A perceived reduction in government performance may be due to high unemployment rates and poor results for public schools. A decrease in the human needs score suggests that in 2014 Batswana felt that they had less access to clean water, cash income and enough fuel to cook than in 2008. This may be a result of shortages like those of electricity and potable water that the country experienced in that period.

FUTURE IMPLICATIONS FOR POLITICAL PARTIES

Based on the findings of this work, the following implications arise for parties:

- In order for the ruling party to be voted back into power, it should deal with perceived levels of corruption amongst leaders and institutions. The ruling party should also maintain the trust of voters and perform well in terms of managing the economy, for example through the creation of jobs, keeping prices down and reducing crime.
- Opposition parties should concentrate on the following in order to win votes from the BDP: They should win more trust and present alternative solutions to solve the most important problems of the economy; the majority of respondents mentioned unemployment,

poverty/ destitution, education and health as the most important problems. They also need to present a viable alternative vision and plan for the country.

- Theoretically, the results of this study prove that Batswana are rational voters whose voting intentions are based on an assessment of the ruling party's performance as well as perceptions of opposition parties.

LIMITATIONS

One limitation of this paper is that even though significant relationships have been identified, they do not imply a cause and effect association; however this is the subject for subsequent research. Some questions were edited in the latest rounds of Afrobarometer and have affected some of the constructs used in this paper. The question of trust in opposition parties has grouped together several parties which might have been scored differently by respondents in terms of trust. Thus a question on the trust in individual opposition parties could have added more depth to the paper.

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Appendix 1 A summary of variables used and how they were measured (Source: Afrobarometer Round 6 Questionnaire, Botswana)		
Variable	Items used	Response Format
Intention to vote for the ruling party	If National Assembly elections were held tomorrow, which party's candidate would you vote?	1=Ruling Party (BDP), 0 otherwise
Gender	Respondent's gender	1=Female, 0=male (or other)
Age	How old are you?	Continuous
Locality	Whether its rural or not	1=Urban, 2=Rural, 3=Semi-Urban
Party Identification	Do you feel close to any political party?	1=Ruling party, 0=other. Non-party identifiers are excluded'
Demographic Variables		
Level of Education	What is your level of education?	1=At least post-secondary qualification, e.g. diploma, 0=other
Employment status	Do you have a job that pays a cash income?	1=Yes, 0=No but looking. Housewives and students are excluded..
Perception of corruption of leaders and institutions	How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption? The president and officials in his office, members of parliament, Independent Electoral Commission, Botswana Unified Revenue Services, individual local government councils, the ruling party, courts of law.	0=None, 1=Some, 2=Most, 3=All of them
Trust in the ruling party and the president	How much do you trust the president and the ruling party?	0=Not at all, 1=Just a little, 2=Somewhat, 3=A lot
Trust in opposition parties	How much do you trust opposition parties ?	0=Not at all, 1=Just a little, 2=Somewhat, 3=A lot
Trust in security agencies	How much do you trust the police and the army?	0=Not at all, 1=Just a little, 2=Somewhat, 3=A lot

Satisfaction with democracy	Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in Botswana	1=Satisfied, 0 otherwise
Economic Conditions		
Human needs score (food, clean water, etc.)	Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family gone without enough food to eat; without enough clean water for home use, without medicines or medical treatment, without enough fuel to cook food and without enough cash income.	4=Never, 3=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 1=Many times, 0=Always
Perception of current government performance	How well or badly would you say the current government is managing the economy, improving living standards of the poor, creating jobs, keeping prices low, narrowing gaps between rich and poor, reducing crime, improving basic health services, addressing educational needs, providing water and sanitation services, ensuring everyone has enough to eat, fighting corruption in government, maintain roads and bridges, providing a reliable supply of electricity	1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well
Opposition as a viable alternative vision and plan	Political opposition in Botswana presents a viable alternative vision and plan for the country	1=Agree, 2=Disagree
An alternative to solve the most important problem of the economy	In your opinion, is there any other political party that could do a better job in solving the most important problem	1=Yes, 2=No

PARTIES IN A PLURALITY SYSTEM: *Candidate Nomination in Ghana's Minor Parties*

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ABSTRACT

In theory, plurality electoral systems do not favour the development of minor parties. Scholarly analysis of minor political parties has focused on their electoral performance in national elections, and very little is known about their candidate nomination behaviour at grassroots level. Why minor parties should compete in national elections within a plurality system is a puzzle explained in this paper by an examination of candidate nomination by minor parties in Ghana's plurality system. Ghana's minor parties compete in constituencies they know they cannot win. Drawing on poll data, the paper argues that these minor parties use the candidate nomination process not to win parliamentary seats but as a strategy to make their party platforms visible in the political landscape. It reaches three conclusions on candidate nomination: that it is used by minor parties to make their presence felt in the country; that it allows the parties to give the appearance of being strong; and that it is a strategy to boost the campaign of presidential candidates.

Keywords: Ghana; minor parties; plurality system; candidate nomination; two-party system

INTRODUCTION

Following the re-introduction of competitive politics in Africa in the early 1990s, different electoral systems have been adopted and different party systems have evolved (Bogaards 2004, 2007; Doorenspleet & Nijzink 2014; Hartmann

2007). Whereas some countries adopted majoritarian systems, others embraced proportional representation. Cote d'Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi and Uganda are among those that adopted single member plurality systems while Burkina Faso, Benin, Sierra Leone and Senegal opted for proportional representation systems (Hartmann 2007). These different electoral systems have different consequences and are known to have an impact on the development of political parties (Cox 1997; Farrell 1997; Norris 1997; Taagepera, 2007). Proportional systems encourage the development of minor parties (Norris 1997) whereas studies have shown that majoritarian systems adversely affect the performance of minor parties (Borisjuk et al. 2007; Gerring 2005). The majoritarian system operates in many recently democratised African countries, and consequently Kadima (2006, p. 8) argues that most electoral systems in Africa 'call for pre-election alliances in order to avoid wasting votes'. In some countries with a plurality system, a pre-election alliance is prevalent (Kadima 2014), though it has also been observed that there is a low level of inter-party coordination in other African countries with a plurality system (Ishiyama 2009).

Ghana's party system is anchored in a plurality electoral system which has favoured the development of major parties only (Daddieh & Bob-Milliar 2014). As a result, a de facto two-party system is being consolidated in the country (Daddieh & Bob-Milliar 2014; Morrison & Hong 2006; Whitfield 2009). The duopoly of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP) has seen them maintain a strong presence across the country and between them these two parties have captured at least 95% of parliamentary seats since 1996 (Daddieh & Bob-Milliar 2014). Minor parties and independent candidates have managed to capture barely 5% of parliamentary seats (Daddieh & Bob-Milliar 2016). These minor parties, including the Convention People's Party (CPP) and the People's National Convention (PNC), have been visible in very few constituencies during parliamentary elections, an absence that has been attributed to financial constraints and organisational weakness (Aidoo & Chamberlain, 2014; Ninsin 2006). This reflects Stroh's observation (2010, p. 7) that a lack of human and financial resources renders 'secondary parties' incapable of engaging in 'territory-wide competition'.

Financial constraints and the electoral system have made it difficult for minor parties to make incursions into Ghana's political system. Following existing theories on party behaviour, these obstacles should result in strategies to put smaller parties in a better position to win seats in parliamentary elections. Such strategies could consist of coalition and strategic nomination choices, where parties with 'similar policy interests' enter pre-election alliances so as to avoid splitting votes (Herron 2002, p. 723). As Ishiyama (2009, pp. 320–21) succinctly notes, minor parties lack 'the organizational wherewithal to blanket the country

with candidates.' As a result, 'where to nominate candidates must be based on careful choices as to where the party's chances of winning are the greatest' (ibid.).

This paper contributes to our knowledge about the behaviour of African political parties by examining the electoral behaviour of minor parties in Ghana. It does so by exploring the extent of collaboration between the 'Nkrumahist' minor parties (Bob-Milliar forthcoming), and the degree to which these parties behave strategically with respect to coalition and strategic nomination theories. Given the contextual effects of majoritarian systems, how do minor parties in Ghana behave in parliamentary elections? Despite the majoritarian bias of Ghana's plurality system, electoral data reveals that these minor parties nominate candidates even in constituencies where they have no chance of winning, behaviour that defies the strategic nomination thesis. The paper thus argues that the behaviour of minor parties in Ghana's plurality system goes against the grain of existing theoretical perspectives. This is because minor parties use candidate nomination not only as a mechanism for winning parliamentary seats but also as a campaign strategy to make their parties visible in the political landscape. The paper thus demonstrates inconsistencies between the existing theoretical propositions and the pattern of candidate nomination in a democratising state like Ghana.

Since the re-democratisation of Africa in the 1990s, elections have become a common fixture in African political systems. Periodic elections have been welcomed by the populace as a vital means to express themselves and to have a say in governance. Despite occasional recessions, the democratisation of Africa has enlivened political participation and Ghana in particular has established itself as a beacon of hope for democracy on the continent. One of the underlying factors for this is 'the institutionalization of political parties' which is spearheaded by the two major parties (Whitfield 2009). Despite its 'democratic success' (which is largely electoral), the political system is bedevilled by episodes of political violence, the limited capacity of civil society organisations, and excessive presidentialism (Abdulai & Crawford 2010). Generally, the literature on party politics in Ghana has concentrated on the political behaviour and activities of the major parties (Ayee 2011; Bob-Milliar 2012; Daddieh & Bob-Milliar 2016; Ninsin, 2016), voter behaviour (Arthur 2009; Fridy 2007; Gyimah-Boadi 2007; Lindberg 2003; Lindberg & Morrison 2005; Nugent 1999, 2001, 2007), and party systems (Daddieh & Bob-Milliar 2014; Morrison & Hong 2006; Osei 2012; Whitfield 2009). Recently there have been some preliminary works that put minor parties in the spotlight and assess their staying power, performance and the normative role they play in Ghana's political system (Aidoo & Chamberlain 2014; Bob-Milliar forthcoming; Yobo & Gyampo 2015). Yet an interesting puzzle that has not been given significant attention in the literature is the political choices or electoral behaviour of the minor parties. Stroh (2010, p. 7) observed that 'due to the apparent and sometimes obvious weakness [of African

parties], a systematic analysis of their strategic behaviour has not been seen as relevant'. Nevertheless, Ishiyama (2009) asserts that the electoral behaviour of minor parties is an important element of African democratisation.

This paper thus attempts to interrogate the electoral behaviour of the minor parties in Ghana. Electoral behaviour is a broad concept; however, for the purpose of this paper, the focus is on the candidate nomination behaviour of the parties. With insights from Ishiyama (2009, p. 321), candidate nomination behaviour is defined as 'candidates nominated by the minor opposition parties in the publicly announced lists of candidates for the single member district elections'.

METHOD AND DATA

The paper is based on a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods. In essence, the quantitative approach was used to depict the electoral behaviour of the parties while the qualitative approach enabled us to unravel the reasons behind their nomination behaviour. Helland and Saglie (2003, p. 600) indicate that 'electoral statistics provide a rich data source for the study of electoral behaviour'. Thus poll data forms the primary unit of analysis. Poll data is underutilised in the study of minor parties in Ghana. All the studies that have given exclusive attention to minor parties in Ghana used aggregate results from elections. In studying the electoral behaviour of African voters, Wahman (2014, p. 206) concludes by suggesting that there is 'a need for more systematic research on sub-national electoral behaviour' for a better understanding of political behaviour in Africa. Therefore, to study the nomination behaviour of a party, it is important to disaggregate poll data and make use of regional and constituency results in general elections, as is done in this paper. The data was collected from five parliamentary elections and analysed descriptively, and is based on the performance of the two minor parties at the regional and constituency level. Broadly, we observed the nomination pattern of the parties where particular attention was given to the spatial distribution of nominations, and also the extent to which their nominations are coordinated. For the purpose of comparison, we presented the electoral results and performance of the parties in the same tables and graph, and then highlighted the key issues in the discussion section. In some cases the performance of all political parties in the country (including the major parties) was highlighted for a better understanding of the strength of the minor parties. In addition, elite interviews were conducted with the leadership of the two minor parties which provided a deeper understanding of the political choices of the parties.

The rest of the paper is structured as follows: an overview of the theoretical debates on electoral systems and party behaviour is followed by a discussion

of the electoral system and party politics in Ghana. The paper then analyses the nomination of the parties under consideration, focusing on the spatial distribution of their nominations in five election cycles. Finally, we explain the reasons underlying the nomination behaviour of the minor parties and draw some conclusions.

THEORETICAL EXPLANATIONS FOR ELECTORAL SYSTEMS AND PARTY BEHAVIOUR

The way an electoral system is designed has a bearing on a political system and can also determine party systems (Farrell 1997; Taagepera 2007). An electoral system broadly includes 'different components such as the regulation of candidacies, the facilities for registration and voting, and the funding of party campaigns' (Norris 1997, p. 299). However, Norris (*ibid.*) further contends that the heart of electoral systems is the process of translating votes into seats. This facilitates the determination of 'victors and losers' in an election (Farrell 1997). To a large extent, this process gives rise to different systems. Generally, the literature on electoral systems provides three broad types – majoritarian, proportional and mixed/combined systems (Norris 1997). In majoritarian systems, parties often win a proportion of seats more or less than the proportion of votes they amass in elections, whereas proportional systems ensure that parties get seats commensurate with the votes they obtain in elections (*ibid.*). These two electoral systems affect parties in diverse ways. Proportional representation ensures equitable representation of all parties, including smaller ones. On the other hand, the utility of majoritarian systems lies in the effectiveness, accountability and stability they ensure in governance (Norris 1997).

Notwithstanding the utility of plurality systems, the negative consequences it has on the performance of minor parties cannot be overlooked. The anomalies in a plurality system tend to favour the big-tent parties. In this context, Bogaards (2007, p. 171) contends that 'the choice of electoral system follows from the choice of party system function'. This implies that electoral systems are meant to produce particular party systems in line with the needs and aspirations of a country. Thus, Norris (1997, p. 300-301) argues that:

The aim of plurality systems is to create a "manufactured majority", that is, to exaggerate the share of seats for the leading party in order to produce an effective working parliamentary majority for the government, while simultaneously penalizing minor parties, especially those whose support is spatially dispersed.

In a similar vein, Heywood (2007, p. 260) asserts that 'two-party systems and single party government are manufactured by the majoritarian bias of the [plurality] electoral system and do not reflect the distribution of popular preferences'. These claims suggest that majoritarian systems are used as 'gatekeeping mechanisms' to keep smaller parties at bay for the sake of stability and efficiency in the political system. In effect, plurality rules tend to favour larger parties. Of importance for this paper is the penalising effect of plurality systems on minor parties in terms of their performance and the seats they win. If plurality systems penalise minor parties, such parties could minimise this punishment by stretching the boundaries of the electoral system through a call for reforms. However, Taagepera (2007, p. 9) notes that 'fundamental changes in electoral laws are infrequent'. For electoral system reforms to be successful, they would require the support of representatives (especially in the main parties) who happen to be the major beneficiaries of majoritarian systems. In the absence of reforms, minor parties can stay relevant in the political system only by adopting strategies that can put them in a better position to win seats in parliamentary elections. The nature of an electoral system thus structures electoral competition (Sartori [1976] 2005).

According to Helland and Saglie (2003, p. 581), 'majority-plurality systems invite strategic behaviour' especially from parties that are adversely affected. With respect to strategic behaviour, Norris (1997) suggests that small parties can do well in plurality systems if their support is spatially concentrated. On this note, she observes that smaller parties with 'a strong concentration of votes in key regions' perform better than those 'that spread their nominations across a wide range of constituencies' (Norris 1997, p. 301). Similarly, Ishiyama (2009, p. 320-321) posits that since 'minor parties do not have the organizational wherewithal to blanket the whole country with candidates', 'where to nominate candidates must be based on careful choices as to where the party's chances of winning are the greatest.' Furthermore, Stroh (2010) contends that since 'secondary parties' are hampered by inadequate human and financial resources, they need to focus on constituencies where they are likely to perform well. Hence, the idea of 'spatial concentration of nominations' is a crucial strategy for minor parties in plurality systems.

Also, parties can engage in electoral alliances to optimise the chances of winning elections (Bob-Milliar, forthcoming). The National Democratic Institution (2015, p. 14) notes that 'the main purpose of an electoral alliance is to combine the resources of two or more parties to improve electoral outcomes for the members of the alliance'. Often 'parties in plurality-majority systems may agree not to compete against each other in particular electoral districts' (ibid.). Helland and Saglie (2003, p. 600) assert that 'in [a plurality system], a pair of parties may negotiate electoral alliances centrally, securing representation for both parties'. In this context, Herron (2002) suggests that in single-member district elections, like-minded parties may

decide to coordinate their nominations in order to avoid nominating candidates in the same districts so as to optimise their chances of winning. This shows that parties with similar ideologies in a plurality system may choose to enter electoral alliances to coordinate their nominations in parliamentary elections.

To sum up this section, we can tease out the main ingredients as follows: first, the explanations of electoral systems and party behaviour suggest that minor parties can minimise the penalising effects of majoritarian systems by concentrating their nominations in key constituencies or selected regions. Second, like-minded parties in plurality systems may choose to coordinate their nomination choices in parliamentary elections, which has been the norm in some advanced democracies. Nevertheless, in a democratising state like Ghana with a competitive party system, the candidate nomination behaviour of the minor parties challenges these dominant theoretical perspectives. Notwithstanding the financial and organisational challenges facing these minor parties in Ghana's plurality system, they compete in constituencies where they are unlikely to win parliamentary seats, as is evident in their nomination patterns. The goals of Ghana's minor parties, as well as the impression they wish to create, explain why their behaviour deviates from the norm. What follows is an explanation of the nature of party politics in Ghana.

THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM AND PARTY POLITICS IN GHANA

Competitive politics in Ghana is regulated by a number of variables including (but not limited to) the Constitution, the electoral system and several Acts of Parliament. First, the 1992 Constitution, which legalises multiparty competition, defines the boundaries within which the political parties operate. Even though the Constitution guarantees the 'right to form political parties', certain provisions tend to restrict how these political parties operate. Among these, the Constitution stipulates that 'every political party shall have a national character and membership shall not be based on ethnic, religious, regional or other sectional divisions' (Republic of Ghana 1992, p. 48). It also enjoins all parties to have 'branches in all the regions of Ghana' and in at least 'two-thirds of the districts of each region' (*ibid.*). These constitutional requirements have a profound impact on political parties, especially the smaller ones. Crafted as they are on the history of competitive politics in Ghana, these provisions do not favour the development of smaller parties. As Ishiyama (2009) has correctly observed, many smaller parties in Ghana do not have the 'organizational wherewithal' to cover the whole country.

Since the inception of multiparty contest in Ghana in the early 1950s, electoral competition has always been mediated by the plurality electoral system. As explained earlier, to be elected as a member of parliament in this system, the

candidate needs only to win a plurality of the votes in parliamentary elections. This reflects the 'British type single-member district plurality system' (Morrison & Hong 2006, p. 624). Ninsin (2006, p. 7) notes that 'this electoral system does not reward a political party whose candidate may have won a number of votes beyond an established threshold'. The system tends to over-reward major parties and penalise other parties. Based on Ghana's 2000 parliamentary elections, Adjei (2013, p. 17) shows that smaller parties would be 'better off under the proportional representation system'. He reached this conclusion by running the votes gained by all parties in a proportional representation formula which saw the seats of the major parties decrease while the seats of the minor parties increased (ibid.). Clearly, this brings to light the majoritarian bias of the plurality system which has worked against the development of the minor parties in the country. To a large extent, the 'majoritarian bias' ingrained in this system has helped in 'nurturing Ghana's two-party system' (Daddieh & Bob-Milliar 2014).

The filing of nominations for the presidential and parliamentary elections is regulated by the Electoral Commission (EC), and also affects minority parties as it comes at much cost. Candidates are required to make a (refundable) deposit before picking up a nomination form. Between 1992 and 2004, the deposit was pegged at 5m old Ghana cedis (\$114.29) and 200,000 old Ghana cedis (US\$ 4.57) for presidential and parliamentary nominations respectively. In 2008, the Electoral Commission increased the nomination deposit to GH¢ 5,000 (US\$ 1,142.86) for presidential nomination and GH¢ 500 (US\$ 114.29) for the parliamentary nomination. New filing fees announced for the 2012 elections were fixed at GH¢ 10,000 (US\$ 2,285.72) and GH¢ 1,000 (US\$ 228.57) for presidential and parliamentary nominations respectively. In the recently concluded election, the EC increased the fee to GH¢ 10,000 (US\$ 2,285.72) for the parliamentary election and GH¢ 50,000 (US\$ 11,428.59) for the presidential election. The minor parties protested against this increase, and the Progressive People's Party (PPP) sued the EC at an Accra High Court after it refused to consider a reduction of the fees. Nonetheless, the challenge was unsuccessful. Legally, parliamentary candidates are entitled to a refund if they are able to obtain at least 12.5% of the votes in the parliamentary election. For the major parties, this has not been a problem since they easily pass the 12.5% threshold. But the minor parties with limited resources have been hardest hit since their performance in most constituencies has not reached 12.5% (see Tables 2 and 3). In effect, the institutional design of Ghanaian politics has been benevolent to the two major parties while having a punishing effect on the minor parties.

Despite the majoritarian bias of the electoral system and the cost of nomination fees, a number of minor parties have contested elections in the Fourth Republic. Since 1992, more than 20 political parties have been registered

and certified by the Electoral Commission to compete in national elections. Yet the number of parties contesting elections has not reached half the number of registered political parties in an election year. Between 1996 and 2016, the number of parties competing in parliamentary elections, including the major parties, fluctuated between seven and eight. Throughout these elections, the major parties have competed in virtually all the constituencies. In the recent elections, the major parties competed in all 275 constituencies in the country. On the other hand, due to financial constraints and weak organisation, most of the minor parties were unable to file candidates in most constituencies. And even where they competed, as Nugent (2001, p. 423) notes, they were 'little more than spectators in a two-way fight'. Consequently, for a keen observer like Nugent, the smaller parties were also-rans. The People's National Convention (PNC) and Convention People's Party (CPP) have nominated more constituency candidates for parliamentary elections than the other minor parties, and they are the only existing minor parties to have gained representation in the National Assembly (see Table 1). The next section focuses on their ideologies, nomination behaviour and electoral performance in Ghana's Fourth Republic.

Table 1
Results of parliamentary elections, 1992-2016

1992						
Party	NDC	NPP	PNC	NIP	PHP	NCP
Seats Won	189					8
1996						
Party	NDC	NPP	PNC	PCP	NCP	GCPP
Seats Won	133	61	1	5	0	0
2000						
Party	NDC	NPP	PNC	CPP	GCPP	
Seats Won	89	100	3	1	0	
2004						
Party	NDC	NPP	PNC	CPP	DPP	
Seats Won	91	129	4	3	0	
2008						
Party	NDC	NPP	PNC	CPP	DPP	
Seats Won	113	108	2	1	0	
2012						
Party	NDC	NPP	PNC	CPP	PPP	GCPP

Seats Won	147	123	1	1 ^a	0	0
2016						
Party	NDC	NPP	PNC	CPP	PPP	GCPP
Seats Won	106	169	0	0	0	0

^a This seat was won in a bye-election in 2013.

The CPP and PNC in electoral politics

By most definitions in the empirical and theoretical literature, the CPP and PNC are minor parties (e.g. Bob-Milliar, forthcoming; Gerring 2005). These parties have gained fewer seats in parliamentary elections since the inception of electoral politics in 1992. According to the EC records, some twenty-two parties have registered. However, for the purposes of this paper, the focus is on two minor parties of historical and parliamentary relevance. Historically, both parties have their roots in the vanguard party founded by Kwame Nkrumah in the late 1940s and are consequently linked to the ideas of the founding president of Ghana. Even though some of the other minor parties subscribe to the ideals of Nkrumahism, the CPP and the PNC have been more proactive with this ideology.

At the level of representation, both parties have won seats and have entered Parliament at different times. Despite the fact that the PNC and the CPP have outperformed other minor parties in parliamentary elections, these two parties have faced similar challenges to those of other parties in the political system. They also lack the organisational wherewithal and the financial capacity to compete with the mainstream parties in the country. Most importantly, these parties share similar ideologies: on that score, they can be branded as like-minded parties. The next section depicts candidate nomination behaviour of these two parties by analysing electoral data in parliamentary elections, focusing on the nomination pattern and their electoral performance.

Table 2
Frequency distribution of electoral performance for the CPP and PNC
in the 2012 parliamentary election

Percentage Vote (%)	Ashanti Region		Volta Region		Greater Accra	
	CPP	PNC	CPP	PNC	CPP	PNC
(0.00 – 0.99)	22	22	11	3	17	17
(1.00 – 1.99)	1	-	6	1	7	-
(2.00 – 2.99)	-	-	-	-	-	-

(3.00 – 3.99)	-	-	1	1	2	-
(4.00 – 4.99)	1	-	2	-	-	-
(5.00 – 10.00)	-	-	1	-	-	-

Source: 2017 Electoral Commission poll data

The Convention People's Party

The CPP is the reincarnation of the vanguard party that won political independence from the British in 1957. After the overthrow of the Nkrumah regime in February 1966, the CPP lost prominence and has since been fragmented. Like the PNC, the CPP also subscribes to Nkrumahism as its central tenet. The CPP competed in 188 out of 200 constituencies in the 2000 elections, winning only one seat (see Table 4). With 230 constituencies available for capture in the 2004 elections, the CPP filed candidates in 172 constituencies and won three seats (see Table 5). In the 2008 elections, the party won only one of the 205 seats it contested (see Table 6). In the 2012 election, the party again performed poorly by failing to win a single seat in the 159 constituencies it contested (see Table 7). The CPP, however, managed to win the bye-election held in the Kumbungu constituency (in the Northern Region) in April 2013. This bye-election victory by the CPP is attributed to the support from the two major parties and in particular the NPP. In 2016, the party competed in 220 constituencies and again failed to win a seat (see Table 8). Like the PNC, the CPP also lost seats to the NDC. The CPP has won a total of seven seats in parliamentary elections since 2000 which were, with the exception of the Kumbungu seat, all in the Central and Western regions. The favourite son thesis best explains the CPP's ability to win because the founding father of the party, Kwame Nkrumah, hailed from this region. Gyimah-Boadi and Debrah (2008, p. 149) observe that 'the relative support base of the CPP is rooted among the Nzema whose affinity to Nkrumah appears to be unshakable'. It is thus not surprising that when Kwame Nkrumah's daughter Samia appeared on the political scene in 2008, she was able to unseat the incumbent in that year's election. While other factors might be responsible for this feat, the fond memories of her father cannot be underestimated.

The People's National Convention

The PNC was formed in July 1992, emerging from the 1979 Imoru Egala-Limann tradition of the People's National Party (PNP). Dr. Hilla Limann, President of the short-lived Third Republic, founded the PNC after several attempts to present a single Nkrumahist platform had failed (Nugent 1996). As an appendage of

Nkrumahism, the PNC subscribes to Kwame Nkrumah's brand of socialism and Pan-Africanism (scientific socialism). Since its formation in 1992, the party has contested in every election in the Fourth Republic with the exception of the 1992 parliamentary elections. The party has competed in all national elections and has won a total of 11 seats in parliamentary elections (see Table 1). In the 2000 elections, the party nominated 155 candidates across the country and won three seats (see Table 4). In the 2004 elections, the PNC presented 124 candidates and won four seats (see Table 5). In the 2008 elections, the number of nominations increased to 127 but the number of seats won decreased to two (see Table 6). However, in the 2012 parliamentary elections, the party managed to file candidates in 100 out of 275 constituencies, winning only one seat (see Table 7). In the 2016 elections, the PNC filed fewer than 100 candidates for the parliamentary election (see Table 8). It is worth noting that the party has won parliamentary seats in only the three northern regions in the country (Northern, Upper East and Upper West regions). As such, it is said that the PNC is a 'Northern-based party' (Gyimah-Boadi & Debrah 2008, p. 149). Furthermore, all party leaders have hailed from one of the three northern regions; for example, former president Dr. Hilla Limann is a son of Gwolu, the capital of the Sissala West District in the Upper West Region. Between 2000 and 2008 the PNC were able to win at least one of the parliamentary seats in the two Sissala constituencies, which are among the strongholds of the party. However, the party lost its parliamentary seat to the NDC in the 2016 elections.

Table 3
Frequency distribution of electoral performance of the CPP and PNC
in the 2016 parliamentary election

Percentage Vote (%)	Ashanti Region		Volta Region		Greater Accra	
	CPP	PNC	CPP	PNC	CPP	PNC
(0.00 – 0.99)	33	20	16	1	28	6
(1.00 – 1.99)	2	1	3	-	2	-
(2.00 – 2.99)	-	-	-	-	-	-
(3.00 – 3.99)	-	-	-	-	-	-
(4.00 – 4.99)	-	-	-	-	-	-
(5.00 – 10.00)	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: 2017 Electoral Commission poll data

Interparty coordination

The major parties aided the CPP and PNC to win seats in some regions by withdrawing their candidates from the 2004 parliamentary contest. Based on an earlier agreement with the CPP and PNC, the NPP in particular did not file candidates in four constituencies during the 2004 parliamentary elections (Bob-Milliar, forthcoming). In three constituencies in the Central and Western regions, the CPP candidates were unopposed by the NPP (Bob-Milliar, forthcoming). Similarly, the PNC candidate in the Sissala East constituency of the Upper West region ran unopposed (Bob-Milliar, forthcoming). In all four constituencies, the Nkrumahist minor parties won the parliamentary seats. Bob-Milliar explains the nature of these alliances in the context of party patronage. Despite sharing a common ideology, there is no formal agreement between the CPP and PNC in parliamentary elections.¹ In contrast to the theory of interparty coordination, the two parties coordinate their nominations sparingly. Inter-party coordination in Ghana is mediated primarily by party patronage rather than ideologies, and that has proven to be quite viable for the Nkrumahist minor parties. Nevertheless, the major parties have been the major beneficiaries of these ‘unholy alliances’ (Bob-Milliar, forthcoming).

The nomination pattern of the CPP and PNC

Ghana’s ten regions are further partitioned into single-member constituencies. The number of constituencies has varied over time, having increased from 200 in 1992 to 275 in 2016. As a result of these variations, it will not be helpful to use the number of nominations in its raw form to make an assessment. Thus the number of nominations for each party has been converted into a percentage to allow for uniformity even though this conceals some variations (see Figure 1).

1 There is no evidence confirming that the parties coordinate their nominations in general elections. However, the two parties have supported each other in some bye-elections where one party refrained from contesting and threw its weight behind the other.

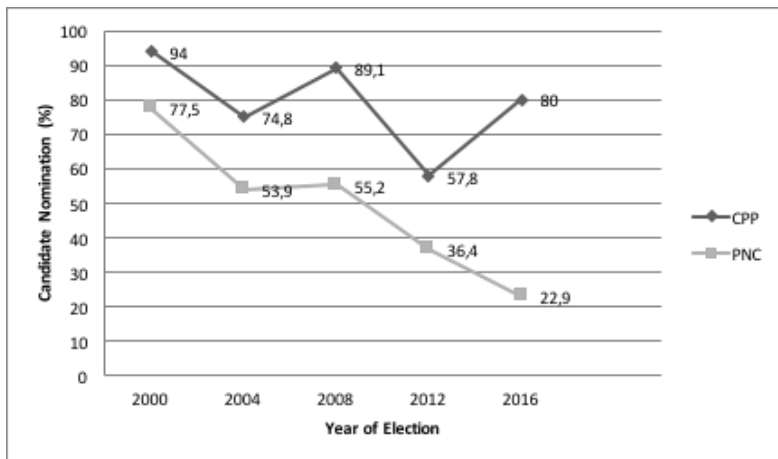


Figure 1

Nomination pattern of the CPP and PNC between 2000 and 2016

The spatial distribution of national nominations

Overall nominations for these two parties have been decreasing; the nomination pattern for the PNC has witnessed a steep decline from 77.5% in 2000 to 22.9% in 2016. On the other hand, the nomination pattern for the CPP has been up and down; in the transition elections in 2000, 2008 and 2016, the party competed in more than 77% of the constituencies. The drastic decline of nominations for the CPP in 2012 can be attributed to the sudden breakaway in 2011 of Dr. Nduom (the party's flag bearer in 2008) and the emergence of the Progressive People's Party (PPP). The nomination pattern for the two parties is illustrated in Figure 1. Even though the graph conceals the regional distribution of the nominations, it gives a fair idea of the extent of nomination dispersion by the parties. The percentage of candidate nomination for the PNC in the various elections suggests that their candidate nomination is fairly dispersed. With the exception of the 2012 and 2016 elections, the PNC competed in more than 50% of the constituencies in the country, varying between 53% and 77%. The CPP percentage reveals that their candidate nomination is widely dispersed across the country. Aside from the 2012 election, the percentage nomination of the CPP has fluctuated between 77% and 94%. Overall, the findings reveal that the two parties spread their candidates across the country, and that contrasts with the theoretical proposition of a spatial concentration of nominations. However, despite the fact that the CPP spread its candidates across the country more widely than the PNC, the PNC won more parliamentary seats than the CPP (see Table 1).

Table 4
Candidate nomination for CPP and PNC in 2000

Region	No. Constituencies	Nominations		Average %		No. Seats	
		CPP	PNC	CPP	PNC	CPP	PNC
Ashanti	33	33	28	100	84.8	0	0
Brong-Ahafo	21	21	12	100	57.1	0	0
Central	17	16	10	94.1	58.8	0	0
Eastern	26	23	24	88.5	92.3	0	0
Greater Accra	22	22	19	100	86.4	0	0
Northern	23	23	22	100	95.7	0	1
Upper East	12	11	12	91.7	100	0	1
Upper West	8	2	7	25.0	87.5	0	1
Volta	19	18	10	94.7	52.6	0	0
Western	19	19	11	100	57.9	1	0
Total	200	188	155	94.0	77.5	1	3

Table 5
Candidate nomination for CPP and PNC in 2004

Region	No. Constituencies	Nominations		Nominations %		No. Seats	
		CPP	PNC	CPP	PNC	CPP	PNC
Ashanti	39	33	19	84.6	48.7	0	0
Brong-Ahafo	24	16	6	66.7	25.0	0	0
Central	19	15	8	78.9	42.1	1	0
Eastern	28	21	13	75.0	46.4	0	0
Greater Accra	27	25	14	95.6	51.9	0	0
Northern	26	17	19	65.4	73.1	0	0
Upper East	13	12	11	92.3	84.6	0	2
Upper West	10	5	10	50.0	100	0	2
Volta	22	12	13	54.5	59.1	0	0
Western	22	15	11	68.2	50.0	2	0
Total	230	172	124	74.8	53.9	3	4

Regional distribution of nominations

The regional distribution of candidate nomination for the two parties further demonstrates the inconsistencies between the strategic nomination thesis espoused by Ishiyama (2009) and the behaviour of the minor parties in Ghana. Minor parties were expected to make strategic choices by nominating more candidates in their strongholds and fewer candidates outside their strongholds. However, in Ghana there is little empirical support for this assertion. The data shows that both parties nominate fewer candidates in their strongholds while competing in more constituencies outside their strongholds (see Tables 4–8). In the 2012 and 2016 elections, the PNC competed in fewer than 50% of the constituencies in the Northern Region. The CPP also competed in fewer than 50% of the constituencies in the Western and Central Regions in 2012 (see Tables 7 and 8). Most importantly, these parties competed in more constituencies, even in regions such as Ashanti and Volta considered to be strongholds of the major parties. In particular, the CPP competed in all the constituencies in the Ashanti Region (the stronghold of the NPP) in the 2000 parliamentary election but did not win any seat.

Table 6
Candidate nomination for CPP and PNC in 2008

Region	No. Constituencies	Nominations		Nominations %		No. Seats	
		CPP	PNC	CPP	PNC	CPP	PNC
Ashanti	39	34	22	87.2	56.4	0	0
Brong-Ahafo	24	20	12	83.3	50.0	0	0
Central	19	18	2	94.7	10.5	0	0
Eastern	28	25	18	89.3	64.3	0	0
Greater Accra	27	26	13	96.3	48.1	0	0
Northern	26	22	21	84.6	80.8	0	0
Upper East	13	12	12	92.3	92.3	0	1
Upper West	10	9	10	90.0	100	0	1
Volta	22	18	9	81.8	40.9	0	0
Western	22	21	8	95.5	36.4	1	0
Total	230	205	127	89.1	55.2	1	2

Table 7
Candidate nomination for CPP and PNC in 2012

Region	No. Constituencies	Nominations		Nominations %		No. Seats	
		CPP	PNC	CPP	PNC	CPP	PNC
Ashanti	47	25	22	53.2	46.8	0	0
Brong Ahafo	29	11	5	37.9	17.2	0	0
Central	23	10	5	43.5	21.7	0	0
Eastern	33	14	10	42.4	30.3	0	0
Greater Accra	34	26	17	76.5	50.0	0	0
Northern	31	16	10	51.6	32.3	0	0
Upper East	15	7	11	46.7	73.3	0	1
Upper West	11	4	8	36.4	72.7	0	0
Volta	26	21	5	80.8	19.2	0	0
Western	26	12	8	46.2	30.8	0	0
Total	275	159	100	57.8	36.4	0	1

Table 8
Candidate nomination for CPP and PNC in 2016

Region	No. Constituencies	Nominations		Nominations %		No. Seats	
		CPP	PNC	CPP	PNC	CPP	PNC
Ashanti	47	35	21	74.5	44.7	0	0
Brong Ahafo	29	25	10	86.2	34.5	0	0
Central	23	21	3	91.3	13.0	0	0
Eastern	33	24	1	72.7	3.0	0	0
Greater Accra	34	30	6	88.2	17.6	0	0
Northern	31	27	10	87.1	32.3	0	0
Upper East	15	10	5	66.7	33.3	0	0
Upper West	11	8	4	72.7	36.4	0	0
Volta	26	19	1	73.1	3.9	0	0
Western	26	21	2	80.8	7.7	0	0
Total	275	220	63	80.0	22.9	0	0

WHY THE CPP AND PNC NOMINATE CANDIDATES FOR PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

Notwithstanding the number of constituencies the CPP and PNC contested in parliamentary elections, they lacked traction. The question that needs to be addressed is why these parties nominated candidates even in constituencies they knew they could not win. According to Daddieh & Bob-Milliar (2016), 'the office of the Member of Parliament is a coveted trophy in Ghana' so it is not uncommon to see more candidates (from both major and minor parties) on the ballot paper vying for parliamentary seats during general elections.

Despite knowing their strength vis-a-vis the major parties, the minor parties nominated candidates in parliamentary elections not only to win the parliamentary seats; other factors also inspired them to campaign nationally. First, the parties competed in parliamentary elections as a way of making their presence felt. One respondent explained: 'when you have a candidate in a constituency, he will run a day-to-day campaign which will make the people know that the party exists' (Abdul Sallam, 2016, personal communication). Another respondent notes: 'if there is no candidate, the party will not be active'; but 'having a candidate in a constituency spices up party activism' (Suleman Seidu, 2016, personal communication).

Furthermore, nominating a candidate is meant to create the impression that the party has strong grassroots support. The CPP secretary for Ashanti Region notes that 'if a party is not able to file more candidates in an election, it means the party is weak.' Thus the CPP nominated as many candidates as possible. As can be seen in Figure 1 and Tables 5–8, they have always nominated more candidates than the PNC in all five of the elections they contested.

Finally, the parties used candidate nomination as a strategy to boost the campaign of their presidential candidate. Given that the presidential candidates are often distant from their constituencies, it becomes expedient for them to count on the popularity of the 'home boys' who are in touch with the grassroots for success in the presidential elections. Since the 1992 Constitution requires parliamentary aspirants to be residents of their constituencies, political parties normally nominate persons who hail from constituencies to contest the parliamentary elections. And given that parliamentary and presidential elections take place simultaneously in Ghana, it is expected that the joint-ticket philosophy would apply in the grassroots campaigns. Thus, the parties expect that as they nominate more candidates in parliamentary elections, their parties will become popular at local level which will eventually benefit them with more votes in presidential elections. Electoral results show that this strategy has not been effective for the presidential candidates of the CPP and PNC. For instance, the

Great Consolidated Popular Party (GCPP), one of the minor parties, nominated fewer than ten parliamentary candidates in the 2012 parliamentary election. Yet, in comparison, the presidential candidate of the GCPP outperformed the CPP and PNC which had each nominated more than 100 candidates. Even though the CPP nominated more candidates than the PPP in the 2016 elections, the PPP outperformed the CPP in the presidential election. Nevertheless, the parties achieved their aim of being visible to the Ghanaian electorate and as a result both the CPP and PNC are considered to be among the leading parties in Ghana.

CONCLUSION

Several studies have established that minor parties generally perform poorly in a majoritarian system such as Ghana's two-party plurality system. Best and Lem (2010) note that the participation of minor parties in America's two-party plurality system is puzzling due to their slim chances of winning elections. Theoretically, the decision by minor parties to compete in Ghana's national elections is problematic, and it is even more surprising that they compete in constituencies where they know they cannot win. Despite professing a similar ideology, there is little cooperation between Ghana's minor parties and their behaviour is inconsistent with existing theories on strategic nomination and interparty coordination.

This accords with Kadima's (2014) observation that party alliance in African countries is rarely based on ideological considerations. Like minor parties in other African countries, inter-party coordination is used sparingly by the CPP and PNC; however, they both collaborate with major parties that have different ideologies, and minor parties have successfully won seats in the few instances where they have cooperated with the larger parties.

Since 2000 the CPP has nominated more candidates than the PNC in parliamentary elections; nonetheless, overall nominations for these parties have declined. Contrary to Ishiyama's expectation, in all five elections both parties nominated more candidates outside their strongholds where they stood little chance of winning. The nomination investment made by these parties has not yielded significant results as far as winning parliamentary seats is concerned. Broadly speaking, neither the CPP nor the PNC was able to win more than four seats out of the several nominations they made in each election.

The candidate nomination behaviour of the minor parties can be understood both within the context of Ghanaian politics and in terms of the aspirations of these parties. To this end, the paper has argued that the electoral behaviour of the minor parties in Ghana deviates from the norm because the political parties use candidate nomination not only as a means of winning parliamentary seats,

but also as a campaign strategy to make their parties visible in the political landscape. Three reasons underlie this strategy; first, by nominating a candidate in a constituency, the minor parties intend to make their presence felt. Second, minor parties use candidate nomination to create the impression that they are strong on the ground. Finally, candidate nomination is used to boost the popularity of their presidential candidates. However, candidate nomination has not been a productive strategy for the CPP and PNC as their performance in the last presidential elections was no better than those parties that nominated fewer parliamentary candidates. Nevertheless, it bears repeating that the parties under consideration nominate candidates not only to win but also to popularise their parties. Overall, this has profound implications for the concept and practice of candidate nomination.

Existing theories conceive of candidate nomination only as a means of winning parliamentary seats, and while this might be so in many political systems, the Ghanaian case suggests that this is not always the case. The inapplicability of the theories is rooted in a narrow conception of candidate nomination. This paper takes a broader view and contends that candidate nomination should be viewed not only as a mechanism for winning parliamentary seats, but also as a means for achieving other socio-cultural and political goals deemed relevant to a political party. The present study thus provides a basis and context for political scientists to conceptualise candidate nomination and electoral strategies. Empirical analyses of party behaviour in plurality systems in both advanced and new democracies will deepen our understanding in this area.

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SOCIAL MEDIA, ELECTIONS AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT:

The 2014 General Election in Mauritius

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ABSTRACT

Mauritius has preferred the ballot to the bullet, earning its status as a democracy to be emulated within Africa. Elections are a regular feature of the Mauritian political landscape, and since it became independent in 1968 the small island has already held ten elections deemed to be free and fair. Another notable feature is the relatively high level of voter turnout, which has hovered at between 70% and 85% for the past ten general elections. With such an impressive scoreboard all should be fine, but unfortunately this is not the case. Over the past few years a number of gnawing democratic deficits have been noted, in particular the advent of dynastic politics, the rise of ethno-politics and the presence of big money in politics. Elections have seen the alternation of power but unfortunately it has been with the same parties and the same leaders. In fact, across the world established politics is in crisis and Mauritius is not exempt from this state of affairs. The objective of this paper is to explore the possibility of doing politics differently through the use of new technology and social media. The paper will explore whether Mauritius has followed the trend of what is now being termed direct democracy, and the possibility for a new kind of political engagement and in the process the construction of a new political discourse.

Keywords: social media, elections, democratic consolidation, political engagement and political renewal

INTRODUCTION

There is a growing body of literature on the role and impact that new and social media are having on elections. This seems to be even more visible in countries where traditional media are either under the control of the state (national television) or severely restricted in their capacity to be independent and autonomous (private media). In a recently released publication, Schiffrin (2017) speaks about media capture by both the state and business interests.

Over the last decade there has been an accelerated use of new media, which has ushered in the phenomenon of social media through the popularisation of platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram and You Tube. The study of media effects has a clear evolution from the hapless and a helpless audience (Lasswell 1927; Lippmann 1922) to the limited effects theory (Klapper 1960; Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet 1944). The effects theory was subsequently inverted from: what does the media do to people, to what do people do with the media – the uses and gratifications theory (Blumler & Katz 1974). Studies on the effect of new media and particularly digital technologies are only just beginning to emerge (Bryant & Thompson 2002). Media consumers are no longer called simply an audience but are now users and producers, heralding a new era of active consumption and distribution. This is in turn creating an ecosystem where new relationships and meanings are emanating from the confluence between media, politics and the audience.

Politics and the media have always had a keen interest in each other and represent two pillars through which ideological influence and control are exercised (Herman & Chomsky 1988). Patterns of ownership have become more defined by power than by public service and/or profit (Schiffrin 2017). Elections are often considered an important test case between media and politics, between media capture and media independence.

This article will explore the case of Mauritius, a country that has espoused the ballot and not the bullet culture (Bunwaree & Kasenally 2005), where elections have been classified as free and fair by international observers, where voter turnout ranks high and where the media is often celebrated for its diversity.

The case of the 2014 general election will be analysed as the latter was the first election in Mauritius in which social media was used as a means of political engagement by political parties. What type of political messages were generated, the quality of the political discourse and the response from the citizen/user will be analysed. The post-2014 general election period will also be studied to consider whether the type and nature of political engagement has evolved, and if so for what purpose.

SETTING THE SCENE: MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY IN MAURITIUS

As mentioned earlier, Mauritius has nurtured a tradition of holding regular elections every five years. It tops the democratic league in Africa as a 'full democracy' (EIU Report 2016), one where political rights and civil liberties attain a combined score of 1.5 (Freedom House 2016) and where the media is considered to be relatively free.

Politics and the media have an important historical link in Mauritius. In fact, the written media in Mauritius spans some 250 years and is one of the most established institutions in the southern hemisphere. The media, and especially the written media, played a significant role in the political emancipation of the Indo-Mauritians. As early as 1832 when the island was under French rule the first newspaper appeared. *Le Cerneen* was essentially used to safeguard the interests of the Franco-Mauritian elites and those closely associated with them. The visit of Mahatma Gandhi in 1901 would be a turning point for Indo-Mauritians, who were strongly urged to educate themselves and become politically mobilised. A number of Hindi and other oriental language newspapers would subsequently appear and were used as an important tool for political advocacy among the Indo-Mauritians.

The battle for independence was to a large extent fought in the columns of the newspapers. A number of pro-independence titles appeared, such as *L'Express* which would give the emerging middle class a greater role in the running of the country. This was achieved to a limited extent in 1947 through the formalisation of a new Constitution that increased the number of eligible voters from 11 000 to 72 000 and in the process modestly increased the political clout of the Indo-Mauritians. The extension of the franchise was advocated by a relatively young party, the Mauritius Labour Party (MLP), which had a sympathetic hearing in the pro-independence newspapers. As Mauritius headed towards independence and ultimately became independent in 1968 there was a clear split in the population, with 44% voting against independence. This was mirrored in the different newspapers that supported either pro- or anti-independence movements. It is thus interesting to note the role that an important section of the written press played in the political awakening and ultimate emancipation of the Mauritian citizenry. Another point worth reflecting on was the capacity of the written media to campaign for a common cause, that is the independence of Mauritius.

Post-Independence: The Media, Friend or Foe?

The post-independence period is important in the life of any new nation. This was especially so for Mauritius as the country was fragmented following the split views

on independence. Under the leadership of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam (SSR) immediately after independence, this was seen as an opportunity to federate the divided nation and appeal to a sense of unity. In fact, he was commended for his ability to steer the small island 'from a potentially explosive racial hothouse into a bustling, prosperous, politically hectic sustainable democracy' (Rotberg 2003). The immediate post-independence period saw the written press (especially those that had a direct hand in the pro-independence movement) deliberately distance itself from the ruling party, with the aim of creating a free and independent media (Paroomal 2008).

The euphoria of this post-independence time was relatively short-lived with the advent of a young political party that grew from the May 1968 student protests and espoused Marxist ideology – the Mouvement Militant Mauricien (MMM). Matters were further aggravated with the postponement of the first post-independence general election due in 1972. In 1971, SSR promulgated the Public Order Act (this has subsequently been replaced by the Public Gathering Act of 1991) aimed at clamping down on political and media freedoms. This period lasted until December 1976 when the long-expected general election was held. The written media suffered tremendous censorship as it was branded pro-opposition by the ruling party. Ironically, the very press that had been supportive of the independence movement were viewed as troublemakers just six years after independence. This at times oppositional not to say antagonistic approach would repeat itself a couple of times, in 1984 with the Newspapers and Periodicals Bill¹ and again in the mid-2000s, with the repeated threat from government to regulate the press through some form of statutory regulation.

Table 1 below lists some of the current legislation governing the media in Mauritius. Unlike the written media (which has no regulatory body or specific law), broadcast media falls under the MBC Act (1982) and the IBA Act (2000). It is, however, important to note that within the Mauritian Criminal Code issues pertaining to sedition, defamation and publishing false news are clearly listed as punishable offences. The Official Secrets Act of 1972, which is part of the island's colonial legacy, also remains in force.

1 This bill required a significant financial guarantee from any editor for setting up and running a newspaper. It was finally abandoned after sustained protest from the media corps.

Table 1
Current Legislation Defining the Mauritian Media Landscape

Criminal Code Article 299 - Publishing false news	'where the offence is committed by means of any writing, newspaper, pamphlet or printed matter or by any means other than spoken words, by a fine which shall not be less than 20,000 rupees and not more than 50,000 rupees and imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year '
Criminal Code Article 288 - Interpretation of defamation	Any person who, by any of the means specified in section 206 (<i>by any writing, newspaper, pamphlet or other printed matter, or by any drawing, engraving, picture, emblem or image, sold or distributed or put up for sale or exhibited in any public place or meeting</i>), is guilty of defamation shall be liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year and a fine not exceeding 5,000 rupees.
Article 202: Publishing matter without description of author	... liable to a fine not exceeding 10,000 rupees and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months. ... any copies seized shall be forfeited.
Article 282: Stirring up racial hatred	For the author of hate speech, ..., liable to a fine not exceeding 25,000 rupees and penal servitude for a term not exceeding ten years. For publisher ... liable to a fine not exceeding 25,000 rupees and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years

Article 283 : Sedition	be liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year and a fine not exceeding 20,000 rupees
Article 284 Inciting to disobedience or resistance to law	liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year, and a fine not exceeding 2,000 rupees.
Art.287 Suspending publication of newspaper containing seditious publication	liable to a fine not exceeding 10,000 rupees and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year.
Article 296 Insult	where the offence is committed by means of any written or printed matter, drawing, picture, emblem or image, imprisonment for a term not exceeding three months and a fine not exceeding 10,000 rupees
National Assembly (Privileges, Immunities and Powers) Act	Section 6: Contempt of National Assembly. Subsection (1) (n) publishing any defamatory statement or writing upon the Assembly or any committee, or upon any member touching, or relating to, his character or conduct as a member and with regards to actions performed or words uttered by him in the Assembly.
Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) Act of 2000	Revocation and suspension of licence Any person who commits an offence shall, on conviction, be liable to a fine not exceeding 100,000 rupees and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years
The Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation Act of 1982	Any person who contravenes this Act or any regulations made under it shall commit an offence and shall, on conviction, be liable to a fine not exceeding 2,000 rupees and to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years

Official Secrets Act of 1972	liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months/liable to imprisonment for a term of not less than one month and not more than 12 months together with a fine not exceeding 2,000 rupees,/liable to penal servitude for a term not exceeding 15 years (depending on offence)
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Source: Compiled from Mauritian Laws

MEDIA DIVERSITY AND THE DEMOCRATISATION OF INFORMATION

A number of media tracking institutions (see FES Media Africa, Freedom House and IREX) commend Mauritius for the diversity of its media titles. Despite the presence of defamation and libel within the Mauritian Criminal Code most journalists are relatively free to report on a range of issues. Elections are important moments in the lives of all citizens and Mauritian are no different. Written media has had a presence of over 250 years on the island, whereas broadcast media (television and radio) is relatively new. Public, not to say state media has been available since the mid-1960s and private commercial radio stations since 2002. Unfortunately no private television station exists on the island, although there are a number of web TVs that have started up in the last three years. For many the advent of private commercial radio stations has been a key factor in the democratisation of information and radio (as in many parts of the world) remains one of the most accessible and popular forms of communication. The use of Creole rather than French as the main language of communication ensures that its outreach has more impact. The different radio programmes on offer are formatted to privilege audience phone-ins and other chat shows that deal with the different social, economic and political issues present on the island.

As mentioned earlier, Mauritians have a particular appetite for politics which constitutes a regular feature of news, analysis and commentary in both written and broadcast media. However, the democratisation of access to information and communication space has not always ensured the quality of political commentary and debate – the ever-present dilemma of quality versus quantity. We shall come back to the issue of political commentary when we discuss the nature and tone of the political conversation(s) that characterised the 2014 general election.

Table 2 outlines the evolution of the communication/media landscape in relation to the ten general elections held in Mauritius after independence.

Table 2
Post-Independence General Elections and Media Landscape

General Election	Means of Media / Communication
1976	Post Public Order Act (1971), written media, state television and radio The first time that the MMM fielded candidates for an election The only time that elections would be contested as a three-corner fight; subsequently all elections would be contested as a pre-election coalition
1982	Written media, state television and radio Abuse of state media by incumbent The first 60-0, where the opposition party won all seats
1983	Written media, state television and radio Abuse of state media by incumbent The newly created MSM (following the fragmentation of the MMM) contests the election for the first time in coalition with the MPL and PMSD
1987	In 1984 an attempt to pass the Newspapers and Periodical Bill was resisted by media professionals Written media, state television and radio Abuse of state media by incumbent
1991	Written media, state television and radio Abuse of state media by incumbent
1995	Mauritius is now a republic following the amendment to the Constitution in 1991 Written media, state television and radio Abuse of state media by incumbent The second 60-0 result, where the opposition party wins all 60 seats
2000	Written media, state television and radio Abuse of state media by incumbent
2005	The IBA Act (2000) provides for the setting up of private commercial radio stations Three private commercial radios stations have been in operation since 2002 Written media, state television and radio Abuse of state media by incumbent
2010	Written media, private commercial radios and state media and radio Abuse of state media by incumbent
2014	New and social media Written media, Web TV, private commercial radios and state media and radio Abuse of state media by incumbent

Table 2 offers an overview of how the post-independence general elections have been influenced by the evolving media landscape. The systematic abuse of the national broadcaster (the MBC) by incumbents, which intensified during election campaigns, has been regularly documented by domestic observers as well as International Observation Missions (see EISA Election Observation Report 2010 and AU Election Observation Report 2014). Despite its often biased treatment and coverage of political news, the MBC, as the national/state broadcaster, is required to provide airtime to all registered political parties as part of the Political Electoral Broadcast (PEB) during each electoral campaign. Airtime is based on two criteria, namely the number of seats held in the outgoing parliament and the number of candidates fielded (Kasenally 2009). Private commercial radio stations had been operating for nearly eight years, and by 2010 their presence and impact were tangible. This prompted the IBA to produce a 'Political Broadcasts and Party Election Broadcasts General Guidelines for Private and Public Broadcasters: General Elections 2010', prefaced with the instruction: 'Broadcasting licensees shall ensure that these Guidelines are strictly adhered to by their employees and agents, and, wherever applicable, their interviewees'.

ELECTORAL CAMPAIGNS, NEW AND SOCIAL MEDIA: FORCE FOR CHANGE OR A MERE FLASH IN THE PAN?

International events in the past decade bear witness to the rise of social media. The Iranian protest against the re-election of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in 2009, the Red Shirt uprising in Thailand in 2010 (Shirky 2010), the Arab Spring in early 2011 (Carlisle & Patton 2013), the 'Y'en a Marre' youth protestation in Senegal (2011) and the 'Umbrella Movement' in Hong Kong (2014) are all testimony that social media has not only changed ordinary citizens' lives but is also the main force behind the drive to change the political affairs of a particular country. Social media does not only impact the lives of people in authoritarian regimes, it is now being used as a major tool in political communication in democracies. This has been made possible due to the 'free public space of the internet' (Castells 2013).

Barack Obama's electoral campaign for the United States (US) presidential election in 2008 is where this seems to have started. Parallels were even drawn between President Barack Obama's innovative use of the Internet in 2008 and President John F. Kennedy's pioneering use of television in the 1960 US presidential race (Aronson 2011). Facebook was used intensively for the first time 'to obtain campaign information and/or share campaign news with others, exchange their political views and express support for a candidate' (Kushin & Yamamoto 2010). By using interactive Web 2.0 tools, Obama's campaign changed the way politicians organise supporters, advertise to voters, communicate with them, and defend

themselves against criticism (Miller 2008). Obama, as the presidential candidate, was very active on social media platforms, gathering around five million supporters online. By November 2008, Obama had nearly 2.4 million Facebook supporters, compared to his opponent, John McCain's 640 000. On Twitter, Obama had over 11 000 followers and McCain had fewer than 5 000 (Hwang 2016).

The recent 2016 U.S election once again highlighted the role of social media during electoral campaigns in America. Donald Trump's substantial social media usage, coupled with his pompous personality, helped keep him in the limelight (Hwang 2016). Bernie Sanders' digital campaign is also fascinating because it was mostly driven by his supporters. The hashtag campaign #FeelTheBern was created by Sanders' Twitter followers and was extensively used to promote his policies, and to demonstrate and amass support for him.

As the use of smartphones rose globally, that of social media also increased. It is thus especially interesting to look at the impact of social media in non-Western countries where access to smartphones and the Internet has gradually become easier. Three countries stand out as interesting: India (with a population of over 1 billion and often called the world's biggest democracy), Nigeria (Africa's most populous country and riddled with corruption) and Ghana (one of Africa's most stable democracies). These three countries offer significant insights into the use and impact of new and social media during their most recent elections.

India's 2.0 Elections: The Digital Era

The Indian general election of 2014 was the longest campaign in the country's history, with the highest recorded voter turnout (Schedule of Elections 2014). This election was also unique because of the way social media was used to reach out to voters (Biswas et al. 2014). Price (2015) speaks about the arsenal of modern technologies used by Modi to make his campaign disruptive and innovative.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which became the first party since 1984 to win an absolute majority in India's parliament, engaged citizen supporters in the party's successful social media campaign (Chadha & Guha 2016). The team of prime ministerial candidate Narendra Modi used an aggressive social media strategy while campaigning, tweeting and updating Facebook users multiple times per day. By the time he was sworn in as Prime Minister, Modi had more than 16 million 'likes' on his Facebook page, the second most for any politician in the world, and he was the sixth most-followed world leader on Twitter (Ali 2014). YouTube videos, translated into several local languages, were also uploaded regularly with Modi emphasising key issues that concerned the population (Chadha & Guha 2016).

Digital media itself was used unconventionally by the BJP for campaigning purposes during the 2014 Indian election. The BJP, along with the Citizens for

Accountable Governance, organised an innovative campaign called 'Chai Pe Charcha' (Hindi phrase for discussion over tea). This enabled Modi, as the prime ministerial candidate, to interact with people at tea stalls in predetermined places using a combination of satellite, DTH, internet and mobile. The programme was relayed to 1,000 tea stalls in 300 cities across the country (Ali 2014, Price 2015). There were also virtual rallies where Modi simultaneously addressed large numbers of voters in 3D using hologram technology. This helped him reach parts of India where he was unknown (Price 2015).

Nigeria's 2014 Electoral Campaign

The election of Muhammadu Buhari as President of Nigeria has been hailed internationally as a historic transfer of power for Africa's most populous nation. It was the first in which a sitting president was defeated (Eddings 2015). At a time when the incumbent president was seen as the enemy of democracy for having suppressed the free circulation of newspapers (Olowojolu 2016), social media came to the fore as the driving force of Buhari's campaign between March and April 2015. The change message of Buhari's party, the All Progressives Congress' (APC), was compelling and captivated Nigerians throughout the campaign (Egbunike 2015).

Social media was used by candidates and their parties to disseminate information and to solicit support and sympathy from the population (Aduloju 2016). Hashtags of trending events were created on Facebook and Twitter for easy access to news and information (Aduloju 2016). News agencies, civil society and the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), for example, made use of the hashtag #NigeriaDecides to categorise and share information pertaining to the election (Aduloju 2016). INEC also used the opportunity to develop its communication channels and engage with citizens through Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. Its situation room was established with the aim of enabling people to contact the organisation directly to report misconduct and concerns about the poll (Bartlett et al. 2015).

Over the period of 18 March–22 April 2015, researchers collected 13.6 million tweets posted by 1.38 million unique users associated with the Nigerian Presidential and State elections. Data (posts and interactions) was also collected from 29 election relevant public pages on Facebook (Bartlett et al. 2015). Twitter was found to be ten times more active over the election period than at 'normal' times; 12.4 million tweets were generated about the elections over that period (Bartlett et al. 2015).

Sunday Dare, chief of staff and media adviser to the head of Buhari's political party, best summarised the role of social media during the electoral campaign:

I think this election was decided, dominated and directed by social media. The power of social media came out for this country. Social media played a central role as a watchdog in keeping the integrity of the process. Within minutes of votes being counted at a polling unit, the results were all over social media. Ordinary people with Excel sheets were doing tallies. At the end of the day when it was announced officially, the results matched. So social media were central because of the immediacy, because it was in the hands of so many citizens who were involved, who were interested. In a way, social media seized the day from the legacy media. You had almost everyone depending on social media for the breaking news. Social media came alive for us this time.

Dare 2015

#GhanaDecides

Ghana's 2016 election was considered to be one of the most fascinating elections in its history, as it was the first time that the incumbent president had failed to win a second term (Opara 2017), leading to the win of Nana Akufo-Addo.

Realising the effectiveness of the Nigerian social media electoral campaigns, Nana Akufo-Addo and his team hired the same group that had elected Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari and the APC into power with their aggressive use of social media (Opara 2017). 'Change' banners flooded social media. With the hashtags #Knowyourpresident, and #ChangeIsComing, his campaign strategists portrayed him in a way that appealed to everyone (Opara 2017). The team of the incumbent, John Mahama, also made full use of social media as a campaign tool. They regularly uploaded drone-filmed videos to show the infrastructural works being done across the country; John Mahama himself personally tweeted and engaged with his followers throughout the campaign (Opara 2017). Social media was also used by the Electoral Commission as a means to deliver an effective voter education campaign with a pertinent video education series on the voting and electoral processes, regularly sharing updates on its Twitter and Facebook (Penplusbytes 2017).

What is indeed undeniably striking about Ghana's 2016 election is the way social media has been widely used to ensure a safe and democratic electoral process. Penplusbytes, a non-governmental organisation committed to using new technologies to strengthen governance, developed several platforms to safeguard the holding of a free and fair election. By using software programmed with keywords to track what Ghanaians were posting online during the polling, the organisation wanted to record some of the key issues on the streets (Hairsine, 2016).

The team could then use such data to detect potential irregularities or violence and pass these incidents on to the appropriate authorities (Hairsine 2016).

The Youth Dividend

All of the electoral campaigns referred to above took place at crucial times where there was an accelerated use of the Internet and smartphones. Social media had already been present during past elections, but it had been used sparingly. Another feature seems to connect these three countries, that is the presence of a sizeable youth segment.

Social media can be a game-changing feature in the political landscape because it has the ability to increase political participation among young voters not typically involved in politics (Aronson 2012). The popularity of social media sites like YouTube, Facebook and Twitter, especially among the younger generation, provides a highly visible environment for candidates to promote themselves and interact with voters (Vitak et al. 2009). In his 2008 campaign, Obama understood the potential success of social media strategies with the youth. This is why he specifically hired 'Facebook co-founder Chris Hughes to revolutionize his new media campaign and provide expertise of the various social networking platforms that resonated with the millennial generation that had always been technologically connected' (Stelter 2008, p.6).

In India, according to the Election Commission, there was an increase of 100 million voters for the 2014 general election, compared to the previous general election in 2009. Urban India had 78 million social media users in June 2013 and this number rose to 91 million by December 2013, according to the Internet & Mobile Association of India's report (IAMAI Annual Report 2015). Indian voters were likely to access the Internet with ease, but social media use levels were especially high among the millions of citizens between the ages of 18 and 23 who became eligible to vote for the first time (Singh 2016). The BJP thus understood the need to reach out to first-time voters who represented a sizeable segment of the youth population.

'We saw a trend, we read this trend, where the youth of the country were embracing social media as their first tool when they started using the internet, and we made sure our presence was there', said Arvind Gupta, who as head of BJP's IT division led the party's social media campaign (Ali 2014). Modi himself reached out through Twitter to the young, appealing to what the youth were looking for: jobs, security and the use of technology.

In Ghana, around 7.9 million people had access to the Internet and 3.5 million Ghanaians, out of a population of 28 million, were active on Facebook in 2016 (internetworldstats.com); 34% of the Facebook users in Ghana were between the

ages of 25 and 35, with 41% between 18 to 24 years of age (Penplusbytes Report 2016). Both parties, understanding that their audiences were mainly the youth, emphasised messages targeted at this demographic. For example, incumbent President Mahama encouraged young citizens to vote and not to resort to violence on polling day. Through social media Akufo-Addo invited youngsters to campaign rallies, and also asked them to think about their country's future before casting their votes.

In Nigeria, 51% of the population was using the Internet around election time (Barlett et al. 2015). 'Most individuals also own a personal mobile phone (83%) with half of those who do not reporting that they have access to a mobile phone owned by someone else (55.1%)' (Udoka 2015). 'Home Internet access also increased sharply [...] 95.7% of weekly Internet users say they accessed the Web using a mobile device in the past week.' (Udoka 2015). With these figures, it is certain that social media played a crucial role during the election period and led to a high level of political participation from the young demographic. This is also confirmed by personal mobile ownership rates across age groups being the highest among those aged 25 to 34 (89.3%) (Udoka 2015). Developing a social media strategy specifically for election campaigning was thus deemed as an intelligent move. Both front running parties used 'Google Hangouts', in which candidates could answer the questions of young Nigerians (Barlett et al. 2015).

THE 2014 MAURITIAN GENERAL ELECTION: HARNESSING THE DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

The 2014 general election came a year ahead of its scheduled time, precipitated by a pre-coalition deal between the MLP and MMM. Predicted as a clear victory by its two leaders, Navin Ramgoolam and Paul Berenger respectively, it saw the win of the cobbled coalition led by the former Prime Minister and Former President, Anerood Jugnauth. The reasons for the spectacular defeat of the MLP–MMM coalition is beyond the scope of this article but can be attributed to a combination of factors. These include an uninterrupted nine years in power for Ramgoolam (2005–2014), a series of high profile scandals, the non-functioning of the Legislative Assembly for several months in 2014, and a rushed proposal around a Second Republic.

For the first time, new and social media were used by all the political parties – mainstream, small, as well as newcomers. This is not surprising as Mauritius boasts an important digital footprint with some 1.65 million mobile phones, 800,000 Internet users and 630,000 Facebook users (Internet World Statistics 2017) in a population of 1.3 million.

Despite this digital dividend there does not seem to be a strategic approach to social media and new technology by Mauritian political parties, as there is in India, Nigeria or Ghana. In most cases what could be observed was that traditional political messages such as political leaders' addresses, public meetings and other political slogans were being posted. What was clearly absent was a strategy to engage social media users around critical and crucial ideas. However, what can be viewed as a master stroke was a video production made by Alliance Lepep entitled 'Vire Mam'.² 'Vire Mam' was short video that juxtaposed the leaders of MLP and MMM, Navin Ramgoolam and Paul Berenger, vowing over the past few years never to enter into political deal. This short clip was viewed more than 500,000 times. This is quite consequential for a population of 1.3 million of which 937,000 were registered voters (Electoral Commission Office 2015).

WHAT THE DATA SHOWS

A content analysis of the Facebook pages and Youtube channels of a selected set of mainstream and small political parties covered one month of campaign prior to the day of the general election, 10 December 2014. Facebook and Youtube were selected as the two social media platforms due to their popularity among Mauritian users (see Alexa 2017).

The selected political parties were as follows: the two contending coalition parties, MLP and MMM, and another led by Anerood Jugnauth popularly known as Alliance Lepep. Three small parties were also included in the sample; Rezistans ek Alternativ, Lalit and Ensam Nu Kapav. It was also judged wise to include the Facebook pages of the different political leaders of the two coalition parties. This reflects a worldwide trend of political leaders existing and growing beyond the established boundaries of their parties.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

With the exception of the Lalit party all political parties included in the sample created their Facebook and Youtube presence in 2014. They became active with the official announcement of the date of the general election. The use of social media as a tool of communication was most visible among the opposition parties, that is Alliance Lepep and the smaller political parties. This can be explained by the fact that the incumbent's abuse of the state broadcaster, the MBC, caused opposition parties to resort to other forms of communication. As for the smaller parties, social media is a freely accessible and cheap form of communication.

2 In Creole this means turn-around people.

Type of Content – Old Wine in New Bottles

Content is king, as the saying goes. Most of the content assessed during the one-month time frame was what can be termed traditional fare, that is invitations to attend public meetings, clips and extracts of the speeches of different political leaders, reposting of existing interviews, and other content produced by traditional media. There was very little content produced specifically for social media with the exception of the small political party Lalit. They had produced a series of short videos prior to the general election, on a number of issues such as the role of the judiciary, the dangers of a second republic, and the impact of big money on elections. It was indeed disappointing to see the absence of any engagement between the political parties and their leaders with users of social media. This was in fact a one-way communication, merely posting traditional political messages.

Another noticeable trend was the tone of the content. There was a negative tone in most of the content analysed, with an occasional exception among the smaller parties. This was most visible in the content posted on the Facebook page of Alliance Lepep. Their main objective was to discredit the Ramgoolam/Berenger duo, highlight the numerous inconsistencies in their ideas and demonstrate how unholy their relationship was.

Self Promotion: Vote for Me and my Party

An election is an important moment in the lives of voters. It is not only about the right to vote but also about the ability to engage in a meaningful discussion on what type of society one wishes to live in. In Mauritius elections are held regularly every five years and voters' turnout has been relatively high, hovering at between 70–85% for the last ten general elections. However, the question which should be asked is the manner in which political parties and their respective leaders interact and engage with voters.

Like most of the previous elections, the 2014 general election had very little constructive exchange of ideas. For example, all political parties prepare and publicise their election manifestos. In principle, this is deemed an important document that maps out the vision of political parties for the next five years and by its very nature should be an engaging exercise. It would no doubt have been a worthwhile exercise to engage social media users, and by extension voters, around a genuine politics of ideas using their electoral manifestos.

Social media was used mainly by the parties to promote themselves and their candidates. Marketing political events was the other recurrent trend. For the mainstream coalition parties' pages and the profiles and pages of the different leaders of the two coalition parties, their events marketing concerned

only meetings and congresses. However, the small parties had different contents promoting their door-to-door activities or the media interventions in which they participated. Besides marketing political events, another visible trend was that of marketing political leaders. For certain parties and coalitions, it was clear that their posts were promoting their leaders as the main protagonists. This led to a very leader-centric campaign in terms of which the focus was on the person rather than on the policies the party had to propose.

Quality of Comments

Feedback is an essential feature of all part of communication. A fair portion of the literature refers to the ability of new technology and social media to create a 'new republic of ideas' (Hind 2012) or a 'free public space of the internet' (Castells 2013, p. 15). The notion of e-democracies was supposed to herald a new form of e-advocacy and e-activism. However, the results have not always been conclusive as the type and quality of engagement varies according to country context.

In the case of the Mauritian general election in 2014 most of the Facebook posts and YouTube videos consisted of petty, shallow, and at times derogatory comments largely directed at leaders of specific parties. Another trend was a high level of passivity within the comments. In fact, the respondent only expressed whether he or she liked the post, or agreed with it. Very often only a thumbs-up emoticon was used to express this sentiment. Other comments dealt with the certainty of winning by parties and/or coalitions. Just like the absence of constructive content previously mentioned, most of these comments were not constructive.

Absence of Social Media Strategy

Unlike elections in the other countries referred to, the 2014 Mauritian general election did not have a planned social media strategy. Social media was used on an ad hoc and random manner and most political parties and leaders felt that they could simply ride on the popularity of such platforms. As mentioned earlier, content was not specifically devised for social media interaction and engagement, but on the contrary the traditional fare was just repackaged and posted.

Facebook and to a lesser extent Youtube were the only two social platforms used, and though Twitter is a popular platform for political engagement it was ignored. This can to a certain extent be explained by the relatively low level of following at around 4% (StatCounter, 2017). In other countries – Ghana (#ghanadecides), Nigeria (#nigeriavotes) and more recently in Kenya (#kenyaelections) – popular hashtags were generated by political parties, political

leaders, and civil society groups to whip up interest and engagement among citizens. In the case of Mauritius, none of the political leaders from the mainstream political parties even have a Twitter account.

Another issue worth flagging is the non-digital presence of the Mauritian Electoral Commission Office. Unlike other Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) across Africa, the Mauritian EMB has a very timid digital footprint with a very basic website that is essentially informative by nature. In a number of African countries, namely Kenya, Ghana, Malawi and Zimbabwe, EMBs have associated themselves with the GoToVote initiative (<https://gottovote.cc>) to ensure that voter registration, polling and counting are done in an interactive and engaged manner. It is quite surprising to note that despite the existing digital dividend that Mauritius possesses this has not been better exploited to create a politically engaged and interactive citizenry.

THE STATUS OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT AFTER THE 2014 GENERAL ELECTION

The ruling party Alliance Lepep is currently at mid-mandate and has already lost one of its partners, the Parti Mauricien Socialiste Democrate (PMSD) whose leader, Xavier Luc Duval, was the Deputy Prime Minister and second in cabinet hierarchy. Another notable feature is that Sir Anerood Jugnauth stepped down as Prime Minister at the end of January 2017 and handed over power to his son Pravind Jugnauth. This new political landscape was coupled with a difficult economic conjuncture and a number social problems, such as the alarming spread of drugs within the country and the rise in poverty. These are challenging the governance structure of the island. Moreover this state of affairs has triggered the demand for political renewal and the need for ethical political leadership among certain segments of civil society. A number of these initiatives have used the presence of social media, particularly Facebook, to generate a community of followers. The most visible of these are as follows: Nou Republik (New Republic), Ennsellepep (One Nation), Mauritius Society Renewal, and Young Thinkers Mauritius. A quick overview of these different entities is that they wish to promote an 'intelligent and constructive debate' with citizens and especially with the younger generation. At the moment it is still too early to predict their impact as they are all relatively new to social media.

What about the traditional mainstream parties? Has it been business as usual? Facebook continues to remain their most used and preferred social media platform, possibly because it is the most popular, or because it is a low-maintenance platform allowing for posting traditional fare. One noticeable feature is that the digital presence of all the mainstream political parties has increased

considerably following the 2014 general election. However, upon closer scrutiny the quality of engagement has not really improved as Facebook remains essentially a platform for posting their conventional party messages, such as what the leader has to say, door-to-door canvassing, and press conferences. However, it is worth mentioning the case of Roshi Badhain, who used to be a minister in the Alliance Lepep government and resigned shortly after Pravind Jugnauth was passed the prime minister's baton by his father. He contends that his main grievance is the father-son deal which was never endorsed by popular mandate. Badhain created a new political party with the tagline 'be the change you want to see in Mauritius'. His main recruitment strategy is through Facebook and he is currently the political leader with the highest number of online followers. Although Badhain uses conventional posting mechanisms, he differs from the other political leaders by his relative youth and the way in which he uses his Facebook page to voice his own opinion, clarify certain information, and even share snippets of his personal life which make him likeable and contribute to his popularity.

Table 3 provides an overview of the key political parties and their respective political leaders Facebook footprint.

Table 3
Facebook Footprint: Political Party and Leader

Political Party	Political Leader
MSM 60,000 followers	Pravind Jugnauth 36,000 followers
Reform Party 54,000 followers	Roshi Badhain 135,000 followers
Mauritius Labour Party 31,000	Navin Ramgoolam 45,000
PMSD 28,000	Xavier Luc Duval 57,000
MMM 15,000	Paul Berenger 15,000

CONCLUSION

This discussion on social media, elections and political engagement is important for the future of Mauritian democracy and the manner in which politics will be dispensed in the future. Mauritius will celebrate 50 years of independence in 2018, a period which has witnessed a number of democratic deficits namely the

rise of ethno-politics, constant pre-electoral alliances and coalitions, the advent of dynastic politics, a class of ailing political leaders and the influence of big money in politics (Kasenally 2011). There seems to be an increasingly audible call for change, renewal, and new political blood, mostly on social media platforms such as Facebook. In fact, the impact so far of social media and more specifically Facebook is that political parties and their leaders want a slice of this medium of communication – they know it is popular especially among the young and by associating this provides them with a sense of modernity and connectivity. Unfortunately, the content analysis conducted during 2014 general election indicated that most of them used a conventional and non-engaging method of communication, the old wine in new bottle approach.

Therefore to ensure a more constructive approach to using social media for political engagement, and in the process crafting a new political discourse, the following might be relevant:

- Political parties must engage in a serious and structured social media strategy. It will not be meaningful nor generate quality political dialogue and engagement if they continue to use only traditional content. It might also be wise to start using other social media platforms such as Twitter. Case examples in other countries might provide some good examples.
- There is a dire need for investing in political literacy for citizens. The Mauritian citizen votes but does not know why he or she does so. A politically literate voter will trigger a change in political culture in which the business-as-usual approach will no longer be tolerated.
- Greater synergy between traditional and new media. The aim is to ensure that content and exchange is quality driven and instead of mudslinging, character assassination, and cheap politics will consist of a genuine and constructive community of ideas. Here it is important that the media, both traditional and new, up the ante and improve the quality of political discourse.
- Elections and its outcomes concern EMBs. EMBs in a number of African countries are now part of the new media and technology ecosystem. It is imperative that the Mauritian EMB be part of the conversation around social media and also that it continues to engage with citizens voters, not only during elections but also between elections.

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MOZAMBIQUE'S 2014 ELECTIONS: *A Repeat of Misconduct, Political Tension and Frelimo Dominance*

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ABSTRACT

The cease-fire that ended the military hostilities between government and Renamo paved the way for Mozambique's fifth general elections on 14 October 2014. Frelimo consolidated its dominant position in an election underpinned by fraud and misconduct at the polling stations. There was an imbalance of power with Frelimo enjoying better organisation and patronage networks, control of the police and media, and secrecy in the National Electoral Commission (CNE), including altering results. This imbalance is shaped partly by the system of party dominance but also by the weakness of opposition parties who failed to use existing systems. Renamo's dispute of the electoral results and its endeavour to engage in dialogue with the government as a remedy for the alleged fraud reflects the inadequacy of Mozambique's elections as the mechanism for a political settlement. This sets the agenda for the next electoral cycle which, in procedural terms, will mirror previous elections.

Keywords: Frelimo, Renamo, MDM, elections, politics.

POLITICS BEFORE THE ELECTIONS

The electoral sequence in Mozambique is that local government elections take place the year before the general elections. Thus local government elections were held in November 2013, prior to the October 2014 general elections. Renamo, the former rebel movement and the biggest opposition party, boycotted the November 2013 local elections alleging that there were neither material nor legal conditions for these elections. As part of the boycott, Renamo did not take up its two seats in the National Electoral Commission (CNE).

Despite this boycott, local elections were held amidst violent conflict. There were press reports of Renamo attacks on police officers, for example on 22 April 2013 there was a clash between the riot police (FIR) and Renamo fighters in Maringwe – the Renamo stronghold in the central province of Sofala – resulting in the death of 13 FIR officers (da Silva, 2011). On April 4, 2013 Renamo attacked a FIR camp in Muxungue killing four FIR officers (Frades, 2013) in an attempt to force Frelimo to make concessions on political arrangements.

The violence escalated with government forces bombing the Renamo central base in the Satungira hills in the Gorongosa district (Sofala province). Renamo stopped traffic on the only road linking the south to the rest of the country and even military convoys were unable to guarantee safe escort for civilian cars on this route. Hundreds of lives were lost, hundreds cars burnt and the fear of nationwide civil war threatened not only the electoral process but also the stability of the country. The electoral census took place during this conflict and the electoral authorities needed a special plan to register potential voters in the Save river and Muxungue regions, the areas affected by the conflict. The president of Renamo, Afonso Dhlakama, who was hiding in the Satungira hills, needed an extension of the registration period in order to register.

Though Frelimo enjoyed a two-thirds majority at the time, government and Renamo agreed to embark on a dialogue which began on 2 May 2013. Renamo had two major issues for discussion: a review of the electoral legislation, and parity of representation in the electoral bodies, namely the CNE, the National Electoral Commission, and the Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration (STAE). After 50 rounds of talks, government conceded on the electoral legislation with Parliament reviewing laws to accommodate Renamo demands. These included allowing Renamo to appoint deputy directors at all levels of the STAE, from the headquarters in Maputo to district level; and in addition the three main parties, namely Frelimo, Renamo and the MDM, had the right to appoint scrutineers (*membros da mesa da assembleia de voto*, or MMV) at each polling station, who were paid by the state. However, government did not concede on parity within the CNE.

In exchange, Renamo would hand in its military personnel, partly to be integrated into the national army and partly to be disarmed and reintegrated into civilian life. In the cease-fire agreement signed on 5 September 2014 between President Armando Guebuza and Dhlakama, an international team for the observation of the cessation of military hostilities (*Equipa Militar de Observadores da Cessação das Hostilidades Militares*, or EMOCHM), was established. EMOCHM was tasked with monitoring the integration of members of the Renamo militia, the so called residual forces, into the armed forces (FADM), the police, and civilian life, as well as dismantling and disarming the militia. While the electoral process moved

swiftly as per the agreement signed by the two leaders, the work of EMOCHM was sloppy. Government accused Renamo of a lack of cooperation in handing in its lists of military personnel to be integrated into the national army, and Renamo insisted that a 'model of integration' was to be agreed on before doing so. The elections were held with these issues unresolved, which proved to be problematic for politics after the elections.

CANDIDATE SELECTION AND THE ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN

While Renamo's Afonso Dhlakama and the MDM's Daviz Simango emerged as the natural candidates for their respective parties in the presidential elections, Frelimo's Filipe Nyusi had to submit to tough primary elections within the party before he became Frelimo's presidential candidate. The then president of Frelimo and head of state, Armando Guebuza, was in his second and final term as set by the Constitution of the Republic; but he made a move towards a third term through a bill to amend the Constitution. This move was obstructed within Frelimo, a clear sign of Frelimo's political maturity and internal democratic processes. When this failed, president Guebuza attempted to promote a loyalist to replace him in order to retain some state control through which to maintain his business empire.

The preparation of this terrain was back-dated to the 2012 congress in Pemba, Cabo Delgado province. The composition of both the central committee¹ and political commission² was shaped to favour the political ambition of President Guebuza, with key historic members of Frelimo being sidelined from both (Nuvunga, 2014). In a departure from Frelimo tradition the statutes approved in the 10th Congress of 2012 introduced two important changes. First, that the political commission should propose pre-candidates for presidential elections to stand for election before the central committee of the party. In the past, the central committee had elected the presidential candidate who was thereafter ratified by the political commission. Second was a more controversial innovation known as *dois centros de poder*, two centres of power, to distinguish between the head of state (even if he or she is the Frelimo candidate) and the president of the party.

1 The central committee deals with the business of the party between congresses. A powerful organ, it comprises 180 effective and 18 standby members who are responsible for the election of the party's president in cases where the president elected by congress has to be replaced; determines the composition of the political commission and elects its members; elects the members of the secretariat of the central committee; determines the composition and elects the members of the verification committee of the central committee, and ratifies the political commission's proposal of candidates for the presidency of the Republic.

2 Elected by the central committee, it consists of 15 to 21 members. The party president, the general secretary, and the secretary for verification are full members of the political commission. The head of Frelimo's parliamentary bench, the head of state, the speaker of Parliament and the prime minister, if elected by Frelimo, have permanent seats at the meetings but do not have the right to vote.

Up until the 10th congress and including the presidency of President Guebuza, the head of state, if elected by Frelimo, was also the president of the party. But according to the new statutes, the head of state and the president of the party would be two distinct roles. The head of state – who has a permanent seat at the meetings of the political commission but does not have the right to vote – is accountable to the political commission, headed by the president of the party, Armando Guebuza at the time. With this in place and the third-term option barred, the then secretary-general of the party unexpectedly announced that the political commission had met and proposed three candidates for primary elections in the party.

These three candidates were seen as President Guebuza's loyalists. So the process was bitterly criticised in the media, with opinion makers and Frelimo's own historic figures asking for more openness so that people other than these three nominees could have the chance to stand in the primaries. The three candidates canvassed the country seeking electoral support. Guebuza apparently favoured the prime-minister, Alberto Vaquina, and Jose Pacheco, minister for agriculture and rural development and head of the government delegation in talks with Renamo, who were considered likely to win the primaries.

In the end, the party opened up to other candidates which meant that former Prime Minister Luisa Diogo could contest the primaries as an independent. However he and the two apparently preferred candidates, namely Vaquina and Pacheco, all lost in the primary election held by the elective central committee on 1 March 2014. In the end, it was Luisa Diogo who forced a second round of the internal election. Filipe Nyusi, who had served as Armando Guebuza's minister for defence since 2008, was elected as Frelimo's presidential candidate in a democratic primary election. This was the first time that Frelimo had held primaries, as the previous two democratically elected Frelimo presidents had been appointed by the central committee and their candidacy ratified by the political commission.

As a candidate Filipe Nyusi ran an excellent, well-resourced campaign with a clear television message and massive motorcade rallies. His *manifesto* revolved around six points, but in his rallies and popular address he tended to emphasise the fourth point about the *Promoção do Desenvolvimento Económico e Desenvolvimento Sustentável, Criação de Riqueza e Combate a Pobreza*, that is economic and sustainable growth, wealth creation and the fight against poverty. In his *showmícios*, rallies, he also emphasised building infrastructure, ending unemployment, housing for the youth and expanding electric energy to rural areas. He promised to invest in technical and professional training for young people as the remedy for unemployment. Agriculture was a central theme in his campaign, together with national unity and peace, with his famous phrase '*na minha cabeça só cabe a paz, a paz, a paz*', 'in my mind there is only space for peace, peace, peace'. He

acknowledged that the separation of powers was not effective and that he would therefore work to achieve it, with particular focus on the independence of the judiciary and respect for the Constitution and ordinary laws. But there was a controversial issue: cars belonging to Frelimo members carried a sticker reading '*quem não é da Frelimo, o problema é dele*', 'who is not a Frelimo supporter that's his/her problem'. This gave the impression that it was a problem not to belong to Frelimo, a clear sign of the political intolerance and arrogance characteristic of former liberation movements when in government.

Renamo's Afonso Dhlakama was in triumphal mode. First, he had resisted the bombardment by government forces of his central base in the Satungira hills. In this context President Guebuza took the blame for the military hostilities, not so much for initiating the aggression but for appearing to do little to prevent it from occurring. Second, these hostilities revitalised Renamo's dormant social bases and also the impoverished and excluded segments of the population. Third, the government had conceded to his demands regarding electoral legislation and improved transparency by politicising the electoral administration. Signing the cease-fire agreement with President Guebuza brought a breath of fresh air into a Renamo that was on the point of collapse after it had been soundly defeated by Frelimo in the 2009 election. So the military hostility between the government forces and Renamo returned Dhlakama to the centre of Mozambique's politics and political governance.

Although he had started the campaign some 15 days after the official date, Dhlakama was welcomed by huge crowds of supporters in all his rallies, including the three southern provinces of Inhambane, Gaza and Maputo, which are traditionally pro-Frelimo. While Frelimo clearly brought in supporters from different areas to the venues where key Frelimo cadres were rallying, Renamo lacked the logistical means to do that. Yet Dhlakama's rallies were surprisingly packed with people waiting for hours until he arrived. Key media houses and the independent TV station (STV), including the critical and specialised Mozambique Political Process Bulletin, emphasised the crowds at Dhlakama's rallies. His *manifesto* gravitated around the deepening of democracy, a government of social justice, and inclusivity. In his speeches he emphasised the rule of law, constitutionalism and multiparty democracy, and the separation of powers. He also pledged to put in place an efficient government which would serve the public interests. Contrary to campaigns in previous elections, he pledged that should there be a Renamo victory there would be no vengeance towards non-Renamo supporters, and all competent people would keep their jobs irrespective of their political affiliation. This was a very positive aspect that indicated a more politically mature Dhlakama.

Daviz Simango's political and electoral success in the local elections in Beira in 2008 led to the formation of the MDM as a breakaway party from Renamo in 2009. Its non-transparent exclusion from contesting legislative elections in seven constituencies in 2009 gave it the status of martyr and victim in the informal concord between Frelimo and Renamo. Its victory in the 2011 municipal by-election in Quelimane (Zambezia province) and the good results it obtained in the 2013 local government elections gave the MDM the status of second party in Mozambique in the context of a collapsing Renamo. These results were mainly its victory in Beira, Nampula, Quelimane and Gurué, respectively the second, third and fourth cities in the country, and the near-victories in the capital Maputo and Matola municipalities. The MDM was being projected as replacing Renamo in Mozambique's politics. The MDM and its presidential candidate also exhibited a triumphalist aura and apparently the 2014 elections were simply to confirm the ascension of the MDM as the second party in the country. But neither the MDM nor its president, the MDM's presidential candidate, had done any good political fieldwork between the 2009 and the 2014 election. Its eight members in Parliament had become highly urbanised and had little contact with their constituencies, and the MDM usually sided with Frelimo in Parliament.

The MDM also wanted to use the 2014 election to show that it was not just a Beira phenomenon, in reference to its home municipality. Historically, the MDM had originated in Beira after Simango was expelled from Renamo prior to the 2008 local elections and had stood as an independent candidate in the election. His victory as an independent built a momentum that he seized to form his own party. The fact that the MDM president is the mayor of Beira turned Beira into its hometown. His electoral manifesto focused on:

- public sector reform aimed mainly at reducing the excessive powers of the president
- separation of the party from the state
- zero tolerance to corruption
- emphasis on agriculture
- economic growth reflected in the daily life of the people
- improving the quality of education, and
- investing in the health sector.

However in 45 days of electoral campaign he focused more on criticising the government on the following grounds: mismanagement of the Mt 7 million intended for decentralised projects in the districts; dependency of the judiciary and legislative on the executive branch of government, particularly the head of state; youth unemployment; lack of investment in agriculture; and political intolerance towards the opposition.

ELECTORAL VIOLENCE, POLICE BEHAVIOUR AND THE USE OF STATE RESOURCES

Three trends characterised the 45 days of electoral campaign. The first was electoral violence. Based on previous experiences prior to the electoral campaign, the electoral authorities and leaders of civil society, including religious leaders, used the media to make several appeals for a peaceful electoral campaign. In addition, political parties signed codes of electoral conduct agreeing to non-violence, tolerance and mutual respect; but this proved to be easier said than done. The main features of electoral violence were:

- Clashes during campaign motorcades and rallies with physical aggression between supporters of the different political parties involving Frelimo, Renamo and the MDM. Sticks, katanas (machetes) and other sharp instruments were used in this electoral violence.
- Politically motivated groups attached to contending political parties made it difficult for their opposition to rally and organise gatherings. Provocation included occupying venues and routes previously communicated to the police as being prepared for a gathering by other political parties; throwing stones, or playing loud music, which made communication difficult. The opposition parties, mainly Renamo and the MDM, were the usual victims of these acts which were mainly in the southern province of Gaza, a Frelimo stronghold. Most of this violence happened in the Gaza and Nampula provinces.
 - In Gaza, these events took place in Macia, Xai-Xai and Chokwe districts on 23 and 24 September. MDM's Daviz Simango was scheduled to campaign in Gaza, travelling by road from Maputo. The entry town into the province is Macia, where his motorcade was attacked by a sizeable group of people using sticks and stones, though few in the motorcade were injured. Unable to campaign in Macia, Simango moved to Xai-Xai, the capital of Gaza, where a large group greeted him with violence. His supporters were severely beaten up and some saw their homes burnt. On 24 September, Simango went to Chokwe, which had since 1994 been the centre of electoral violence against the opposition parties (Nuvunga & Salih, 2010; Nuvunga, 2005). Simango had another violent reception, his supporters were beaten up again and electoral material destroyed, including vehicles belonging to his supporters. Similar incidents happened in Chibuto and Manjacaze, both in Gaza province. The police made some arrests in relation to the case, but oddly these were all MDM supporters (Mozambique Political Process Bulletin 2014a, p.1).

In the northern province of Nampula on the 25th September (a public holiday commemorating the day of *Forças Armadas de Defesa de Moçambique*, the Armed Forces for the Defence of Mozambique) MDM retaliated by taking a coffin covered by a Frelimo flag and a photograph of Filipe Nyusi, to Heroes Square. The riot police confiscated the coffin, and in the resultant hostility MDM supporters stoned the police, causing chaos and injuring civilians and a policeman. This led to the closure of the official ceremony at Heroes Square. The police had to use tear gas to control the situation (Mozambique Political Process Bulletin 2014b, p. 2).

- At the beginning of the campaign a group of 20 MDM supporters were beaten up by Frelimo supporters and six were severely injured; a prelude to what happened to the MDM and Daviz Simango in Gaza.
- On 12 October, the final day of electoral campaign, Renamo and Frelimo clashed in Angoche, a Renamo stronghold in the northern province of Nampula. Both parties had planned to end the campaign in the densely populated area of Inguri, and as a result they clashed. Renamo supporters were armed with sticks, stones, and katanas and their members attacked 12 houses belonging to Frelimo district leaders. In retaliation, Frelimo supporters broke the windows of Renamo's district headquarters. Two people died and many more were injured (Mozambique Political Process Bulletin 2014d, p. 1).
- Renamo and Frelimo also clashed in Nampula on 12 and 13 October. With their leader Dhlakama in Nampula for the official closure of the campaign, Renamo supporters were reportedly clashing not only with Frelimo supporters, but also beating up anyone they found dressed in Frelimo campaign material. There were reports that some couples were forced to take off their Frelimo T-shirts and go home topless.

Since the onset of multiparty democracy in the country, Gaza has been a hostile, almost no-go territory for the opposition (Nuvunga, 2012). Initially it was opposed to Renamo and its leader, Afonso Dhlakama; but in the 2014 election it also turned against the MDM and its leader. This was not only because the political and electoral growth of MDM had turned it into a new Frelimo 'enemy'; but also the fact that Dhlakama's guard was armed with AK47s. Despite police intervention in Xai-Xai and the confiscation of some of these weapons, Renamo were still prepared to face attack. A new aspect was that Dhlakama had a hero's welcome in Xai-Xai, the Frelimo stronghold, but there was still not enough support to secure his party a single parliamentary seat from this constituency.

Nationwide Frelimo tended to make it difficult for opposition parties and candidates to campaign, though to a lesser extent than in the past. Where the opposition enjoyed massive support, e.g. Nampula and Zambezia, they also targeted Frelimo supporters and Frelimo offices. This trend is part and parcel of Mozambique's two decades of democratic politics. Apparently Frelimo finds it hard to let the opposition campaign freely, possibly because it had liberated the land and the people, formed the nation and considered that it owned Mozambique. Veteran Frelimo politician and former minister of defence Alberto Chipande opined recently that Frelimo 'would lead the country for the next 50 years'.

Electoral violence is related to police behaviour and they are accused by opposition parties and candidates as being biased in favour of Frelimo. Their modus operandi includes giving Frelimo information about venues and routes to be used in opposition rallies. With this information, Frelimo groups either first occupy the venues and roads previously allocated to the opposition, or they prepare to stone opposition gatherings. Police are also accused of indifference or apathy when Frelimo groups attack opposition rallies and gatherings, and of being intransigent when faced with wrongdoing by opposition supporters. As a result, an overwhelming majority of the people arrested in connection with electoral crimes are supporters of opposition parties. This was confirmed in a press conference held on 30 September by the spokesperson of the General Command of the Police, General Pedro Cossa.

The police are also accused of deploying fewer policemen to protect opposition rallies and gatherings, and also of intimidating opposition supporters. For instance, in Nampula on the final day of the campaign (12 October), the police are reported to have fired tear gas to disperse the gathering waiting for Dhlakama at the municipal stadium just before the start of the rally. The people disbanded and returned two hours later, only after Dhlakama had arrived. A policeman at the rally told journalists 'we had orders from the most senior commander to launch the tear gas. We just followed orders' (Mozambique Political Process Bulletin, 2014c, p. 1).

The third alarming trend in the electoral campaign is the illegal use of state resources. Frelimo controls the state and with it state resources, particularly the public buildings, state personnel and vehicles. After the 2013 local government elections, the opposition also controlled local government resources in the three main cities, namely Beira, Nampula and Quelimane. Historically, Frelimo used its control of the state to abuse these resources for electoral purposes; but now this is done not only by Frelimo but also by the opposition, although on a lesser scale. This use of state assets has diminished in comparison to previous general elections, but Frelimo had the unfair advantage of being the majority party in government.

Not only were state vehicles and fuel deployed and used for the Frelimo electoral campaign, but high-ranking state personnel were also illegally coopted into Frelimo's electoral campaign. Indeed, President Guebuza indicated in his speech after the promulgation of the 2014 electoral results by the Constitutional Council on 30 December 2014, that he was impressed by the fact that ministers, national directors, and permanent secretaries had left the comfort of their homes in cities and had spent 45 days in rural villages campaigning for Frelimo. These high-level politicians and civil servants used not only state resources but also the powers of the state for Frelimo's benefit, meaning that Frelimo's much-vaunted party machinery is, in fact, state machinery. Public buildings carried Frelimo pamphlets, which is prohibited by law but this is not enforced. However, the opposition did the same in areas where they controlled the local government though realistically this was only the MDM, as Renamo had controlled no municipality since boycotting the 2013 local government election.

ORGANISATIONAL PROBLEMS: POLLING STATIONS AND TABULATION

Ballot-box stuffing

As of 2004, ballot-box stuffing became a pattern in Mozambique's elections (Nuvunga, 2012; Rønning 2011; Nuvunga & Salih, 2010; De Brito 2009; Hanlon & Fox 2006; Nuvunga 2005). Its most common manifestations include extra physical (illegal) ballot papers being inserted in the ballot boxes, and changes to the results sheets, the *edital* in Portuguese. The Mozambique Political Process Bulletin estimates that in at least 680 polling stations (4% of the total) there was ballot-box stuffing benefiting Frelimo.

Extra ballot papers in the box were noticed in Matola (Maputo province), Quelimane (Zambezia province), Beira and Dondo (Sofala province), and Chidenguele (Gaza province). According to the Mozambique Political Process Bulletin the scheme works as follows:

One member of the polling station staff (MMV) has the books of ballot papers which are handed out to each voter. With turnout around 50% they can be sure that not all ballots will be used, so when no one is looking, ballot papers are taken from further down in the book. These are then passed to previously identified Frelimo supporters when they are voting, and they deposit several ballots in the box. Often the ballot papers are pre-marked for Frelimo before being passed on to supporters.

(Mozambique Political Process Bulletin, 2014d, p. 8)

The change of *edital* resulting in an increase in turnout clearly gave extra votes to Frelimo. This was first noticed in the 2013 local government elections, particularly in Gurue where the Constitutional Council had to invalidate the results and order a repeat of the election. This was despite the fact that the vote count system has an inbuilt mechanism to prevent fraud. After the partial vote count that takes place at the polling station, the *editals* are filled and signed by all members of the polling station and copies are given to political parties and observers and a copy is stamped at the entry of each polling station. Thereafter all ballots and the original copies of the *edital* are packed in a box which is then sealed. The next step is the transportation of the boxes to the district headquarters of the Technical Secretariat of Electoral Administration (STAE) for district tabulation. There have never been reports of violated boxes between the polling station and the STAE district headquarters, but *editals* do appear with changed results.

The implication is that the change of results takes places at STAE district headquarters. In the case of local government elections with few polling stations it was easy to compare the results produced by STAE district headquarters with those generated by civil society groups through parallel vote tabulation, and confirm that *editals* were manipulated. But it proved almost impossible to check the integrity of *editals* in a general election with 17,000 polling stations nationwide.

One intriguing aspect that appeared to be evidence of ballot-box stuffing is that in a sizeable number of polling stations there were more ballots for president than for Parliament. This is despite that fact that the ballot boxes for president and Parliament are side by side and 'observers and journalists almost never see a voter put a ballot in one box and not in the other (...) thus a difference between the two suggests extra votes have been added for president, either by changing the *edital*, or with extra ballot papers being inserted into the box just for president' (Mozambique Political Process Bulletin, 2014e, p. 8). Statistically, the Mozambique Political Process Bulletin reports that in 1.2% of polling stations the results show that between 10% and 90% of voters deposited ballots for the president and not for Parliament.

Invalidating ballot papers

This is a trend that began in the 2005 local government by-election in Mocimboa da Praia, in the northern province of Cabo Delgado (Nuvunga, 2012). Since then it has been observed in all subsequent elections, and always damaging to the opposition vote (Nuvunga, 2014). This is easy to observe since by law all invalid ballot papers (*nulos*) are sent to Maputo to be reconsidered by the National Electoral Commission and this requalification of *nulos* is open to media and observers. There it becomes clear which are really *nulos* and which were deliberately invalidated

by people other than the voters. The *nulos* for the presidential election in 2004 was 2.7%, increasing to 4.0% in the 2009 election.

Improvements in the law, e.g. no ink being allowed on the table at the time of the vote count, reduced the possibility of purposeful invalidation of votes; but there were still 3.2% of *nulos* after requalification. According to the Mozambique Political Process Bulletin, more than 750 polling stations (4.5% of the total) had an excessive number of invalid votes, which implies votes that were improperly invalidated, i.e. had an inked extract mark alongside an orderly expressed vote intention. As the Mozambique Political Process Bulletin indicates, it is illegal to falsely invalidate ballot papers, but the CNE declined to take any action to prosecute.

The people revalidating *nulos* were not instructed to separate out obvious groups of improperly invalidated ballot papers. This could have allowed prosecution, because all ballot papers now have the number of the polling station, and the fingerprints are sometimes clear enough to indicate which individual left the print.

(Mozambique Political Process Bulletin, 2014e, p. 9)

Late opening

Media reported that only four polling stations did not open, which is a significant improvement on previous elections. There were particular problems in Nampula, Nacala, Angoche (all in the northern province of Nampula) and Beira (in the central province of Sofala) where according to media reports some polling stations did not open until the afternoon. Polling stations are supposed to open at 7 am, failing which the problem must be solved by 11 am. Opening in the afternoon violates the electoral law. The Mozambique Political Process Bulletin estimates that in 450 polling stations (2.5% of the total) turnout was improbably low, suggesting very late opening or other administrative problems. The problem was most notable in Zambézia, Nampula, Niassa, and Sofala, all known to support the opposition.

Registration books

Registration is problematic in Mozambique and problems with registration books prevented registered voters from exercising their franchise in past elections (Nuvunga, 2006). In 2014, observers and journalists reported that some polling stations had extra register books (*cadernos*) not on the official list of polling stations. These extra books are sometimes called 'transfer lists' (*lista de transferidos*). Where there are two small register books and the total does not exceed 800 voters,

the two books can be combined in a single polling station. This was done in some places, and the official list gives the numbers of both register books; but in some polling stations, the extra book was not on the list.

According to Mozambique Political Process Bulletin reports, the city of Tete suspended counting for a day because there were 234 *editais* (one *edital* per polling station) and only 178 polling stations. The official explanation from STAE was that some polling stations had more than one register book. In this instance MMVs incorrectly created a separate *edital* for each book instead of one for the whole polling station. Even so, that means 58 extra books, while the official list gives only 37. The Mozambique Political Process Bulletin estimates that up to 250 polling stations (1.4%) had extra, unreported, register books.

Problematic district tabulation

Mozambique's vote count and tabulation have never been problem-free (Nuvunga, 2014; Nuvunga & Salih, 2010; Nuvunga, 2005). Following the vote count at the polling station, the boxes are sent to the district and city election commissions (CDEs), which according to the law, add up the results from each polling station and produce one district *edital*. So there should be no further vote count. In the 2013 local government elections, the *Conselho Constitucional*, Constitutional Council (CC), invalidated the results of Gurue municipality (Zambezia province) after it confirmed that the district tabulation had been fraudulent. In 13 of 49 polling stations there were *editais* without the signature of the polling station president, or signed by the polling station president but with no stamp; *editais* from 15 polling stations had been altered, and in two polling stations *editais* had been written by the Zambézia CPE, not the polling station presidents. So district tabulation became a sensible part of the electoral process. After criticism from media and electoral observers, CNE agreed to allow for more transparency at the district tabulation, i.e. agreed allow journalists and observers to watch the district and provincial tabulation.

It soon became clear that the lack of transparency, which had been evident from the first democratic elections in 1994 until the 2013 local government elections, was used to conceal a disorganised district tabulation. In fact, as the Mozambique Political Process Bulletin indicates, observers found the first major problem was widespread confusion over the lack of instructions on how the district count should be handled. Clear rules are a central part of good governance for any electoral processes; so without guidance from STAE at national level, each CDE set up its own system. National media and the Mozambique Political Process Bulletin summarised the problems as the following:

some used computers, some used pencil and paper, and some wrote on classroom blackboards. Some started as soon as they received their first *editais* while others waited until they received them all. Some started with data submitted by telephone and SMS and some waited for *editais*. Some did everything neatly while others had papers spread around the room and different people seemed to be following different systems. Some used special rooms, others were in smaller crowded rooms, and one was done in the district STAE director's office. Some allowed party representatives to check the final table and some did not. In some places it was impossible to check the data being input. Some CDEs, in violation of the law, refused to post the *editais* or give copies to observers and media.

ELECTORAL RESULTS

Provincial tabulation was peaceful, but CNE was highly divided with the final results approved by 10 votes to 7. Salomao Moyana, whose candidacy for the CNE was promoted by Renamo, was the only member from the opposition ranks who voted in favour of the final results, a vote that legitimated the results. Otherwise it would have been only Frelimo's members of CNE that would have voted in favour of the results. The opposition handed in protests to CNE which were approved by only 9 for and 8 against, meaning that Moyana this time sided with Renamo. The pro-opposition weekly paper, *Canal de Moçambique*, labeled Moyana a Judas Iscariot for having betrayed the opposition that supported his candidacy for CNE. Renamo and the MDM handed in appeals to the Constitutional Council, which were all rejected on procedural grounds, not on merit.

Renamo had in fact failed to follow the electoral law in relation to complaints. The requirement is that all complaints regarding tabulation and votes cast are to be made and submitted to competent people at the polling station. If not satisfactorily addressed, these complaints must then be submitted to the district courts of justice. Renamo failed to adhere to the electoral law that was amended at its request. Instead, Renamo collected all protests and submitted them to the CNE and subsequently to the Constitutional Council, which irrespective of the merit of the cause rejected the appeals in agreement with the electoral law. The results were promulgated by the Constitutional Council on the 29th of December through *Acórdão 21/CC/2014*.

With a turnout of 49% (which is about 5.3 million voters) compared to 45% (4.4 million) in 2009, Frelimo and its candidate Filipe Jacinto Nyusi collected a comfortable victory, but lower than its record in the previous 2004 elections. Then Frelimo had gained a qualified majority in Parliament and its presidential

candidate gained 75% of the vote. Table 1 below presents the presidential election in five elections.

Table 1
Presidential vote in five elections

Candidates	1994		1999		2004		2009		2014	
	mn	% of valid	mn	% of valid	mn	% of valid	mn	% of valid	mn	% of valid
Chissano	2.6	53%	2.3	52%						
Guebuza					2.0	64%	3.0	75%		
Nyusi									2.8	57%
Dhlakama	1.7	34%	2.1	48%	1.0	32%	0.6	16%	1.8	37%
Domingos					0.1	3%				
Simango							0.3	9%	0.3	6%
Others	0.6	13%			0.1	2%				
		% of total		% of total		% of total		% of total		% of total
Nulos	0.2	2.8%	0.1	2.9%	0.1	2.9%	0.2	4%	0.2	3.2%
Branco	0.3	5.8%	0.3	6.5%	0.1	2.9%	0.3	6%	0.3	5.4%
Total	5.4		*5.3		3.3		4.4		5.3	
Turnout		88%		74%		43%		45%		49%

Source: Mozambique Political Process Bulletin, 2014e, p. 8

The MDM doubled its share of parliamentary seats but this is still far below what the party expected to harvest. It is fair to say that the MDM and its candidate were defeated mainly by Renamo. With a disappointing vote of 0.3 million, MDM's Daviz Simango was the face of defeat in the 2014 elections. The dream of becoming the second political force in the country ended with harsh defeat and disappointment, whereas Renamo's Dhlakama tripled his electoral performance compared to 2009. Although he did not win the election he made significant political gains, particularly thrashing Simango of the breakaway MDM. The 2014 election revived the weakened Renamo and its president, who made a significant comeback to a position of strength in Mozambican politics.

The results show that Frelimo retains its dominance in the four southern provinces and the northern province of Cabo Delgado, one of its strongholds. Dhlakama and Renamo gained majorities in three provinces, namely Nampula, Zambézia and Sofala. The two parties tied for place in three provinces, namely Tete, Manica and Niassa. The decisive factor for both the Nyusi and Frelimo victories is that in the four provinces that Frelimo dominates, both the party and the presidential candidate had a landslide victory. Victories by Renamo and Dhlakama have a small margin compared to those of Frelimo and its candidate.

Dhlakama disputed the electoral results on the grounds that they were fraudulent. MDM and Simango also disputed the electoral results on the same grounds but unlike Dhlakama, Simango accepted the ruling of the Constitutional Council validating the electoral results generated by the National Electoral Commission. Neither Dhlakama nor Simango presented evidence for their claims. However, there was serious misconduct, including ballot-box stuffing and the invalidation of opposition ballot papers. The question is how serious the misconduct was and how much it impacted on the results. But the new electoral law, resulting from the amendments suggested by Renamo, was robust enough in theory to prevent misconduct like these from happening.

The revised electoral legislation gave a larger presence to the two main parties, namely Frelimo and Renamo, in both the National Electoral Commission and the Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration at both central and district level. At the request of Renamo this also gave political parties – mainly the opposition parties – the right to name people who could check the system from within. This is the most manifest indication of an attempt to promote electoral transparency by politicising the electoral management bodies. The revised legislation introduced in 2014 offered the option for all three main parties, namely Frelimo, Renamo and the MDM, to submit names to the electoral management bodies. These would be added to the four polling station staff hired directly by the electoral management bodies, thus creating seven-member polling station teams. The function of these three party nominees was to perform regular polling station management duties, for which they would be paid by the electoral management bodies in the same way as the regular polling station staff. Although they could not submit complaints, they could give credibility to the electoral process by acting as the eyes and ears of their political parties; but the major problem was that opposition parties failed to recruit and submit enough people to be considered for this function.

Had the opposition parties succeeded in adequate recruitment, they could have collected all the *editals* nationwide and within hours after the closure of voting they could have had a realist projection of their electoral performance. Opposition parties claimed to have preferred to invest more in recruiting party delegates with a monitoring function who could make legal complaints; but the

reality is that they failed to succeed in both cases, with neither scrutineers nor party delegates. Frelimo succeeded in placing their people as scrutineers in all polling stations but they neglected the party delegates. This might have been influenced by the fact that there is a guaranteed payment for scrutineers from the electoral management bodies, but payment for party delegates must come from the party. However, critics accuse Frelimo of neglecting this aspect because the system is seen to be skewed in favour of Frelimo.

It is noteworthy that despite the high rate of unemployment, guaranteed payment from the electoral management bodies was not enough of an incentive to attract people to function as scrutineers for opposition parties. However, opposition parties alleged that some of their candidate scrutineers were not awarded contracts by the electoral management bodies, and many of their candidates for the position of party delegate failed to be accredited by the same electoral management bodies. Indeed, the Carter Center observer mission (Carter Center, 2015) indicated that in 18% of the 434 polling stations it observed, only Frelimo had both the party-nominated scrutineer and the party delegate. As far as the accreditation issue is concerned, the Carter Center observation mission estimates that the accreditation problem only affected some 1 000 people (Carter Center, 2015). Taking into consideration all these problems, an aspect to be underlined is the lack of constructive collaboration between the two major opposition parties, Renamo and the MDM.

Evidence shows that in some polling stations where the opposition scrutineers were present they not only failed to prevent misconduct but also failed to collect evidence about where misconduct took place and where it was noted and reported by observers and media. In addition, as Mozambique Political Process Bulletin reports, ‘... opposition members of STAE and district election commissions did not prevent problems with counts. Indeed, opposition party MMVs and election commission members sometimes signed manifestly incorrect results sheets (*editais*)’ (Mozambique Political Process Bulletin 2014e, p. 10). Frelimo was accused of intimidating people in order to stop them from being recruited by the opposition. This is not new and is one of the privileges enjoyed by dominant parties, but the opposition also failed to make proper use of the new system for transparency based on politicising the electoral management bodies.

Civil society also designed initiatives aimed at checking the integrity of the electoral process. Focusing on the presidential election, a parallel sample tabulation (PVT) was carried out by EISA (Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa 2014) for the Electoral Observatory³. With a statistical sample of 1798 polling

³ Coalition of national civil society organisations including religion organisations dedicated to electoral observation.

stations, about 10.6% of the total national polling stations, and based on official copies of the results sheets (*editais*) collected by independent national observers at the polling station, the PVT generated a result very close to the final official result. It projected 35% for Dhlakama and the official result was 37%; 57% for Nyusi and the official result was 57%; and 8% for Simango whose official result was 6%. The Mozambique Political Process Bulletin rightly indicates that 'the closeness of the PVT to the final result suggests that there has been relatively little manipulation at intermediate levels, despite the confusion' (Mozambique Political Process Bulletin 2014e, p. 10) but does not say what happened at the polling stations. So the PVT may be confirming an unchecked fraud at the polling stations, augmented by the inability of the opposition parties to use the new system for transparency based on politicising the electoral management bodies.

Following from the above are three major problems underpinning Mozambique's 2014 election – problems which in reality underpinned all elections held in the country since the founding democratic election in 1994. First, fraud and misconduct at the polling stations which is seen as perpetrated by and benefiting Frelimo. Second, an imbalance of power, with Frelimo enjoying better organisation and patronage networks, and control of the police and media. Being the party of government allows Frelimo to abuse state resources for its electoral machinery. And third, secrecy in the CNE including changing results, which is shaped by a view that the electoral system should be party-based rather than neutral and impartial. Opposition thinking is that this would give them their own people on the inside to check what was happening; but this has happened only marginally because of the inability or unwillingness to train people to use their positions. Opposition officials in STAE allow misconduct to go unchallenged. All considered, it appears that Frelimo party dominance shapes the political economy within which elections take place. Not only does this effect the possibility opposition parties have to mobilise scrutineers and party delegates, but importantly their behaviour once in those positions.

POLITICS AFTER THE ELECTIONS

Politics after the elections had a sense of *déjà vu*, and a repetition of previous elections. There was a rejection of electoral results by Renamo, and political tension with Frelimo refusing any possibility of a post-electoral deal. Dhlakama returned to his position before the 2014 election, his hide-out in the Gorongosa hill, and conflict escalated. A few days after the election Dhlakama called a press conference and told journalists that the elections had not been free and fair, and because of these fraudulent results he was available to negotiate for a government of national unity. In parallel, Renamo had submitted a formal appeal for the

Constitutional Council to invalidate the electoral results on the grounds of fraud.

Late in November Dhlakama called for a caretaker government consisting of competent people from both Renamo and Frelimo. A proposal along these lines was submitted to Parliament by Renamo but was dismissed by Frelimo. At the same time, government submitted to Parliament what Frelimo had refused to do for the previous two decades: a bill for the status of leader of the opposition. This was aimed at accommodating Dhlakama in the governance system but it was also a way to introduce and pass the controversial bill for the ex-president's and former MP's social provident fund.

Perceptibly unhappy with Frelimo's move Dhlakama initiated provincial rallies, mainly in those provinces where he had strong support, namely Zambezia, Nampula, Sofala, Manica and Niassa. It was in these highly crowded rallies that Dhlakama changed not only the tone of language but also the message. He told his followers that there would be a joint government consisting of Frelimo and Renamo. He said he was tired of seeing his electoral victories being stolen by Frelimo. He mentioned the problematic election in 1999, as well as those in 2004 and 2009. In December 2014 he told an overcrowded rally in Manica province that although he would not let Frelimo govern if it went on to form a government without the opposition, he would not use guns.

This hardening of the discourse came in the form of *República Autónoma Centro e Norte de Moçambique*, Central and Northern Autonomous Republic of Mozambique, which meant dividing the country at the Save River which links the south with the rest of the country. This is an old Renamo threat and to some extent it is built into the legacies of the liberation struggle and subsequent civil war. Renamo also boycotted the inauguration of Parliament and provincial assemblies. Although it was not the first time that Renamo had threatened not to take its seats in Parliament but had in the end done so, the then President elect, Filipe Nyusi, had agreed to meet the Renamo leader. There were two meetings where Dhlakama presented a new concept: *autarquias provinciais*, provincial autarchies, intended mainly to transform the provinces where Renamo obtained majority into provincial autarchies with a Renamo government. Historically, Renamo has since the onset of democratic politics demanded a shared government in the form of the right to appoint provincial governors in the provinces where it had a majority. This was a serious consideration in the negotiations following the problematic 1999 election, but it failed to materialise.

Renamo's new concept was presented as a bill in Parliament but Frelimo's political commission made it clear that it was not only against the meetings between Nyusi and Dhlakama but also against Renamo's bill for provincial autarchies. This was the first time that there had been a clear split between Frelimo and its head of state. The former president, Armando Guebuza, wanted

to remain president of Frelimo with Nyusi as head of state. According to the new Frelimo statutes the head of state would be accountable to the Frelimo political commission headed by the party's president, Armando Guebuza. This scenario of *dois centros de poder*, two centres of power, came to an end in March, when the extraordinary meeting of the Central Committee acrimoniously told the powerful President Guebuza to relinquish office and allow Nyusi to take over the party leadership. This was a clear indicator of not only internal democracy within Frelimo but more importantly, the party's maturity. This made the young Nyusi not only the head of state but also the president of the party, setting a generational change within party leadership and the end of the rule of old combatants from the liberation struggle.

However, although President Nyusi kept his openness towards critics and the opposition there are signs that he was hardening his position towards Renamo and Dhlakama. His availability to meet Dhlakama evaporated and Frelimo has rejected the Renamo bill for provincial autarchies on the grounds of unconstitutionality. This bill resulted in the alleged fraud of the 2014 elections. If elections are proven fraudulent they have to be invalidated and repeated. It is legally problematic to call for a form of shared government as a remedy for fraudulent elections. Mozambique's proportional representation electoral system is a *de facto* winner-takes-all system, since although opposition parties have parliamentary representation – which gives them some state money proportional to their representation – they are not part of the network of patronage centered on the president-dominated government. The implication is that Dhlakama's 1.8 million votes count for nothing. So even if it is not proven, the fraud discourse is the only opportunity for the opposition, and particularly Dhlakama, to get something out of Frelimo, since Mozambique's elections fail to offer a mechanism for a political settlement.

Without progress in the talks between Renamo and the government, the first attacks were reported in the central province of Tete in June 2015, and Dhlakama escaped unhurt from an ambush in September 2015. In early October key negotiators escorted Dhlakama to Beira from where he was to travel to Maputo to meet President Nyusi. The following day his house was invaded by the army, and Dhlakama escaped back to Gorongosa. This was the start of the escalation of the conflict, but it was only in February 2016 that attacks were reported on the N1 road in the Muxungue region in the central province of Sofala. The aim was to block the communication between the south and the central part of the country. Cars were burnt and military convoys were needed to escort civilian cars. This continued until a final peace deal was reached in December 2016, which holds at the time of writing.

The formal talks were grounded and the two leaders reached a deal in

informal talks that resulted in Nyusi travelling to meet Dhlakama in Gorongosa Hill. Before the formal talks were grounded they produced a key result, that of signing the agreement for a *despartidarização da função pública*, to depoliticise the civil service. If implemented this could be a major milestone in further democratising the country. The main points of the agreement include the following:

- Civil servants are not obliged to undertake party political activities during their work time;
- Magistrates are forbidden to take part in any kind of political activities;
- Party and religious activities are forbidden in governmental institutions;
- Party cells are not allowed in governmental institutions;
- No obligatory salary deductions for political parties are allowed.

Three years after the 2014 election, Renamo still insists on appointing governors in the six provinces where it claims to have obtained a majority, but Frelimo succeeded in buying time for the next election. This has been the history of Frelimo's dominance of Mozambique's democratic politics and second republic: the five years after an election is spent addressing the claims from Renamo and mainly buying time for the next election. Decentralisation is again at the top of the agenda as a way of addressing power sharing. It is not yet clear how this point will be framed in the peace deal yet to be signed, and how it will be implemented; but Renamo is inclined towards an agreement that will allow each party to appoint governors in those provinces where it obtained an electoral majority. All things considered the die is cast: addressing problems arising from the previous election and setting the course for the next electoral cycle where the same electoral problems will probably happen again.

CONCLUSION

The three major problems which underpinned Mozambique's 2014 election are characteristic of Mozambique since the founding democratic election in 1994. First, fraud and misconduct at the polling stations which is seen as perpetrated by and benefiting Frelimo. Second, there was an imbalance of power with Frelimo enjoying better organisation and patronage networks, and control of the police and media. Being the party of government allows Frelimo to abuse state resources for its electoral machinery. Third, secrecy in the CNE, including altering results, is shaped by factors related to the opposition, namely a view that the electoral system should be party-based rather than neutral and impartial. Opposition thinking

is that this would enable their own people on the inside to check procedures. However, this had only marginal success because of an inability or unwillingness to train scrutineers and party delegates to use their positions, and of opposition officials in STAE to allow misconduct to go unchallenged. All things considered, it appears that Frelimo party dominance shapes the political economy within which elections take place. This affects not only the possibility for the opposition parties to mobilise scrutineers and party delegates; but more importantly their behaviour once in those positions.

Mozambique's elections have suffered from mistrust both between the major parties, and by mainly opposition parties towards electoral management bodies, which they accuse of being biased towards Frelimo and its candidates. As a result of the 2014 peace deal, the electoral law had, in theory, inbuilt mechanisms for further transparency and fraud prevention: it allowed each of the three parties with parliamentary seats to appoint its own people as scrutineers, fully paid by the electoral management bodies. So each party had to recruit 17 000 scrutineers. Although these scrutineers could not make formal complaints, they could check the system from within. This was the most manifest indication of an attempt to promote electoral transparency through politicising the electoral management bodies. While Frelimo managed to recruit its share of scrutineers, the two major opposition parties failed to do so. In most cases they failed to recruit not only scrutineers but also party delegates whose responsibility is to monitor the process and make formal complaints. So the opposition parties failed to use the new system of transparency to check the system from within, which was evident later in the poorly substantiated claims by opposition parties, in particular Renamo.

As far as the electoral process is concerned, Renamo's Afonso Dhlakama and the MDM's Daviz Simango emerged as their respective parties' candidates for the presidential elections. However, two important events took place within Frelimo which not only evidenced substantive internal democracy within Frelimo but also maturity of the party. Firstly, Frelimo prevented the then party leader and head of state from amending the Constitution to accommodate a third term for the president. Secondly, for the first time in its history Frelimo organised open primaries to nominate its presidential candidates. In these primaries not only the party leader's preferred candidates were rejected but the process was also open to independent candidates, against the will of the party leadership. So while elections have a democratising effect, it appears that these events may have positive effects on the party system not only by deepening democratic practice within Frelimo but also by influencing events in other parties.

Election day was peaceful despite the late opening of polling stations, ballot-box stuffing, invalidation of opposition ballot papers and problems with registration books. The final results indicate that Frelimo and its candidate, Filipe

Jacinto Nyusi, collected a comfortable majority even though this was marred by problems in an estimated 12% of polling stations. However Dhlakama disputed the election results on the grounds that they were fraudulent. While this was not intended to discount the problems in some of the polling stations, Renamo failed both to make proper use of the improved system for electoral administration, e.g. fraud prevention, and also to present any evidence of the alleged fraud.

Instead of proposing a government of national unity and a caretaker government, Dhlakama moved to propose a bill for provincial self-government. This bill is a political settlement and is not a remedy for alleged electoral fraud. Frelimo has accordingly rejected the Renamo proposal of provincial autarchies on the grounds of unconstitutionality, but has failed to find a mechanism of compromise with Renamo. There are clearly technical problems related to the 2014 election which were not seriously dealt with by the electoral management bodies. But Renamo is also to blame for failing to use the system of transparency it proposed, which could allow for a better understanding of the extent to which fraud accounts for its electoral loss. Mozambique's election fails to be a constructive mechanism for political settlement, mainly because Mozambique's electoral system, although proportional, is a disguised winner-takes-all system. Thus the agenda for the next electoral cycle was set, first to ending military hostilities, and then to drafting legislation that will accommodate agreements comprising the peace deal. It remains impossible for the opposition parties to make proper use of the theoretically improved electoral administration since Frelimo dominates these institutions, resulting in its political dominance of the country.

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AFRICA'S WEST MEETS ITS SOUTH:
A Comparison of Democracy in Nigeria and South Africa,
1993–2016

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ABSTRACT

Democratic elections in Africa have drawn significant international interest because of their tendencies to generate conflict and violence. Unfortunately, this is not likely to change in the near future, especially with the prevalence of one-party dominance, electoral malpractices, patrimonial leadership and election violence in a number of African countries. Against this background the paper carries out a comparative analysis of presidential elections in Nigeria and South Africa between 1993 and 2016. It focuses specifically on their experiences with election violence, one-party dominance, voter dynamics, and how both countries rate against key global democratic indicators. In doing so, the underlying research question seeks to understand how both countries differ from these variables and what factors contribute to these differences. Using secondary data and responses to the National Democratic Institute (NDI) indicators, the paper argues that while both countries are key players within their respective regions, various factors are responsible for why they differ in their experiences with elections in particular and the democratic process in general. In carrying out an extensive empirical review of relevant literature, this paper is a starting point for comparing the state of democracy in two of the strongest economies on the African continent. The paper also attempts to understand the more recent and urgent experiences and the challenges of democracy in these two contexts. Finally, it presents objectives and challenges for the present and the future.

Keywords: elections, violence, democracy, political party, Nigeria, South Africa

INTRODUCTION

Many democratic experiences on the African continent attest to significant failures. These include violence and the securitisation of elections, failed states and poor voter participation. Violent protests in Burundi and the elimination of presidential term limits in Uganda are two of the many examples that illustrate massive governance deficits, weak leadership and the failure of democratic promises. These challenges are further buttressed by challenges like poverty, unemployment and poor service delivery, all of which contribute to popular disillusionment with government. For example, poor service delivery in South Africa has resulted in various protests and clashes between security forces and disgruntled groups. Thus it can be said that South Africa reflects the widespread discontent across the continent with governmental failure or weak response to addressing the socio-economic challenges of its people. In Nigeria, struggles and political agitation preceded and interrupted the process of democratisation. These included political competition, the pursuit of patrimonial and personal interests, ethnic, communal and religious mobilisation and power. The country has also contended with military regimes throughout its democratic experience, such as those in 1966 and 1983. Nigeria faces the challenge of curbing corruption, conducting credible elections, rebuilding institutions, as well as combating poverty and crime.

While these challenges and many more are typical of most emerging democracies, Nigeria and South Africa provide significant lessons in how democracy has continued to fail or succeed. Taking these experiences into account, the main objective of this paper is to examine and assess the experiences of both countries with democracy between 1993 and 2016. The focus is in particular on Nigeria's attempt at returning to civilian rule (the Third Republic) and South Africa's liberation from the apartheid government in 1994. Both countries were dominated by one-party systems until recently. Nigeria's All Progressives Congress (APC) won the presidential election in 2015 and in 2014 South Africa's African National Congress (ANC) saw a steady decline in votes compared to previous elections. Similarly, both countries are battling with security issues ranging from crime and xenophobic attacks in South Africa, to the grave threat of Boko Haram¹ in Nigeria's northeast geo-political zone. Both Nigeria and South Africa are leading powers on the continent and are dominant players at the regional level, in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) respectively. The

1 Boko Haram is an Islamic Jihadist militant group, founded in 2001 and based in the Nigerian northeast geo-political zone. Boko Haram literally means 'Western education is forbidden'.

relationship between both countries has been defined as the 'shared confluence of economic wealth, regional dominance and political presence that is increasingly seen as the fulcrum of Africa's future' (Alden & Soko 2005, p. 386).

This study will contribute to existing research by bringing together these two experiences of democracy on the African continent. Nigeria and South Africa are key leaders when it comes to political and security decisions on the continent, as demonstrated by decisions taken at the African Union (AU). Thus, they should be shining examples of good governance and strong democracy; however, this is not the case. This examination of both countries will shed some light on their issues and deficits with regard to elections, and on democracy in both countries. The paper will focus specifically on presidential elections, while noting that provincial/state and local government elections also play a critical role in the democratic process of both countries. The paper will contribute to the field of comparative politics by proposing key lessons and recommendations for burgeoning democracies through a joint analysis of these key political players.

Based on the objective and goals stated above, this paper therefore seeks to answer four research questions:

- a. Why has the level of electoral violence been higher in Nigeria than in South Africa since 1993?
- b. Why has there been an alternation in power in Nigeria but not in South Africa?
- c. What factors explain the higher level of democratic indicators in South Africa than in Nigeria?
- d. What factors account for lower voter apathy in Nigeria than South Africa?

The paper concludes with a discussion of political party dynamics; the role of technology in elections; the use of money in elections through vote-buying, or as it is known in Nigeria the provision of 'stomach infrastructure'; and the use of political thugs. All these elements will continue to play a significant role in the progress and strength of these democracies.

METHODOLOGY

Content analysis is the primary methodology of choice for this paper. Furthermore, in answering research questions on the level of democratic indicators, a quantitative analysis method was employed to measure which country has the higher level of democratic indicators. The paper used the National Democratic Institute (NDI) Democracy Indicators as its research instrument.

Content analysis allows a researcher to use text to retrieve important information and make inferences based on key concepts and views in the text. For the purposes of this paper, written text will be reviewed, including discussion papers, news reports, scholarly articles and reports from key research institutions. This is in order to identify key themes and keywords to shape the discussion and examination of democracy in both South Africa and Nigeria. This process of content analysis will focus on identifying the frequency of key concepts, referred to as concept analysis, and the relationship between these concepts, also referred to as relational analysis (Babbie 2017, p. 339).

In unpacking the key research questions of this study, the following key terms will be identified and linked: electoral violence; one-party system; voter apathy; intra-party conflicts; and electoral systems. In so doing it will identify the reasons for and factors in how these variables are reflected in both Nigeria and South Africa.

The NDI Democracy Indicators as developed by J. Brian O'Day (a political party expert with NDI) assessed the following eleven indicators: civil rights, economic and social rights, civil and political participation, political parties, free and fair elections, rule of law, military and police control, government accountability, corruption, media and government responsiveness. The different items or questions under these indicators show the ratings of both countries and where they currently stand in relation to democracy. It should be noted that Freedom House, The Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index, the Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) and Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI) have all developed democracy and governance surveys that have guided the NDI Democracy Indicators. These indicators were sent to two respondents (one in Nigeria and one in South Africa). In both cases, the participant selection was based on purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a type of non-random sampling 'where the researcher selects what he/she thinks is a "typical" sample' (Walliman, 2011). In Nigeria, the subject is a 40-year old female media practitioner who has a wide knowledge of the subject matter and has been reporting on matters relating to Nigerian elections for decades. In South Africa, the participant is a male South African media worker who has reported equally extensively on elections in South Africa. These individuals were selected on the basis of their extensive experience and understanding of the democratic processes in both countries. This study notes that this information is not reflective of the broader population but is meant to give some guidance on the state of democracy in these countries.

NIGERIA AND SOUTH AFRICA: COMPARISON OF THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL VARIABLES

Political Conditions

A few commonalities and differences emerge when comparing the political conditions in Nigeria and South Africa. Both have strong executives with presidents sitting as heads of state and heads of government. Their strong powers are supported by the fact that in both cases their parties have a majority in their legislatures. Historically, two parties have remained politically dominant; the ANC in South Africa and the People's Democratic Party (PDP) in Nigeria. Their federal-type structures are characterised by strong central government and regional authorities consisting of states and local governments in Nigeria, and provinces and municipalities in South Africa. This delegation of powers from national to regional has proved to be successful in managing complex political systems with large and diverse populations. While both countries regard themselves as multi-party democracies with various political parties participating during elections, this has not deterred them from having a dominant one-party system. This situation has however changed, particularly in Nigeria where the opposition APC won the presidential election in 2015, the majority of seats in the Senate and the House of Representatives, and also the gubernatorial elections in 22 out of the 36 states that make up Nigeria.

Based on existing data and statistics from the 2012-2016 Corruption Index, South Africa and Nigeria have failed to improve their rankings, thus remaining as corrupt in 2016 as they were in previous years (Transparency International 2017). According to the Global Corruption Barometer (Pring 2015) citizens in Nigeria noted the high levels of corruption in public institutions, high levels of bribery and the weakness of the government's anti-corruption initiatives. In South Africa, four out of five citizens (83%) noted that corruption has increased and other results show a negative assessment of the government's anti-corruption efforts (Pring 2015).

Economic Conditions

Both Nigeria and South Africa remain economically dominant on the continent. Nigeria is considered a key power in Africa, not only because of its population of over 182 million people (2015 estimate), but also because of its political and economic role in the region (Ploch, 2012). While South Africa's population is below the 60 million mark, it continues to hold a significant role in SADC in particular and Africa in general due to its developmental role in the region and the continent.

Nigeria is one of the world's largest oil-producing countries and is believed to be Africa's leading oil producer. Apart from crude oil, the country boasts other mineral resources such as natural gas, bauxite, coal, tin, iron ore, limestone and zinc, most of which have so far remained either largely unexploited or are being explored by illegal miners. Despite its abundant mineral resources, a large proportion of the population still lives in abject poverty and Nigeria is grouped among the developing nations of the world. The country's GDP is estimated to be \$238.9 billion (2011 estimate), the real growth rate is put at 7.2% (2011 estimate), and the population below the poverty line is 70% (2007 estimate) (Central Intelligence Agency, 2012). The high level of unemployment has not improved with an increase from 13.9% in the 3rd quarter to 14.2% in the 4th quarter of 2016, according to statistics released by the National Bureau of Statistics (Iroha 2017). Figures released by the National Bureau of Statistics from the 1st quarter of 2016 put unemployed youth at 42.2% (*ThisDay Live*).

South Africa has Africa's second largest economy, with a GDP in terms of purchasing power parity (PPP) estimated at \$723.5 billion by the 2017 Index of Economic Freedom. In spite of this there is a high unemployment rate in South Africa, currently sitting at approximately 27.7%, the highest unemployment rate in the county since September 2003 (Statistics South Africa, 2017). Youth unemployment rate also rose to 38.6% in the first quarter of 2017 (Statistics South Africa, 2017).

In addition, areas of concern include the high levels of poverty and crime, and poor access to infrastructure and basic services. According to the 2017 Index of Economic Freedom, South Africa sits at 62.3% and Nigeria at 57.1% where these are concerned. Protection of property rights is weaker in Nigeria (35.3%) than in South Africa (67.6%) (2017 Index of Economic Freedom). In addition, the effectiveness of the South African judiciary (59.7%) and the integrity of its government (47.6%) are rated as being higher than in Nigeria where they are rated as 33.2% and 12.2% respectively.

Social and Cultural Conditions

South Africa still struggles with disparities of a racial nature, and Nigeria of an ethnic and religious nature, all inherited from pre-independence times. These identities continue to shape and determine political, social, and economic interactions and dynamics in both countries, and are reflected in gross disparities in wealth and other inequalities. Nigeria's most glaring political threat is that of Boko Haram, an Islamist group that has both threatened and disrupted the peace and security of the country in the name of trying to Islamise the nation. South Africa's racial dissent has not reached the same level of heightened insecurity

and increased state of chaos as Nigeria, even though racial inequalities and sentiments are felt in various social, economic and political spaces. In Nigeria, current incidences of ethno-religious violence and identity conflicts threaten peace and security in the country on a regular basis. These include the ethno-religious violence in Plateau State, inter-ethnic clashes and attacks on innocent civilians in the northern part of the country (Adamawa and Borno States) and increased cases of kidnapping that speak of the fragile peace in the country.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

According to Omodia (2009, p. 38), democratisation processes that took place in most African states in the 1990s were geared towards liberal western democracy. This emphasises the following:

- Competitive party politics through constitutionally recognised opposition
- Entrenched fundamental human rights through which the citizens could exercise political participation in the political system
- The existence and adherence to the principle of the rule of law that must guide functional conflicts regarding the processes for acquisition of power
- An independent electoral body that should be free from the influence of governmental officials and must be viewed as credible by competing parties
- The principle of political equality which respects the notion of one man, one vote and where the votes of the electorate count
- The notion of free and fair elections, where the electorate are neither intimidated nor insecure when participating in elections.

However, in reality these liberal democratic elements seem to be lacking in contemporary elections, particularly in Nigeria and South Africa. As mentioned earlier, issues like one-party dominance, electoral malpractices and violence hinder the growth of democracy in both countries.

Elections in emerging democracies are increasingly important components in the efforts to manage conflict, and also in facilitating political reform and economic growth (Long 2010). Democracies are known as systems that produce free and fair elections. Democracy also gives citizens the right to vote and align themselves with any political party. Baker (1999) and Southall (2000) further note four critical themes to audit democratic performance within the African context. These are: electoral processes, a transparent and accountable government, civil and political rights, and a society that guarantees freedom of speech and equal rights.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The cases of Nigeria and South Africa provide insights into elections, democracy and violence in burgeoning democracies. This section delves further into a comparative exercise of both countries examining four key variables: electoral violence, one-party dominance, democratic indicators and voter dynamics.

Electoral Violence

This section explores why electoral violence is higher and more destructive in Nigeria than in South Africa. In so doing it examines incidences and forms of electoral violence, performance and perceptions of electoral institutions, actors involved in electoral violence and the reasons for their participation in these two countries.

Incidence and forms of electoral violence

According to Okafor (2015, p.2) electoral violence could be regarded as an 'elections-motivated-crisis employed to alter, change or influence by force or coercion, the electoral behaviour of voters or voting patterns or possibly reverse electoral decision in favour of particular individual, groups or political party'. Using this definition, electoral violence has occurred in both Nigeria and South Africa, although to varying degrees. In the build-up to the 2015 general elections in Nigeria there were the usual tensions that have been the trademark of elections in most of its history. Violence was witnessed during campaign rallies months before the general elections. There were re-run elections in some areas that witnessed disruptions and manipulations. Okafor (2015, p. 2) gives some statistical analysis of electoral violence in Nigeria as follows:

According to IFES Reports (2007), there were 967 incidents of electoral violence in the 2007 elections. Cases of abduction and kidnapping, murder and killing protest, disruption, intimidation and physical attack as well as poster defacing all featured in the incidents. 300 people were killed on issues relating to 2007 elections. Deadly election-related and communal violence in northern Nigeria following the April 2011 Presidential voting left more than 800 people dead.

Human Rights Watch (2011)

As is typical in many developing democracies, violence often features during pre- and post-democratic elections. Ploch (2012, p. 7) observes:

Violence prior to the 2011 elections (in Nigeria) included clashes between party supporters and several assassinations. Poll-related security concerns were further heightened by a spate of bombings during political rallies, predominantly in Bayelsa state in the Niger Delta region. There were at least six bombings in April in the northeast state of Borno, where *Boko Haram*, a local militant Islamist group, has been most active. *Boko Haram* claimed responsibility in January 2011 for the assassination of the state's leading gubernatorial candidate and several of his supporters.

A review of electoral violence in South Africa shows more focus on inter-party tensions, insults and accusations amongst parties rather than the intense and violent clashes that have occurred in Nigeria. Cilliers and Aucoin (2016) note that South Africans have voted peacefully since 1994. In 1999 the level of electoral violence was less than in 1994 with a recorded number of 83 deaths, taking place mainly in the province of KwaZulu-Natal as a result of political chaos four months before the elections (Southall 2000, p. 152). In the 2014 elections, violence broke out on 8 May as a result of residents finding two dumped ballot boxes. Marais (2010) noted that 21st century South Africa is characterised by the disappearance of political violence. Cilliers and AuCoin (2016) also note that election violence was not a significant element during the 2014 elections, apart from threats made to the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). Political violence then was not as serious as it had been prior to the 1994 elections, according to political analyst Aubrey Matshiqi (Powell, 2016). Nonetheless, political intimidation does take place during South Africa's political elections. According to Bruce (2014) its most common forms include: 'manipulating people using misinformation and threats regarding pensions and grants, interfering with access to meeting facilities, the disruption of meetings, assaults and threats of physical harm and punishing people who associate with rival political parties through the denial of jobs, contracts, services and development opportunities.' While these threats might not lead to actual physical violence or human casualties, the danger they pose should not be downplayed as they threaten the ideal that individuals are free to elect whoever they choose and also threaten the physical, economic and social security of individuals.

What is worth noting are the fights and clashes in Parliament, though they are unrelated to elections. Violence erupted in Parliament when MPs from the opposition parties were forced out of the chamber by armed police after they had challenged the president over a corruption scandal (Laing, 2015). Punches, hats, and furniture were thrown with several MPs taken to the hospital and treated for minor injuries (ibid.). In 2017, the National Defence Force was deployed to

remove members of the Economic Freedom Front (EFF) during the annual State of the Nation Address.

South Africa has had fewer incidences of post-electoral violence because, borrowing from Burchard (2015), it arguably has stronger and more independent democratic institutions such as its Independent Electoral Commission, judiciary and media, than Nigeria. Furthermore, Burchard (2015) shows that the more violent and chaotic elections are, the more this limits both future participation in the election process as well as public involvement and support for democracy. Many developing countries have been plunged into violent conflict because of the lack of trust and partiality of electoral bodies. Thus it can be argued that voter apathy and poor citizen participation during elections in Nigeria are because of its violent experience during elections, which highlights the role of electoral institutions in both cases.

Electoral Reputation

In Nigeria, the electoral process has often been marred by significant flaws. For instance, in the immediate aftermath of the 2007 election, the late Nigerian President Umaru Yar'Adua acted on a personal conviction that the election that brought him into power was massively flawed with many irregularities. As a result he set up an Electoral Reform Committee (ERC), to investigate the irregularities experienced before, during and after the election and to make useful recommendations for future elections. The Committee issued its findings in December 2008, but the Nigerian government was slow to act and commenced reforms only in mid-2010 when the Parliament approved the first of several amendments to the electoral laws (Ploch 2012, p. 5). Gberie (2011, p. 1) summarises the 2011 elections in Nigeria as follows:

Nigerians went to the polls in April, to vote for members of the National Assembly, president and governors in the fourth nationwide elections to civil rule in 1999. The elections have been deemed to be the most organised, free and fair in the country's history, but they are far from flawless. International observers described the votes as a 'significant improvement' over the previous ones, which is a correct characterisation. Pre-election violence, including bomb attacks (which killed dozens of people) as well as the cumbersome new voting system used, in which registered voters had to be certified at designated polling booths in the morning and then vote in the afternoon, ensured that there was a low turn-out.

The readiness of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) was questioned at various times before and during the 2015 elections. This was especially when the smart card readers for voters' accreditation made available by the electoral body failed to work at several polling booths, causing initial tensions and even pandemonium in these areas. Notwithstanding, there are a few critical issues that call for urgent review and assessment in order to ensure future electoral successes. Firstly, it is imperative to examine how independent the electoral body is, and how impartial it is in discharging its duties. During the 2015 general elections, INEC displayed a degree of trust and independence, and that was obvious even as the incumbent federal government lost to an opposition party. Credit should be given to the national government for allowing INEC to go about its work without interference. Furthermore, the use of more experienced individuals and intellectuals as returning officers by INEC during the election also facilitated the electoral process and averted the challenges posed by inexperienced polling station agents. To this end INEC employed vice-chancellors of federal and state universities in Nigeria as returning officers.

South Africa's Electoral Commission has garnered a reputation for successfully conducting five national elections and has been recognised internationally for its efforts. The 2004 elections were an example of this as the requisite logistics and security measures to protect ballots were already in place prior to the elections. Furthermore there were no official observer delegations from the European Union or Commonwealth. According to the chairperson of the Commission this was because they felt comfortable enough with the elections process and that South Africa had reached a level which did not require observation from those bodies (Le Roux 2004). The presence of other observer missions from African countries such as Swaziland, Botswana, Namibia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, was for them to learn from the South African experience (Le Roux 2004). This is because South African elections provide a useful role model on how to successfully conduct and complete elections.

Though South Africa's track record is not unblemished, it has proved more credible and independent than its Nigerian counterpart. In 2016 the Constitutional Court noted that the IEC was 'inconsistent with the rule of law' in failing to secure addresses for all individuals on the country's voters' roll. The Court however emphasised that these inconsistencies did not render the elections invalid, thus further protecting the credibility of the institution. The IEC is also acknowledged for the fact that individuals can seek redress from the Electoral Court and it has shown its impartiality very strongly (Masterson 2016).

Actors and Reasons for Electoral Violence

Key distinguishing factors in both Nigeria and South Africa are the actors involved in electoral violence, and the reasons for this violence. Main players in Nigeria

include the extremist group Boko Haram, which has greatly impeded election efforts in Northern Nigeria. Okafor (2015, p. 2) suggests that electoral violence is mostly perpetrated by the youth who are hired by politicians, particularly in previous elections in Nigeria. However, in some incidences teenagers and older adults have also become involved in political thuggery and are often used by politicians to destabilise electoral processes. Abah and Nwokuwu (2015, pp. 41-42) suggested key predisposing factors for electoral violence in Nigeria to include: lack of fairness and transparency in the electoral process, non-credibility of the electoral body, ineffectiveness of law enforcement agencies, inordinate political ambition, ethnic politics, unemployment, the colourful nature of Nigerian politics, and of course, corruption. Some of these triggers of electoral violence are also apparent in South Africa, together with challenges to the law enforcement agencies, individual political ambitions, racialised politics, and unemployment.

Poverty and unemployment are crucial reasons for the youth to engage in or allow themselves to be used by aggrieved politicians during elections. Wealth disparities continue to plague both Nigeria and South Africa, but to varying degrees of intensity. For example, the ratio of the rate of poverty in Nigeria and South Africa is 55.2% to 39.6% respectively (UNDP, 2014). In South Africa, youth unemployment between the ages of 15-24 is 51.5% and unemployment rate for those aged 15 years and older is 25.1% (UNDP, 2014). While there is no UNDP data on youth unemployment in Nigeria, the unemployment rate for those aged 15 years and older is 24% (UNDP, 2014). Dr. Yemi Kale, Statistician-General, National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), puts the current rate of unemployment in Nigeria at 24%, while the poverty rate for 2009-2010 and 2013-2014 stands at 64.2% and 62.6% respectively (World Bank 2013, p. 9). 'The consequences of youth unemployment are arguably a major contributor to the myriad of social vices being inflicted on the country' (*Daily Newswatch*, 2013). Nowadays, it is often perceived that holding public office is an avenue for exploitation and self-enrichment – a development to the detriment of democracy in Africa (Opasina 2016, p. 43). Consequently, elections are seen as a 'do or die' affair, and politicians may go to any length in order to actualise their dreams. Nigeria is no exception. Idle youths are often sponsored by aggrieved politicians to disturb the public peace and to make the country ungovernable for their political opponents who are in power.

In South Africa, youths are not engaged in electoral violence to the same extent as in Nigeria, as the focus seems to be on other, more important and pressing issues. Protests since 2010 and more recently in 2016-2017 are due to issues with service delivery, university fees, labour issues, and calls for the resignation of the president. In the pre-election period these protests could easily be manipulated by politicians and the media thereby resulting in violence during elections; but this is not necessarily election-related violence. These protests are therefore in

response to those political officials already in office and their failure to meet existing social and economic needs and demands. A review of election-related violence shows that these attacks usually involve gunmen targeting political candidates and activists in municipal elections, and protesters torching vehicles and tires while throwing rocks and looting shops because they disagree with a political candidate (Powell 2016). The assassination of political candidates has become a major source of concern, and because of the persistent threats to their safety political aspirants are frightened off from running for political office.

One-Party Dominance

This section examines power alternations in both countries and the factors for this. It also tries to understand the more recent shift in Nigeria and why South Africa, on the other hand, has failed to shift from a dominant one-party system.

Since 1999, Nigeria's Constitution and electoral acts have consistently supported multi-party systems as it has always been a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious nation. Bogaards (2004, p. 173) argues that 'multi-party elections do not lead automatically to multi-party systems'. In Bogaards' view, multi-party politics have led to the emergence of dominant parties and often to the dominance of a single political party, particularly in countries where governments have stayed in power for a long period. A case in point is the PDP in Nigeria, which had been the dominant ruling party since the beginning of the Fourth Republic in 1999 until the opposition APC unseated them in the 2015 general election. In South Africa the African National Congress (ANC) has ruled since 1994. Bogaards (2004, pp. 174-175) further observes that 'party dominance can usefully be distinguished by means of four criteria: the threshold for dominance; the inclusion or exclusion of opposition features; in presidential systems of government; the presence or absence of divided government; and the time-span taken into account.'

There are several lessons that can be learned from Nigeria's 2015 general elections. Firstly, the outcome of the elections saw an end to the domination of the one-party system. A large number of Nigerians wanted change and were determined to cast their votes for the main opposition party. Many reasons informed their decision; these included insecurity caused by the threat of Boko Haram, high unemployment, and the high rate of corruption. The main opposition party, the APC, also stepped up its game by strategically fielding candidates whom the population assumed would be able to meet their yearnings.

While South Africa also supports a multi-party democratic system, this has not been reflected in its political environment. The ANC remains the dominant political party as it has been since the country's first democratic elections after the

end of the apartheid regime in 1994. The proportional representation (PR) system, allocates parliamentary seats to political parties based on the percentage of votes they obtain in elections. This has provided smaller parties with an opportunity to win seats, but it could also be a reason for the ANC's continued dominance in the different spheres of government. However, this dominance can be limited by the presence of constituency representatives at the local level.

Consequently the lack of a strong opposition in terms of numbers could hinder the achievement of a more democratic South Africa and a stronger multi-party system. However, the continued dominance of the ANC (although this is now dropping) shows that democracy can still grow. This is exemplified by the increase in popular dissatisfaction with the ANC since 1994, the rise of new parties like the EFF, led by Julius Malema, and the fact that the Democratic Alliance (DA) has been steadily obtaining more votes. While other parties like the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) lost votes by 2.4% and 0.8% in the 2009 elections respectively, the Congress of the People (COPE) emerged with 7.4% of the total votes even though it did not win any seats in the 2004 elections. According to Southall (2000), the continued dominance of a single party raises questions about its impact on minority groups and their interests, how its control can result in a corrupt and arrogant dictatorship, and whether the opposition can still hold the executive accountable. The ANC-dominated Parliament is one example of the presence and strength of the party in political structures.

This dominance of the ANC even in the last elections stems from the fact that many black South Africans align with and vote for the party. This is particularly because of its role as the major liberation movement in opposing and bringing an end to the apartheid government. It is also part of a tripartite alliance with the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), which strengthened its dominance in the labour arena. The landslide victory by the ANC in 1994 showed the strong allegiance to the party and popular belief in its promise of a better future for many who had struggled and lost their loved ones during the apartheid era. The 1994 elections were noted as a positive development in South Africa's political history and according to Southall (2000) were generally deemed fair and free, though some viewed the process as set up to favour the ANC. These views were supported by factors such as the fact that the ANC used its control of public resources to improve its electoral advantage; in particular, the public news corporation, the SABC, was partisan in offering more support for the ANC than for opposition parties (Southall, 2000). While the ANC's dominance remains unrivalled and will remain so unless some significant shift in voter allegiance occurs, this raises issues of whether democracy will deliver anticipated gains for the electorate.

Suffice it to say that apartheid has had a significant impact on the consolidation of democracy in South Africa. An important outcome of that regime has been the priority of subsequent democratic governments to redress the inequalities and marginalisation of the apartheid regime. This priority has been verbally expressed by presidents and key political actors and is grounded in the Constitution of the country. This Constitution is a key factor in consolidating democracy as it gives priority to the rights of all peoples and promotes the democratic principles of human dignity, freedom and equality. At the time of its drafting, it was important that the Constitution make a solid statement heralding the shift from a strong authoritarian government to one that respected the freedoms of individuals, including the freedom of expression and of religion, belief and opinion. In achieving the ideas of equality and human dignity, another significant development was the creation of the Black Empowerment Program (BEP) during the tenure of President Mbeki. This was considered to be part of the process of reversing the inequalities legislated by the apartheid government which 'systematically excluded African, Indian and "coloured" (mixed race) people from meaningful participation in the economy' (Smith 2009). While the BEP was created with the main aim of redressing the inequalities of apartheid, it has been criticised for benefitting only a select few loyal to the governing ANC.

The apartheid regime and experience showed the need for multi-party politics and the creation of human rights bodies and other Chapter 9 institutions as key components in the new democratic dispensation. These institutions include the Office of the Public Protector, the Commission for the Promotion and the Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities (CRL Rights Commission) and the Commission of Gender Equality (CGE). Protecting this nascent democracy also required a transparent and effective IEC, which despite its challenges has delivered on its mandate to ensure free and fair elections. More importantly the rule of law was and is a recognisable and integral part of the new democratic South Africa. How these have fared since 1994 shows that more needs to be done to protect the democracy of the country against elements of the past from featuring in the current South African state. Lotshwao (2009, p. 970) states that due to the dominance of the ANC, the South African state is defined as:

An unresponsive and unaccountable government enabled by a dominant party that continues to win elections despite its increasing remoteness from the electorate; within the party, policies dictated by the leadership and prominent members; iron control exercised through Leninist principles by the party leadership over its cadres; and the consequent inability of these cadres deployed in various state institutions to hold the executive accountable or influence public policy.

Suttner (2015) notes that those in government have been 'party to attacks on foreign migrants, defiance of the courts over Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir and other underminings of constitutionalism and general failures to provide basic needs like shelter, clean water and adequate educational facilities'.

Political party dynamics: a comparison of Nigeria and South Africa

Nigeria's first period of democratic governance, between 1960 and 1966, was modelled on the British parliamentary system. According to Omoweh and van den Boom (2005, p. 23), 'it was the inability of the people to grapple with politics, especially political competition along democratic line[s] since it was not on the agenda that accounted largely for the intervention of the military in the country's politics in January 1966'. Nigeria's Second Republic commenced in 1979 and lasted until 1983, and during that period the country adopted the presidential system of government modelled on the United States (US).

Unfortunately, that era was short-lived because of the military seizure of power in 1983 which resulted in a return to an authoritarian regime. Another attempt at returning to civilian rule was in 1993, when elections were held during the administration of General Ibrahim Babangida. During that time, Nigeria practised a two-party system and fielded candidates from two registered political parties, namely the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and National Republican Convention (NRC). Analysts agree that the 1993 presidential election, which could have culminated in a full return to civilian rule, was conducted in a free and fair manner. However, the election was annulled by the Babangida administration. The situation became increasingly tense and violence erupted in the aftermath of the annulment. It was not until 1999 that the administration of General Abdulsalami Abubakar handed over power to a democratically-elected president, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo. Since then there have been ups and downs and several challenges that successive civilian administrations have contended with, especially as a result of the military interregnum in Nigerian politics.

Political parties are often confronted with the task of conducting primaries aimed at selecting candidates to be their flagbearers in general elections. In Nigeria, it was not an easy task for the 28 registered political parties for the 2015 general election because there were disagreements and intra-party crises, which led to many cases of cross-carpeting², or crossing the floor. During campaigns, politicians traded insults and used abusive language to intimidate their opponents. In many cases, this political intimidation led to violence and further tensions. Politicians used political debates to attack their opponents' personalities rather

2 The term connotes deflection from one political party to another.

than their performances or political achievements. Many of the politicians also used thugs to disrupt rallies and campaigns.

Party cross-carpeting has become a major feature of Nigeria's political landscape. Aggrieved party members and aspiring political candidates frequently switch over to another political party when they have either lost at their party's primaries or fall out with the leadership of the political parties they previously belonged to. Of course, any opposition party would gladly welcome new members into its fold in order to build on its membership base, and the 2015 general election was no exception. For instance, in Oyo State³, a popular political figure in the opposition party, the PDP, lost at the state primaries. He then decided to cross over to the Labour Party, where he sought to become its flagbearer. Due to his influence and popularity, he was promptly admitted into the Labour Party where he subsequently became the flagbearer against the wish of other aspirants and founding party members.

South Africa has had its own share of defections, though fewer than in Nigeria. Major defections like the move of Julius Malema, former president of the ANC Youth League (ANCYL), to form the EFF, and other members to form COPE, are some examples of party defectors. Recent events, however, show that challenges to the party will come from within and where key political actors leave their party this could potentially increase the strength, numbers and influence of opposition parties (Cheeseman 2017).

Several reasons can be cited as to why cross-carpeting might not be healthy for democracy, although people have the freedom to choose whichever political party they wish to join. In some cases, there have been situations where a political office holder would cross to a new party despite the fact that he or she was nominated and elected by the former party. Politicians are also fond of associating with and switching to the ruling party to avoid being probed for corrupt practices. It may be difficult for political office holders to probe party faithful and loyal members. One thing is certain; each political party has its own ideology and guiding principles and any a party member crossing to another party would have to contend with the ideology and principles of the new organisation.

Another important issue within political parties is the imposition of candidates as flagbearers by the so-called political godfathers during party primaries. There have been cases of election-rigging during the party nomination process. Sometimes incumbents use that platform to impose themselves to the detriment of democratic values. According to Ojukwu and Olaifa (2011, p. 31):

3 Oyo State is a state in south-west Nigeria. Its capital is Ibadan.

Perhaps, the drama that was displayed by PDP on December 16, 2006 at the Eagle's Square, Abuja during the presidential primaries is still fresh in memories. Studies reveal that days prior to the primaries, it was obvious to many perceptive minds that Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, the then Governor of Katsina State and late entrant to the presidential race for the party, would emerge winner. This was not unconnected with the alleged 'behind-the-scene' deals that played out before the primaries. The development perhaps, made aspirants like Peter Odili, Donald Duke, Sam Egwu to suddenly withdraw from the race and perhaps forced to support Yar'Adua's candidacy. Anyhow, the party submitted that it only adopted 'consensus' approach at the eleventh hour.

In South Africa, the ANC has recently faced one of its biggest challenges with the president's removal of competent cabinet ministers and replacement with loyalists. One could however argue that in spite of public protests and public opposition by key members from the South African Communist Party (SACP), Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the ANC, this has not significantly affected the cohesion and core of the party. This act (which some have referred to as clientelism and patronage politics), is already a common occurrence in Nigeria's political parties. It could move South Africa towards a less democratic system where groups and individuals push forward their personal interests in place of party or national interest. According to Cheeseman (2017), South Africa can thus learn from Nigeria that the entrenchment and positioning of politics and government founded on personal networks and clientelism can easily occur at the centre. To avoid this outcome, Cheeseman (2017) thus notes that it might be important to remove those individuals that encourage and fuel this system, in order to avoid normalising such a practice.

Political candidates often employ varied tactics to entice voters during electoral campaigns. One such is the politics of 'stomach infrastructure', which is not a new concept in the Nigerian polity. Several attempts have been made to define the concept of stomach infrastructure. For instance, Stober (2016, p. 455) is of the opinion that 'stomach infrastructure' is more about the people's welfare than the mere distribution of food items, customised or branded materials like t-shirts, umbrellas, and cash. Regardless, Nigerian politicians and political parties often employ the concept to win over voters. Unfortunately, there have been cases where politicians have handed out cash to voters on election days, and incidences of voter card buying from some electorate. Moreover, there have been cases where politicians resort to the use of political thugs to intimidate their opponents and mar the electoral process. In previous elections in Nigeria it was discovered that there is a connection between money in politics and electoral violence. Often, money is used by politicians to hire thugs and assassins, as well as to bribe election

officials and security agents, in order to maim or kill political opponents and to disrupt the electoral process.

The role of money in South Africa's elections has garnered significant coverage, particularly regarding the sources of funds received by political parties, the desire to keep these private, and the view that the distribution processes of government funding to political parties is not fair. Attention to vote-buying within the ANC has been raised by prominent party politicians like ANC NEC member Lindiwe Sisulu (Bendile 2017) and current Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa (Cohen & Mkokeli 2017). Reported incidences of vote-buying in the ANC include the bulk purchase of membership cards and claiming non-existent members (*ibid.*). The use of government-funded food parcels has also been used to dredge up support for the ANC in by-elections (Bruce 2014). In a report by Bruce (2014) for the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE), an interview respondent linked the DA to vote-buying and causing chaos at polling stations in the Western Cape. In 2013, Trade union COSATU stated that the DA's donation of one-million rand to e-tolling opposing group, Organisation Undoing Tax Abuse (OUTA) constituted vote-buying (Miya 2013). This action was also discouraged by South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL), which described it as making OUTA a political proxy (Miya 2013). These examples of vote-buying paint parties in a bad light and thus sully their reputations.

Another dimension of concern is the use of money in South Africa to hire thugs and killers. According to news reports (Olifant 2017; eNCA 2017; and Independent Online 2017) hitmen have been hired to carry out political assassinations and attack politicians, particularly at municipal level. According to eNCA (2017), witnesses in the Moerane Commission investigating political killings in Durban, testified that hitmen from the Glebelands hostel in Durban South had assassinated selected individuals. Their reasons ranged from politics, power, financial gain, criminality, and the failure of government and police – both the South African Police Service and the Durban metro police.

Democratic Indicators

Using O'Day's (2007) democratic indicators, as published by the National Democratic Institute (NDI), the authors of this paper carried out a comparative assessment of 60 democratic indicators in Nigeria and South Africa. They used recent democratic elections in both countries as shown below (see Table 1).⁴

4 The selections and views are those of two individual respondents with wide experience in the Nigerian and South African media and who have reported extensively on elections in both countries. Thus these views are not a reflection of the broader population of either country.

These indicators show that democracy is stronger in South Africa than in Nigeria. The paper considers what these indicators are and why democracy is stronger in South Africa.

Scale:

Absolutely not	1
Mostly not	2
Sometimes	3
Mostly yes	4
Absolutely yes	5

Table 1
Comparative Assessment of Democratic Indicators between Nigeria and South Africa

	Civil Rights	Nigeria	South Africa
1.	Are people free of physical violation of their person or property?	2	4
2.	Do people have the freedom of movement, expression, and association?	3	4
3.	Do people have the freedom to practice their own religion, language or culture?	4	4
	Economic and Social Rights		
1.	Are basic necessities of life provided for, including adequate food, shelter and clean water?	2	3
2.	Is the right to a decent and adequate education protected and provided for?	2	3
3.	Do the citizens have the right to own property or establish private businesses without undue government influence?	4	4
4.	Is there equal opportunity and absence of corruption and exploitation in economic matters such as access to higher education, employment, buying and selling of products, running businesses, etc.?	1	3
5.	Is the choice of residence, the choice of employment, ability to get an education and other personal aspects of an individual's life free of government control?	3	4
	Civic and Political Participation		

1.	Is there a wide range of voluntary associations, citizen groups, social movements, etc. and are they independent of political parties and the government?	2	4
2.	Do women participate in political life and public office at all levels?	2	4
3.	Do all social groups have equal access to public office and are they fairly represented within it?	1	2
4.	Is there academic freedom and is the educational system free of extensive political influence or indoctrination?	2	4
5.	Is there open and free private discussion on all issues?	2	4
6.	Is there freedom of assembly, demonstration, and open public discussion on all issues?	3	4
7.	Are religious institutions, civic organizations, student organizations, unions, and other organizations free of government and political pressure?	2	3
Political Parties			
1.	Are political parties free to form, recruit members and campaign for office?	4	4
2.	Are opposition or non-governing parties free to organize within the legislature and contribute to government accountability?	3	4
3.	Are party and candidate finances transparent and free of corruption?	1	2
4.	Are people's political choices free of interference by government and military institutions?	2	4
Free and Fair Elections			
1.	Are electoral laws fair for all political parties and groups?	3	4
2.	Is registration and voting open to all citizens who meet fair requirements?	4	4
3.	Do the voters have a wide range of choices in the election of political parties and candidates?	3	4
4.	Are government officials in executive positions of power subject to regular competitive elections?	1	2
5.	Do all political parties and candidates have fair access to participate in elections?	3	3

6.	Are there equal campaigning opportunities for all political parties including equal and fair access to the media and means of communication with voters?	2	3
7.	Is there fair polling and honest tabulation of the ballots?	3	4
8.	Do the government and other political forces accept the results of the election?	3	4
9.	9. Is it possible or realistic for opposition parties to win power through the election process?	4	4
10.	10. Is it possible for there to be a peaceful transfer of power from the ruling party to the opposition?	4	4
Rule of Law			
1.	1. Is there an independent judiciary free from executive or outside pressures?	2	4
2.	2. Are all citizens, including those in positions of power, treated equally under the law?	2	3
3.	3. Is there protection from police terror, unjustified imprisonment, exile, or torture?	3	4
4.	4. Do citizens have confidence in the legal system to deliver fair and effective justice?	2	3
Military and Police Control			
1.	1. Is political life free of police and military involvement?	3	3
2.	2. Are the police and security services publicly accountable for their activities?	2	2
3.	3. Do the army, police and security services reflect the social composition of society at large?	3	4
4.	4. Is the country free of paramilitary units, private armies, warlords and criminal mafias?	1	3
5.	5. Does the civilian government have effective control over the police, security and armed forces?	4	4
Government Accountability			
1.	1. Are the executive agencies and their administrative staff open to scrutiny and control by the elected leaders?	2	3
2.	2. Does the legislature have the power to scrutinize executive officials and hold them accountable?	3	4

3.	Does the legislature have the power to initiate, scrutinize and amend legislation?	4	3
4.	Are public budgets and expenditures transparent and open to public scrutiny?	3	4
5.	Do the citizens have the right of access to government information?	3	4
6.	Do freely elected representatives determine the policies of the government?	4	4
7.	Is the government free of pervasive corruption?	2	2
Corruption			
1.	Is there adequate separation between public offices, both elected and unelected and the political party advantage, personal business, and family interests of the office holders?	3	1
2.	Are there effective arrangements for protecting office holders and the public from bribery and corruption?	1	2
3.	Are there rules and procedures effectively regulating the influence of special interests in the financing of elections, candidates and elected representatives?	2	3
4.	Are powerful corporations and business interests prevented from exerting undue influence over public policy and kept free from the involvement in corruption?	2	3
5.	Do the people have confidence that public officials and public services are free from corruption?	1	1
Media			
1.	1. Is the media independent from the government?	3	4
2.	2. Is the media representative of different opinions and accessible to different sections of society?	3	3
3.	3. Are the media and other independent organizations effective in investigating the government, political parties and powerful corporations?	3	3
4.	4. Are journalists free from restrictive laws, harassment and intimidation?	2	4
Government Responsiveness			
1.	1. Does the elected legislature reflect the social composition of the population?	2	4

2.	2. Are there open and systematic procedures to allow the public to consult on government policy and legislation?	2	4
3.	3. Are elected representatives accessible to their constituents?	2	2
4.	4. Are public services accessible and reliable for those who need them?	2	3
5.	5. Do the people have confidence in the ability of government to solve the main problems confronting society?	1	3
6.	Do the people have confidence in their own ability to influence the government?	1	2
	Total Points	148	200

Legend: Divide the total score by 60, to obtain a 'Democracy Score', according to the following scale:

- Least democratic 1.0 – 1.9
- Less democratic 2.0 – 2.9
- More democratic 3.0 – 3.9
- Most democratic 4.0 – 5.0

For Nigeria, the total count (148) divided by 60 gives 2.47. Nigeria ranks in the 'Less democratic' category. For South Africa, the total count (200) divided by 60 gives it a score of 3.33, thus ranking it in the 'More democratic' category. As we can see from the democratic indicator assessment, South Africa performed much better than Nigeria.

Several factors are responsible for Nigeria's performance in relation to democracy and the creation of public apathy. These include economic challenges such as the high rate of poverty and unemployment (Oluwatosin & Abolarin-Egbebi 2015, p. 41). According to these authors, 'political corruption is pandemic in Nigeria, manifesting as bureaucratic and electoral malpractices, bribery, fraud, embezzlement, extortion, favouritism and nepotism in the political scene' (Oluwatosin & Abolarin-Egbebi, 2015). Also, voter apathy in Nigeria is due to a number of reasons such as the high rate of insecurity, political intimidation and lack of confidence in the electoral mechanism. These will be discussed in the next section of this paper.

While 1994 has been described as the beginning of democracy in South Africa, or at any rate the first step towards achieving that system of government, 23 years later much remains to be done. The 1994 elections were monumental and revolutionary as they brought together a racially divided electorate to vote for a government of their own choosing. It is also true that major changes have

taken place and South Africa is in many regards much better than it was 23 years ago. Some of the positive changes from the apartheid-era include freedom of movement, a functioning government, one of the strongest constitutions in the world, economic transformation, and access to health and education. Noteworthy was the change in the balance of political power, which has led to black people dominating the political space.

While these developments are noteworthy, any assessment of democracy in South Africa raises some key challenges and issues. Poor service delivery, a high unemployment rate, the poor quality of public education and high levels of inequality pervade South African society. According to Afrobarometer (2015), unemployment (44%), crime/security (12%), and poverty (8%) were identified as the most pressing problems facing the country between 2000 and 2011. Citizen approval of the government has been consistently low with regards to its efforts to alleviate poverty, inequality and unemployment, particularly between 2008 and 2011 (Afrobarometer, 2015).

There is a high prevalence of corruption in state institutions and amongst state officials. Together with the idea of the Protection of State Information Bill, which permits the protection of sensitive state information, this threatens the democratic advances made in South Africa's political and social context. Most notable was the Public Prosecutor's provisional report that President Jacob Zuma used public monies to upgrade his private home in Nkandla (*Mail and Guardian* 2013), something which has caused further friction between the ANC, DA and the EFF. The report, released in March 2014, noted that R246 million had been earmarked for the project with R215 million already spent (Madonsela 2014, p. 4). The report also noted that the security installations in Presidents Zuma's private residence far exceeded that of all his predecessors, from former President Botha to President Mbeki (Madonsela 2014, pp. 50-51). While a parliamentary committee on the matter concluded that the president did not need to repay the money, the DA and EFF joined together for a direct approach to the Constitutional Court on the Nkandla issue (Hunter 2015 and Gqirana 2015). According to Lotshwao (2009, p. 903), the accusation of corruption is further fuelled by the fact that there is a lack of intra-party democracy within the ANC, and this reduces the influence of supporters in the making of government policy and decisions. Lotshwao (*ibid.*) also notes that the ANC dominates institutions responsible for ensuring accountability.

Voter Dynamics

This section briefly examines voter dynamics, particularly issues of voter apathy and voter insecurity, as they relate to participation in elections.

Voter Apathy

Table 2
Nigerian Population, Registration and Voter Turn-Out from 1999 to 2011

Year	Voter Turn-out	Total Vote	Registration	VAP Turn-out	Voting Age Population (VAP)	Invalid Votes	Population
2011	53.68%	39 469, 484	73 528 040	48.32%	81 691 751	3.19%	155 215,57
2007	58%	*	61 567 036	*	71 004 507	*	131 859 73
2003	69.08%	42 018 735	60 823 022	65.33%	64 319 246	6%	129 934 91
1999	52.26%	30 280 052	57 938 945	57.36%	52 792 781	1.4%	108 258 35

No official figure for indicators marked *

Source: Yusufu 2012, p.47

Table 2 above shows marked voter apathy in Nigeria. This is corroborated by the findings of Falade (2014, p. 22), which suggest that political participation, particularly voting during elections, is very low in Nigeria. Key reasons for voter apathy in Nigeria include: volatile security, political intimidation, poor political education, election rigging, staggered elections, voting system (accreditation being separated from voting especially in the 2011 general election) and a lack of confidence in the electoral system. However, a new policy with accreditation and simultaneous voting has been approved by the current INEC leadership with Professor Mahmood Yakubu as the chairman.

According to the IEC (2014) voter apathy in South Africa has declined significantly since 1994, from 86.87% in 1994 and 89.2% in 1999 to 73.48% in 2014 (Oyedemi & Mahlatji, 2016). Oyedemi and Mahlatji (2016) wrote that the level of voter apathy among young South Africans is particularly alarming because it is still a young democracy. Reasons for poor youth participation in elections include the constant battles with poverty, inequality and unemployment as well as dissatisfaction with the current political environment in all the three spheres of government (Tracey 2013; Oyedemi & Mahlatji, 2016). A distinction must however be made between participation during elections, and community participation, the latter being a space where youths are actively involved through community protests (Oyedemi & Mahlatji, 2016).

Voter Insecurity

For myriad reasons, including that of insecurity because of the activities of Boko Haram in north-eastern Nigeria, analysts, stakeholders and onlookers projected a very slim likelihood of Nigeria holding a general election in 2015. Furthermore, the election management body INEC shocked Nigerians when it announced the postponement of the election dates by six weeks. While some supported this action, the majority of the population expressed their disappointment. The primary reason for the postponement was to give President Goodluck Jonathan's administration more time to tackle the threat of insurgency, particularly in the north. This was in order to provide an enabling and secure environment for all eligible voters to exercise their civic rights, and for INEC to complete the distribution of permanent voter's cards across the country. The presidential and parliamentary elections were finally held on 28 March 2015, while the gubernatorial and legislative elections took place on 11 April 2015. Nigerians went to the poll fearing the unknown. According to statistics, the number of registered voters was 67 422 005 (International IDEA, 2015). However, only 29 432 083 (representing 48%) turned out to vote (ibid.). There were also recorded cases of violence and ballot box snatching at some accredited polling units across the country. There is a large gap between the number of registered voters compared to the number who actually turned out to vote. One reason for this, especially for those voters in insurgency-affected areas, was the fear of being attacked, although there was also the issue of voter apathy. Prospective voters need more than mere promises of peace and security. They want to see the government taking clear steps and realistic actions towards addressing security issues.

While South Africa has also had its fears of electoral violence and violent events during elections, it has for the most part been able to ensure the safety and security of its citizens. The South African Police Services (SAPS) have been instrumental in providing security for voters at various posts across the country to ensure that elections are free, safe and successful. For the fifth local government elections in 2016, SAPS announced the deployment of approximately 60 000 officers, and a further 40 000 mobile police to monitor over 22 000 voting stations across the country (Orderson, 2016). This was due to fears of politically motivated violence as voter insecurity is often reflected in community attacks. This is especially true of local government elections, when the police have been called on to prevent violence and protect citizens.

The Role of Technology in Elections

The question of whether Nigeria is ready for electronic voting has been on the minds of stakeholders for some time. For instance, in preparation for the 2011

election, INEC introduced the use of the biometric permanent voter's card (PVC), smart card reader machine and other technological innovations, in order to control electoral fraud. While a cross-section of Nigerians both in Nigeria and abroad believe that the country is ready for electronic voting, other observers think that several factors would hinder its successful implementation. They argue that factors such as an erratic power supply, which has deteriorated over the years, as well as huge logistical demands, could prevent the adoption of e-voting. Notwithstanding, Nigeria's National Assembly and in particular the Senate, has amended the 2010 Electoral Act in March 2017 to accommodate the use of smart card readers for the authentication of accredited voters. It has also approved the use of e-voting for future elections (Umoru 2017).

Technology has played a major role in South Africa's electoral process and is deemed useful in ensuring both credibility and transparency. Technology has been used to facilitate and improve voter registration processes and the entire voting process. It has become invaluable in ensuring that the process is effective and efficient. For instance, in the May 2014 elections, the IEC spokesperson noted the use of handheld scanners. These were used to scan the identification cards of voters, and other equipment was used to scan forms to provide the residential location of voters (Clotney 2014). This was critical for establishing the location or area of residence of voters. For its 1999 elections, technology was delivered via helicopter and by road to different communities in provinces like the Eastern Cape, to register individuals and ensure they voted in the national election. The IEC learnt some lessons from the challenges in the first democratic elections of 1994, such as poor security response, lack of capacity to manage the high numbers of voters and insufficient voting supplies (Huma 1999). By 1999 they were better prepared and had developed an information technology infrastructure to support the elections (Huma 1999). A comprehensive geographical information system (GIS) and maps were further developed for demarcating boundaries and directing voters to their specific voting booths (Huma 1999). The Electoral Commission has worked hard and in collaboration with various institutions to ensure the efficiency of South Africa's electoral system in collecting, tabulating and verifying results from various centres. So much so that it was described as surpassing anything the First World could achieve (Huma 1999).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Nigeria

Voters and other stakeholders evinced considerable concern about the volatile security situation in Nigeria, given the incidents of violence which erupted in parts of the country before and after the recent elections. Adequate security would

motivate voters and electoral officials to exercise their civic rights and perform their duties respectively.

The need to improve the electoral management bodies in Nigeria (Independent National Electoral Commission and State Independent Electoral Commission) is obvious. Again, training and capacity building of electoral officers has become necessary in order to enhance their efficiency. The EMBs should give more priority to addressing issues relating to logistics, which could affect the credibility of future elections. Electoral reform should be geared towards further amendments of the Constitution and Electoral Act, in order to improve compliance with international electoral standards. For instance, provisions should be made for the establishment of an electoral offences commission and a political parties registration and regulatory commission. Such commissions would ensure that political parties and candidates adhere strictly to electoral rules and regulations. Parties or candidates who flout electoral guidelines should be sanctioned and made to face the consequences. Also, the electoral act should make provisions for voters to lodge complaints when their electoral rights are being violated.

The use of smart card readers for voter accreditation in a country where power is erratic poses a huge challenge to the smooth running of electoral process. This was the case in the 2015 general election. Electoral officers found it difficult to fix the problem, resorting to the use of generators freely lent to them by nearby residents who were also frustrated by the slow process. Nigeria has been battling with an erratic power supply for years. In contrast, the power system in South Africa has been relatively stable.

Successive administrations in Nigeria have been unsuccessful in tackling the problem, despite several electoral promises. Future elections would run more smoothly when important logistics like the smart card readers function effectively without any hindrance. Election experts have agitated for electronic voting because it is faster and tends to be accessible. But there is some doubt as to whether developing nations are ready for electronic voting and whether they have the means and capacity to convert from manual counting. Nigerians living abroad are often side-lined, firstly from registering as voters, and secondly from the actual voting. Introducing electronic voting could address the disenfranchisement of the diaspora population because as citizens of the country they too should be entitled to vote.

South Africa

While South Africa has a very efficient, organised and technologically advanced system in place to limit or at best avoid any forms of electoral fraud, its electoral system is far from perfect. These imperfections and lapses are a result of its

current electoral system. One criticism of proportional representation has been its contribution to the dominant one-party system which gives precedence to voting for political parties rather than individual representatives per constituency, the latter being a more transparent and democratic process. In the proportional system, parties have the upper hand in choosing the calibre and quality of individuals appointed to parliament, some of whom have questionable reputations and may lack the experience and skills for those positions. These individuals also focus solely on pushing forward the party's agenda. A representative democracy with individuals voted in by their constituents could offer a possible solution to the current system.

Attention must also be given to why people vote in the first place – that is to ensure that whoever they elect will focus on meeting their needs. These include access to economic opportunities, provision of quality and timely services, poverty alleviation and employment. It is important also that South Africa's democratic process be sustainable, thus a priority should be to rebuild voter trust and confidence in elected officials. In addition, improving the application and implementation of the rule of law; executive accountability; and avoiding abuse of executive power are integral to the sustainability of South Africa's electoral experience.

This paper provides a comparative analysis of elections and democracy in Nigeria and South Africa and key lessons from both. Most importantly, these have shown that elections in Africa still require significant political will, and human and financial commitment to ensure that these processes are safe, free, fair and successful. This includes financial resources to provide the right technology and increase the presence of security officials. It also involves improving accountability; ensuring the freedom of individuals to run for political office without fear for their safety; and increasing the efficiency of individuals and institutions tasked with running the elections. Secondly, both cases highlight the gaps and challenges to democracies which could inhibit further economic growth and development. These include corrupt governments, security concerns and disregard for the rule of law and the constitution. There is a lesson for less developed countries on the continent, that while a strong economy is important, as is the case in Nigeria and South Africa, weak state institutions and poor electoral processes remain a threat to democracy.

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YOUTH, PROTEST AND THE 2014 NATIONAL ELECTIONS: *The Case of Zamdela, Sasolburg*

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ABSTRACT

There is a general perception that youth are apathetic to local politics and national elections. At the same time, young people are often at the forefront of protest. Both electoral politics and protest are forms of political participation; however, the relationship between the two is under-explored. In Zamdela, young people were politicised by two events: the January 2013 protest, and the formation of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) in mid-2014. In addition, many youth are simply conflicted by the lack of service delivery by the ruling party and the lack of viable alternatives in elections. Using qualitative data, this article traces and thematically analyses the political attitudes of youth in Zamdela between the demarcation protest of January 2013 and the May 2014 national elections. Quantitatively, the article provides practical data describing the way in which young people engaged with the 2014 national elections, given the fluctuating perspectives throughout 2013 and 2014. Against this background the article analyses the notion of youth apathy towards politics and elections, as well as Booyesen's (2007) 'ballot and the brick' analysis of political engagement, protest and elections. The article demonstrates that a high proportion of young people are politically aware, participated in the protest, voted in elections, and evinced an increased likelihood of voting for parties other than the ANC.

Keywords: youth, protest, political participation, elections, political apathy, political alternatives

INTRODUCTION

Youth, protest, and voting are common topics of discussion in South Africa. The connection between the three is significant; however, this connection is seldom discussed. There is a widespread impression that youth are apathetic towards politics, and this impacts on the understanding of their participation in political processes such as voting and protests (Mattes, 2008). Thus far, youth in South Africa have the lowest level of engagement in elections of any age cohort. This is evident in the low rate of voter registrations, where only 23% of eligible 18-19 year olds in South Africa's 2009 national elections registered to vote, and again in 2014 where only 22% of them registered (Schulz-Herzenberg & Southall 2014). This data provides an indication of youth participation in elections but it does not provide a detailed understanding or analysis of the processes that compel youth to either vote or abstain, or how protest action influences their voting.

This article addresses this gap by analysing youth attitudes towards elections and political parties in one township in the Free State province, Zamdela, which was the site of a large municipal demarcation protest in January 2013. It traces these attitudes throughout four periods: after the January 2013 protest; between November and December 2013 (which incorporates the day of elections registrations); pre-elections in 2014; and post-elections. It also analyses these young people's political perceptions thematically, focusing particularly on the themes of governance, liberation legacy, identification with political parties, and change.

The article also offers a detailed analysis of the post-election results from a survey conducted at the end of May 2014. These results are analysed and compared to those of the exit-poll survey administered by the Centre for Social Change, and data from the Electoral Commission of South Africa, also known as the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). With these results, it was possible to analyse the way in which young people participated in protest, voter turnout, the support for parties and whether or not the results corroborate Booysen's (2007) 'ballot and the brick' analysis of the relationship between protest and elections.

YOUTH ABSENTION FROM ELECTORAL POLITICS

Perceptions around youth and electoral politics centre around the idea that young people are apathetic towards politics, that they dismiss politics in the early stages of their lives and only engage with them later on. This is often because young people have fewer reasons to take part in political processes given that the motivations for older people to engage in politics do not yet affect them (Quintelier 2007, p.169). They also abstain because they are more critical of political leadership, are quicker to express disgruntlement, and have very little loyalty towards political parties and representatives (*ibid.*). Looking at African youth and how they vote in

elections, Resnick and Casale (2013, p. 1) add that 'younger people tend to be less engaged in formal modes of the democratic process, particularly voting'. They often find themselves in an environment where political participation can take many forms; usually unconventional forms that often include 'local community actions, political consumerism, new social movements and activities, single-issue politics and protest actions' (Quintelier 2007, p. 165; Cornwall 2002). Indeed, in the South African context, Mattes (2012) has found that young people and particularly 'born frees'¹ are less likely to vote in elections but more likely to take part in community protests.

Susan Booysen has been a leading scholar in the analysis and understanding of the link between voting and other forms of political participation, such as protesting. She argues that given the limitations of formal channels, many citizens use both elections and protest as a way of influencing power relations and achieving more effective delivery of basic services. Communities thus employ a 'dual-action repertoire' in their politics, or the 'ballot and the brick' (Booyesen 2007, p. 25). As a result, communities are able to acquire relatively better service delivery while maintaining their loyalties to the ruling party, which in the case of South Africa is the ANC. Though Booysen makes a compelling argument, Alexander (2012) responds that this thesis cannot adequately explain protest action in South Africa since it lacks the evidence to prove that protesters and voters are the same people. Furthermore, as noted by Alexander, many protestors are young people who are generally less likely to vote. This article thus engages with Booysen's 'ballot and the brick' thesis with a focus on the extent to which this theory can be applied to the case of young voters and protestors.

METHODOLOGY

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to gather data, the latter effectively adding depth to the former. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in March 2013, November and December 2013, and May 2014. The sample included 16 purposively selected young people, 9 men and 7 women, who were between the ages of 18 and 39², an extended segment of what is usually known as youth. Pseudonyms were used for direct quotations. The qualitative data was

1 The generation born after a country's transition to democracy, which in the South African context refers to those born on or after 1994.

2 I purposively selected this age group given the composition of youth political structures in Zamdela. Although the *de jure* age restriction in the ANCYL is 18 to 25 for members, in practice the age groups are slightly higher. Due to social connections, members do not completely break away from the structures so they often remain active, giving informal direction and campaigning even when they are closer to the age of 40. They therefore make a significant part of the youth cohort that was important to include. Those younger than 18 also make part of this cohort; however they were excluded on ethical grounds and because they are not eligible to vote.

then analysed thematically, using the themes governance, liberation legacy, identification with political parties, and change. These themes were drawn from the work of Paret (2016) and adapted for this study.

Two sources of quantitative data were used to supplement the qualitative: the exit poll survey conducted on elections day, and a post-elections survey conducted four weeks later. Researchers at the University of Johannesburg's Centre for Social Change, including the author, conducted the exit poll survey. With convenience sampling, 3 782 respondents aged between 18 and 85 (National Youth Development Agency, 2017) in the wider sample took part; however only the findings particular to Zamdela were included in this article.

The purpose of the post-election survey was to provide a more detailed focus on the voting patterns of young people aged between 18 and 39, and to triangulate findings from the qualitative data. The sample was selected purposefully, with 258 respondents, 146 men and 112 women, who reside in the sections where the protest was most concentrated. This was in order to make a stronger argument about the relationship between protest and elections.

ZAMDELA'S BACKGROUND

Zamdela is a township adjacent to the town of Sasolburg in the northern Free State. South African Synthetic Oil Limited (SASOL), a major petroleum and synthetic fuels firm, established Zamdela in 1954 to accommodate employees of its nearby firms (Vaal Triangle Info, 2013). The township sits in the Metsimaholo municipality whose demographics include a population of 90 000, with only 30 000 people employed. Figures provided by the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) show that 42% of the residents are impoverished and 18% live in informal settlements (SAIRR 2013). Like many South African townships, Zamdela has become a place where issues of service delivery confront the community, and growing discontent with local government has led to large and sometimes violent protests.

The restructuring of municipal boundaries is a highly contested matter in the Metsimaholo municipality. Due to the lack of communication between the Municipal Demarcation Board (MDB) and the communities, the restriction of municipal borders caused a rift between the government and the community. Much of the blame was apportioned to the mayor, the premier, and the local municipality. On 22 January 2013, after a meeting involving about 10 000 people, the community of Zamdela took to the streets for three days in violent protest to stop the planned amalgamation of the Metsimaholo and Ngwathe municipalities. It was commonly perceived that the Parys³-based Ngwathe municipality is poorly

3 Parys, a neighbouring town on the banks of the Vaal River.

funded and has corrupt officials, making the amalgamation unfavourable (*Sunday Times* 2013). At least 5000 community members took part in the protest, about 200 people were arrested, many shops were looted and destroyed, a number of protesters and police officers were injured, four protesters died, and the losses totalled millions of rands (Marinovich & Lekgowa 2013). Media reports show that youth played a central role in carrying out of the protest in Zamdela (*City Press* 2013).

FROM PROTEST TO NATIONAL ELECTIONS: PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF ZAMDELA'S YOUTH TOWARDS ELECTIONS AND POLITICAL PARTIES

Young people's attitudes towards elections are analysed using four themes: governance, liberation legacy, democratic duty, and change. These themes are developed from Paret's (2016) analysis of the Social Change Exit Poll survey results, developed here in relation to both the qualitative and quantitative data presented. *Governance* describes discontent of the people in terms of the provision of services over time, as well as corruption and leadership, whilst *liberation legacy* almost exclusively entails the hegemonic power that the ANC wields in its position as the harbinger of freedom in South Africa's recent political history (Paret 2016). *Identification* refers to people aligning themselves with political parties because of their familiarity with the party or their leaders, which becomes the basis of their support. This is where voters 'identify the ANC as the heroic party that fought for them against the apartheid government and helped them to recover their rights, freedoms and personal dignity' (Beresford 2012, p. 866). *Democratic duty* entails youth expressing voting as a democratic duty that they, and citizens in the country, should fulfil regardless of their political affiliation. Lastly, *change* is the theme often cited by a considerable number of people that vote for parties in opposition to the ANC. This term lacks a specific definition. However, in this article the closest definition is changing the ANC as the ruling party.

Attitudes towards governance and the ANC: after the January 2013 protest

After January 2013 the issue of governance was heavily criticised by youth and there was widespread protest. The ANC's leaders became unpopular and the executive mayor⁴ at the time, Brutus Mahlaku, and premier, Ace Magashule, came under fire. On the one hand, people spoke out vociferously against the

4 The executive mayor chairs the mayoral committee.

ANC leadership. Some, such as Samuel (30, male, unemployed) a member of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL), criticised the ruling party's leadership openly:

The ANC is not failing us; we are being failed by the leaders here. They are very corrupt and are looking at their own pockets. They do not represent what the people want or even what the ANC wants. So as long as Brutus Mahlaku [Executive Mayor] is here, they will keep disappointing us.

On the other hand, people expressed their discontent in other and more unconventional and disruptive ways. The township itself was, for a while after the protest, bombarded with graffiti on walls and on several shack dwellings declaring 'fuck Ace Makgosa'⁵. The protest had made the ANC infamous in the view of many of the residents as well as those people closely linked to it through the local ANCYL.

There were mixed perceptions about the elections and the ANC during this period. A critique of governance and leadership was juxtaposed with a loyalty to the ANC that stems from the liberation struggle and which many young people seem to value. In his analysis of the 2014 national election, Paret (2016) argues that the ANC's support is encapsulated in the liberation legacy with which many black South Africans are familiar. It 'continues to reap a significant "liberation dividend", due to its role as the hegemonic leader of the national liberation struggle' that has subsequently led to what the South African government is today (Paret 2016, p. 442). Therefore, for some people, a sense of both political legacy and identification lingered. Some argued that 'when I was growing up, the only party that I knew was the ANC. It was the party that fought for us and brought us freedom' (Sandile, 37, male, unemployed). Samuel (30, male, unemployed) argued as well that even though there is tension between the community and the ANC, 'I will support it as long as I am still alive. I can proudly say that I am black, green and gold'. The legacy appears to be very important, and many express this as a large part of their motivation for voting, particularly for the ANC. This effectively caused a stalemate between the protest against the ANC and voting for it as the 'ballot and the brick' would have it. The political environment, however, had not changed significantly at this time.

5 This is a play on the Premier's name given how closely 'Magashule' and 'Makgosa' sound. *Makgosa* refers to a prostitute.

November/December 2013 including registrations

The politics of Zamdela changed between the January 2013 protest and the 2014 national elections, transformed by the establishment of the Economic Freedom Front (EFF). Their rise simultaneously resulted in the decline of the ANCYL in the township. The EFF became a significant political player in Zamdela, politicising youth and gaining a following. At the same time, the ANCYL broke apart as its leadership either disappeared or defected. Much of the EFF leadership comprised former ANCYL members. Only a few of its members remained, maintaining the last of what had once been a vibrant ANCYL in Zamdela.

The registration weekend of 9-10 November 2013 pulled in many young people; some registered, some simply observed, and others campaigned for their parties and blew their vuvuzelas⁶. Community anger and frustration had subsided and contrary to earlier expressions of political cynicism, youth came in surprisingly high numbers to register. Opinions on voting varied at this period, with some looking closely at the ANC government:

Voting is not necessarily an answer for life. Voting is not important as such, because politics is the thing that many people nowadays don't consider it seriously because of what is happening within the government. Donald (19, male, student)

In this way, inadequate governance from the ANC devalued the elections. Its failure to deliver services demonstrates the failure of electoral process itself.

Voting in this regard has become less significant as a factor in bringing about the delivery of basic services. Protest actions have become favoured as a means to getting a response from the government. Community protests have been on the rise since 2004, amounting to what Alexander (2010) calls the 'rebellion of the poor'.

The formation of the EFF in mid-2013 was a significant factor in altering people's identification with political parties, particularly with the ANC. Julius Malema, a young leader who already had a large following in the ANCYL, led the EFF. This new party designed its manifesto along the lines of the 1955 Freedom Charter crafted by the ANC and its allies. By November 2013, the EFF had gained popularity among the youth in Zamdela. Sehlogo (29, male) argued that:

6 The vuvuzela is a plastic horn that produces a loud monotone note. It is inspired by the Tswana people's kudu horns that were used to summon distant villagers to attend community gatherings. In South Africa, the vuvuzela is most often used recreationally at large crowd gatherings and festivals, predominantly at soccer matches.

The reason is that this president of EFF has revealed something that I've been interested in for so long. He talked about the policies of the ANC in 1954, the Freedom Charter. It mentioned that the time the ANC became the ruling party there will be greener pastures in terms of land and everything. But now that has happened and the ANC has not done anything about these things. This is why I support the EFF.

Teboho (21, male) added that:

I don't think I can say that this one has better policies but the EFF has caught my eye, but it is difficult to align myself with them. I like their policies. But then I don't think I'm ready yet to join the EFF. But if I were to vote I would vote for the EFF.

The EFF served two purposes with its entry into the elections. It appealed to many disgruntled young people, politicising them particularly with Charterist policies that spoke directly to the redistribution of land and wealth, encapsulated in what they call 'economic freedom'. Secondly, it became a viable alternative in a political environment dominated by the ANC. With the decline of the ANCYL in Zamdela, and very little presence of the official opposition Democratic Alliance (DA), the EFF became the vehicle through which young people in Zamdela mobilised.

Though the EFF gained considerable popularity among youth, the ANC retained some influence in the township, despite the decline of the ANCYL from its previously dominant position. Through campaigns, rallies and speeches, many were reminded of its liberation legacy. Some young people thus embraced the party despite the rise of the EFF. This was endorsed by researcher Mongezi (22, male, student), who opined that:

We all fall under the ANC and I recognise that it has done a lot. Young people today get to go to universities and students like myself who cannot afford education get to study. We have opportunities that our parents don't have.

Kgotso (18, male, unemployed) also argued that he would vote for the ANC since it was the party that his family voted for, stating that 'my parents are my parents; anything good that happened to them I will support. If my parents are free today, then I am free as well'. Even at this stage the liberation legacy of the ANC lingered on, and more importantly, this legacy was transgenerational.

Pre-elections: May 2014

The protest had happened over a year ago and the township was buzzing with party banners and pamphlets promoting the elections. Political campaigns had reached their peak and voting stations were open. It was at this time that the ANC demonstrated its might. Towards election day it overshadowed the EFF and other parties through its highly financed political campaigning. Inundated with placards, posters, banners, and a plethora of walls painted in ANC colours to advertise the ANC, many young people had changed their minds about either abstaining from the elections or voting for opposition parties.

Many came to speak about the ANC. 'We are going to vote for the ANC so no EFF for us. We don't want anything to do with the EFF. We know they are there but we don't want anything to do with it', said Mable (35, female, unemployed). Rose (33, female) declared that her support for the ruling party stems from what she adopted from her parents, and would consequently transfer to her own children. She expressed the view that she was going to vote for the ANC 'because it is the party that my parents and my grandparents voted for. We have freedom because of the ANC, and my child as well.' The activities of the DA are still abysmal in this region, and Mable (35, female, unemployed) expressed the view that she 'cannot simply go to the DA without seeing it works'; while Mathapelo (26, female, unemployed) argues that 'these new parties are just baby parties and they are just nonsense. I don't think they will last so long'. Bandile (32, male, unemployed) concluded in his view of the EFF, DA and other parties that:

All these people are just complainants against the ANC and none of them are talking about what they are offering. Even the DA is always pointing at ANC's mistakes and not promising anything better. Even if we know that there are empty promises we don't really care, but we will vote for the ANC.

The liberation legacy had demonstrated two key points. Firstly, it allowed the ANC to retain much of its support from both the older and younger electorate through cross-generational transference of political opinions. Youth value the liberation legacy, and families, rather than individuals, tend to support similar parties. Secondly, this legacy reinforced the doubts held by the young electorate about other political parties. The idea that no other party has governed the country since democratisation in 1994 is still a concern for most young people regardless of how they perceive the ANC's governance. It is in many ways radical to break away from a party that has governed for over 23 years. The continuing strength

of the liberation legacy was also borne out in the analysis of the election results and two quantitative surveys, demonstrated in the following sections.

National elections: Comparing results of elections in 2009 and 2014

Table 1 compares the results in the 2014 and 2009 national elections. It shows that nationally the ANC faced growing electoral opposition from the EFF and the DA in the Metsimaholo municipality. In South Africa, national and provincial elections are held on the same day. The figures below are all taken from the national elections, so 'Free State' refers to the province's national election results, not the provincial results.

Table 1
National, provincial and municipal results at three voting districts

		2009			2014			
		ANC	COPE	DA	ANC	COPE	DA	EFF
National	Votes	11 650 748	1 311 027	2 945 829	11 436 921	123 235	4 091 584	1 169 259
	%	65.9	7.4	16.7	62.2	0.7	22.2	6.4
Provincial: Free State	Votes	734 688	120 018	119 844	708 720	16 516	164 627	82 674
	%	71.1	11.6	11.6	69.9	1.6	16.2	8.2
Municipal: Metsi- maholo	Votes	37 483	4 359	11 214	31 758	318	13 824	5 555
	%	66.8	7.8	20.0	58.8	0.6	25.6	10.3
Three VDs	Votes	3166	542	38	2567	34	192	444
	%	79.3	13.6	0.1	73.8	0.1	5.5	12.8

Source: IEC.

In the Free State, the ANC's vote declined from 71.1% of the total to 69.9%, a drop of just 1.2%; but in the municipality of Metsimaholo, it fell from 66.8% to 58.8%, a drop of 8.0%. At each level, support for the Democratic Alliance (DA) increased, and support for the Congress of the People (COPE) declined. Given that the EFF was formed only shortly before the elections, it did remarkably well. Interestingly, it obtained a higher proportion of the vote in Metsimaholo, with 10.3%, than it did in the province, 8.2%, or nationally at 6.4%. The EFF gained more support locally, at 12.8%, from the three voting districts (VD) where the protest was concentrated, making the township one of the places that added to the EFF's low national average. As elsewhere, COPE collapsed and the DA improved its position.

In all three voting districts (VDs), the ANC remained easily the dominant party although their vote moved downwards from 79.3% to 73.8%.

So yes, the EFF did well, but not by a large margin. The problem however is that official statistics do not reflect age, and analysing election results alone does not allow an assessment of the relationship that may exist between voting and protesting. So in order to overcome this limitation, I corroborated the results with the exit poll data collected by the Centre for Social Change and collected my own data.

2014 national election: protest, exit poll results and post-election data

Table 2 demonstrates the results of the exit poll survey conducted on election day, 5 May 2014. The survey aimed to capture those people who participated in protest over the previous two years at all age levels, from 18 to 73. Here, only 27% of the people from all voting districts had participated in protests in the preceding two years. Of course, the number of people involved in protest is very small since the survey included everyone regardless of voting ages.

Table 2
Protest participation in previous two years (2012-2014)

Participated in protest in past two years	Social change exit poll			Post-election survey			
				Males		Females	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Yes	41	27	70	47.9	38	33.9	
No	112	73	76	52.1	74	66.1	
Total		153	100	146	100	112	100

Source: Social Change exit poll and post elections survey.

In comparison to the exit poll survey, the demographics in the post-election survey that focuses exclusively on youth are very different, and unsurprisingly so. As in many protests around the country, the participants of the protest were predominantly males. Close to half of the males surveyed participated in the protest, at 47.9%. This is a relatively large number in comparison to the women with only 33.9%, demonstrating that men have a higher propensity to protest than women do.

There was also an even spread of the participants in terms of age. Though the margin was not large, and similarly with the exit poll data, those younger are more likely to have protested in comparison to the older protestors across all age

bands (see Table 3). The least likely to take part in protest are those aged in their late thirties, showing in particular that the likelihood of participation in protest decreases from the age of 30 years onwards.

Table 3
Protest participation by age across the three VDs

			Age band				Total
			18-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	
Participated in protest in the past two years	Yes	no.	38	32	23	15	108
		%	35.2	29.6	21.3	13.9	42.0
	No	no.	49	45	35	20	149
		%	32.9	30.2	23.5	13.4	58.0
Total	no.	87	77	58	35	257	
	%	33.9	29.9	22.6	13.6	100	

Source: Post-elections survey.

In comparison to the exit poll's results, participation in protest by youth is significantly higher. The post elections survey of those between the ages of 18 to 39 shows that at least 42% of the people that participated in protest also voted. One cannot reach a definite conclusion from this; however, this shows strong evidence that young people are more likely to participate in both protest and elections.

Table 4 demonstrates the proportion of youth that voted in the elections in comparison to older residents.

Table 4
Participation in 2014 elections by age

Age		Under 40	Over 40	Total
	Frequency	88	70	158
	%	55.7	44.3	100

Source: Social Change exit poll.

The table shows a higher turnout of youth in the 2014 elections, at 55.7%, demonstrating that more youth participated in these elections in comparison to older residents, at 44.3%.

Table 5 below shows those participants in the 2014 national elections by age. Out of 254⁷ people, 68.5% voted. Against expectations based on qualitative research, participation in the elections was high. In the interviews, youth appeared cynical and unlikely to vote given the protest, but this was not reflected in the survey. However, as one might predict from registration data confirmed by interviews, the proportion of older youth who voted was greater than the proportion of younger youth, 82.4%, compared to 60.5% respectively.

Table 5
Participation in 2014 national elections by age group

			Age band				Total
			18-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	
Voted 2014 national elections	Yes	no.	52	50	44	28	174
		%	60.5	65.8	75.9	82.4	68.5
	No	no.	34	26	14	6	80
		%	39.5	44.2	24.1	17.6	31.5
Total	no.		86	76	58	34	254
	%		100	100	100	100	100

Source: Post-elections survey, 2014.

Table 6
Participation in protest and 2014 national elections

			Participation in protest		Total
			Yes	No	
Voted in 2014 national elections	Yes	no.	84	24	108
		%	77.8	22.2	100
	No	no.	24	56	80
		%	30.0	70.0	100

Source: Post-elections survey.

Table 6 provides an analysis of the participation, or lack thereof, of young people in both the 2013 protest and the 2014 national elections. The table categorises firstly, those young people that participated in both protest and elections; secondly, those

⁷ This number is lower than the total number of participants because some declined to answer the question.

that took part in elections only; thirdly, those who voted and did not protest in 2013; and lastly those who neither protested nor voted. The first category refers to young people who are highly active in political processes locally and nationally, while the second and third describe those who are partially active.

Young people appear to be more political than expected as 77.8% of them were active in both protest activity and elections, more than those who are only partially active. In comparison to the exit poll's results as well (see Table 2), participation in protest and elections by youth is higher, showing strong evidence in the case of Zamdela that young people are more likely to participate in both protests and elections.

Among the 80 people that did not vote, only 30% took part in the protest in comparison to the 70% of those that had abstained from both the political events. Many simply decided to stay at home when both the protests and elections occurred, demonstrating their apathy to these forms of political process. Note however that what is reflected as apathy towards politics is not a definitive conclusion given that there is evidence of other existing spaces of political participation outside of protests and elections. Additionally, there are many young people who did not vote due to administrative barriers such as not having identity documents, not registering, or by showing their rejection of not only politics in general, but the ANC in particular.

Support for parties

Among those that had taken part in the 2014 elections, there was a slightly higher level of support for the ANC when we include the wider sample (see Table 7). The ANC took home 83.9% of the votes in the exit poll data, giving it a huge victory over the other parties, which is not widely different from the 73.8% recorded by the IEC.

Table 7
Parties voted for in 2014 national elections: data from the VDs, IEC and exit poll survey

Political Party	IEC	Exit Poll
ANC	73.8	83.9
EFF	12.8	11.2
DA	5.5	2.8

Source: Social Change exit poll and IEC.

In the exit poll, there was slightly less support for the EFF, at 11.2% of the

votes. The DA did not do well either, as expected, with only 2.8% in the wider sample. There is a problem with the sample size of the exit poll data given that its survey size is very small compared with that of the IEC. Despite this, the results of the exit poll data are very similar to that of the IEC in areas around the three voting districts.

When analysed by age, the exit poll, Table 8, and post-election survey, Table 9, show similar results. The ANC still takes first place with 77.7% of votes, followed by EFF that did relatively well as a newcomer at 18.5%, and followed by the DA and other parties with 2.5% and 1.3% respectively.

Table 8
Party voted for in 2014 national elections by youth between 18 and 39

Political Party	Number	Percentage
ANC	63	77.7
EFF	15	18.5
DA	2	2.5
Other	1	1.3
Total	81	100

Source: Social Change exit poll

The results of the post-elections survey were very similar to those of the IEC for the three VDs considered above (see Table 9). Moreover, they were very similar to the results of the exit poll data.

Table 9
Party voted for in the 2014 national elections (Valid N= 175)

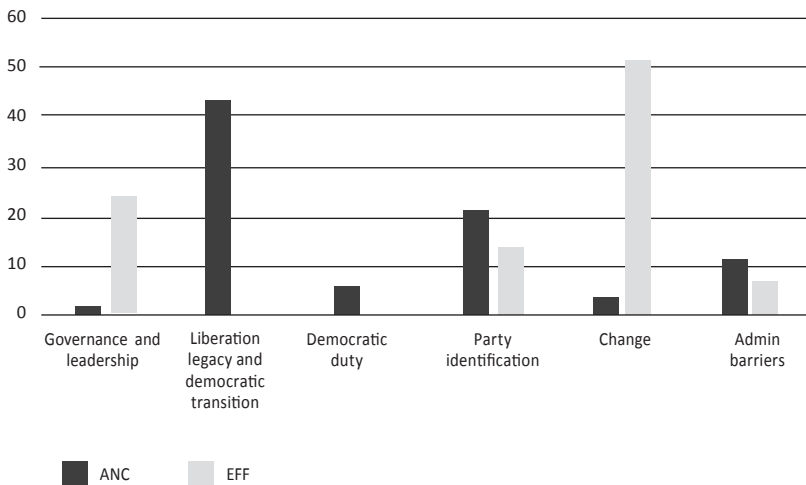
Political Party	Number	Percentage
ANC	126	72.0
EFF	29	16.6
DA	3	1.7
Other	4	2.3
Refused	10	5.7
Total	172	98.3
Missing	3	1.7
Total	175	100

Source: Post-elections survey, 2014.

Much like the results of the exit poll, 16.6% of the post-elections survey voters supported the EFF, slightly more than backed this party in the three VDs that were analysed. The exit poll shows 18.5% of the votes for the EFF, thus demonstrating a significant similarity to the post-election survey. Thus, in the VDs where the protest had the greatest impact, the ANC secured widespread support, even amongst youth. Nonetheless, in these areas the EFF did relatively well, especially given that it was a new party formed only shortly before the 2014 national elections. The relationship between protesting and voting is discussed below.

Reasons for voting for the EFF and ANC

Figure 1 (below) represents a thematic outline of the reasons why people voted for the ANC and the EFF, concentrating on liberation legacy and change. It is notable that a large number of people continued to vote for the ANC because of the ANC legacy. At least 41.1% of the respondents in the sample stated that they would vote for the ANC because ‘it brought freedom’, or ‘because of Nelson Mandela and his legacy’. This continues to provide evidence that many young people still regard the ANC’s legacy as an important factor in voting, and the ANC continuous to benefit from it in elections.



Source: Post-elections survey 2014.

Figure 1
Reasons for voting for ANC and EFF

Second and supplementary to the theme of liberation is party identification and personalities, and thus the ANC still gains votes because of familiarity. Administrative barriers include only those people that would have voted for the ANC and EFF had they registered or not lost their identity documents.

What is notable are the reasons why young people voted for the EFF. This is where the concept of change makes an appearance. This change is abstract, but here it appears to approximate the change from one party to another, that is a vote not for the ANC. Many of the people that opted to vote for the EFF frequently referred to change, with some saying the same about the DA. Some stated that they voted because the EFF 'will bring change in the future' and that 'Malemela stands for change'. With 16.8% of the total number of people seeking change, young people not only demonstrated dissatisfaction with the ruling party as Paret (2016) elucidated, but also demonstrated that a large pocket of the young electorate considered voting for alternative parties instead of the ANC.

The relationship between Zamdela's protest and the elections turnout

The relationship between voting and protesting is complex. Booyesen (2007) argues that communities use the 'ballot and the brick' in their engagement with the state, using protest to force the ANC government to deliver services, and then voting for the ANC in elections. This implies that the same people who participate in protests also vote for the ANC. My data showed considerable differences from her argument.

Table 10 provides evidence relevant to this debate. Again, it is based on the survey of 18-39 year olds in one township, in the three VDs closest to the protest. The contrast between the ANC and the EFF voters is significant. Only 39.5% of those who voted for the ANC had protested in the past two years, whereas 73.3% of those who voted for the EFF protested. That is, young people who voted for the EFF were far more likely to have participated in the protest than people who voted for the ANC. Though there is still significant support for the ANC, the votes that the ANC received are mostly from those people that abstained from protest action in the past two years, which makes up a relatively large 60.5%. Therefore, in the case of Zamdela, the people that do not participate in protest are more likely to vote for the ANC.

Those that protested had a higher rate of support for opposition parties, which in this case is the EFF, and a minimal but still important support for the DA. This shows that young people are not necessarily uncritical of the ANC and can therefore shift to supporting opposition parties. More so, since we are looking at youth, it is interesting that it is they who participated in the protests and subsequently gravitated towards the EFF. The dual-action repertoire therefore

cannot fully explain the increased rate of protest action parallel to the dominance of the ANC.

Table 10
Participation in protests and voting in elections

			In the last two years, have you participated in a protest?		Total
			Yes	No	
Party voted for in 2014 national elections.	ANC	votes	51	78	129
		%	39.5	60.5	100
	DA	votes	3	0	3
		%	100	0.0	100
	EFF	votes	22	8	30
		%	73.3	26.7	100
	Other	votes	2	2	4
		%	50.0	50.0	2.4
Total	votes	78	88	166	
	%	47.0	53.0	100	

Source: Post-elections survey 2014

Several reasons can account for the difference between the elections and protest results in this article and Booyesen's argument. Since 2006 there have been significant changes in the South African political landscape that have influenced the way in which people vote as well as their parties of choice. Firstly, the so-called 'born frees' were eligible to vote, which is different from the period when Booyesen put forward her 'ballot and the brick' thesis. Secondly, the EFF is the first significant party to break from the ANC and shift politically to the left; this is also true of COPE, which was formed just before the elections of 2009 and had also shifted to the left. In 2006, neither the EFF nor COPE existed, so the only significant opposition was the DA. Moreover, for many reasons, and no matter how dissatisfied people were with the ANC, voting for the DA is a big step, which in the minds of many people is not a viable alternative. What we have now in 2014 with the EFF is a viable party that appeals to young working-class people and is therefore considered an alternative to the ANC.

CONCLUSION

This case study provides a window on a particular period in time, looking into the attitudes that young people displayed in Zamdela between the protest of January 2013 and the 2014 national elections. Immediately after the protest, many young people were critical of the ANC, the local government, and of ANC leadership. Nonetheless, this criticism was juxtaposed with the loyalty that many young people had towards the ANC, thus maintaining in large part the good standing that the ANC had with its loyal supporters.

Hostility towards the ANC reduced as they campaigned for the national elections in November 2013. At the same time, the EFF was politicising youth and offering an alternative to the hegemonic ANC. It triggered debate and pushed the youth, as well as older people, to take sides, offering them a new set of politics that reduced some of the loyalties that youth had had towards the ANC.

In the third period approaching the elections, the EFF had reached its peak, campaigning and building significant support from young people. It was, however, still overshadowed by the ANC in terms of campaigning budgets, personnel and strategies. In addition, the ANC's liberation legacy, which many youth still value and which is often inherited from and shared with older generations, appeared to retain its importance for some young people.

Booyesen (2007) argues that communities use the 'ballot and the brick' in their politics, a dual-action repertoire where communities protest against the ANC to satisfy grievances but vote for it during elections. Although the loyalties towards the ANC remain, new evidence from surveys challenges Booyesen's findings. Furthermore, as has been indicated, Alexander (2012) has argued that people who protest are not necessarily the same as those who cast their vote.

The findings here contradict both Booyesen's (2007) and Alexander's (2012) results. On the one hand, the elections results demonstrate that a high proportion of young voters had both voted and protested. This refutes Alexander's view that voters are not protesters. On the other hand, and contradicting Booyesen's (2007) argument that areas of protest display undented support for the ANC, young people involved in protest were more likely to have voted for an opposition party, disproving her 'ballot and the brick' thesis. When communities want to enhance their capacity to bring about their demands, they will go for the ballot and vote for alternative parties, which in the case of Zamdela was the EFF.

The difference here stems from the changing political environment, with the introduction of the EFF, the decline of COPE, and the lack of DA support in townships such as Zamdela. A combination of protest, the creation of the EFF and the fact that the elections occurred shortly after the protest, politicised the youth. This in turn caused the split between the people supporting the ANC and the EFF.

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VOTERS' ROLL CRISES AND THE NEED FOR ELECTORAL REFORMS IN SOUTH AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

This paper considers the implications of the Constitutional Court ruling that declared the 2013 Tlokwe by-elections unconstitutional. This ruling was because the voters' roll did not contain the addresses of voters as required by electoral legislation and it has cast a shadow on the credibility of elections in South Africa. The Constitutional Court gave the Electoral Commission until the end of June 2018 to correct this problem which affects over 10 million voters. The question that this paper discusses is whether the Electoral Commission will find a solution to this conundrum before the national general elections scheduled to take place in 2019. This is especially urgent because the Electoral Commission has already indicated its incapacity to perform this task in the face of inadequate resources. The paper also looks at the nature of the problem regarding the voters' register and the voting district within which it is premised. In an attempt to find a solution to this problem the author undertook a small survey to establish whether political parties used the addresses of voters to conduct their campaign work. The paper concludes by suggesting electoral reforms that may resolve the problem of the voters' roll and improve the overall management of elections in South Africa.

Keywords: credibility; integrity; voters' roll; voting district; electoral reform; Electoral Commission; Constitutional Court

BACKGROUND

On November 30 2015 the Constitutional Court (Concourt) of South Africa made a landmark ruling declaring that by-elections conducted in Tlokwe local municipality had not been free or fair. These elections had been held on 12 September in Ward 18 and on 10 December 2013 in Wards 1, 4, 11, 12, 13 and 20. The reason for the decision was that the voter register was deficient and lacked

the addresses of some voters. The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) approached the Constitutional Court in 2016 in an attempt to get clarity on the far-reaching implications of this judgement. The Constitutional Court reaffirmed its previous decision but gave the Commission a temporary reprieve for the 2016 local elections. This has placed the IEC in the near-impossible situation of having to retrieve the addresses of millions of voters in order to make the voters' roll consistent with electoral laws and constitutional requirements.

The Electoral Act (73) of 1998 (as amended) requires the chief electoral officer to provide political parties with copies of the voters' roll that include voters' addresses. By its own admission, the IEC stated in court papers to the Constitutional Court that the national common voters' roll is missing 12.2 million addresses.

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 9 of the Constitution establishes state institutions, including the Electoral Commission, that support constitutional democracy. Its functions are described in the Constitution as being: '[to] manage elections of national, provincial and municipal legislative bodies in accordance with national legislation and to ensure that elections are free and fair' (*Constitution Act 108 of 1996*).

The national legislation referred to in the Constitution include the *Electoral Commission Act 51 of 1996*, the *Electoral Act 73 of 1998*, the *Local Government Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998*, and the *Local Government Municipal Electoral Act 27 of 2000*. The *Electoral Commission Act* establishes the Electoral Commission of South Africa and spells out its powers and responsibilities. The *Electoral Act* outlines the manner in which elections are managed at national and provincial level. The *Local Government Municipal Structures Act* defines the types of municipalities in South Africa whilst the *Local Government Municipal Electoral Act* deals specifically with the manner in which local elections are conducted.

The *Bill of Rights* in the Constitution (1996) is also instructive and relevant for our discussion on this subject. Political rights as prescribed in the *Bill of Rights*, especially 19(2), state that 'Every citizen has a right to free, fair and regular elections for any legislative body established in terms of the constitution'.

This paper begins by looking at the nature of the problem of addresses on the voters' roll and proceeds to look specifically at the Tlokwe case and the resultant Constitutional Court judgements. It then explores possible ways to resolve this problem.

THE PROBLEM

On his return from observing elections in the United Kingdom in 2001, Tony Leon, then leader of the Democratic Alliance, brought back the idea of including

addresses in the voters' roll to assist political parties in canvassing voter support. As the IEC supported the idea, he immediately approached Parliament with a proposal to amend the Electoral Court. Parliament invited the Electoral Commission to make submissions on this proposal which the Commission did not oppose. Consequently the *Electoral Act* was amended by the *Electoral Laws Amendment Act 28* which introduced Section 16(3) and (4) that came into effect on 17 December 2003¹.

Adding addresses to the voter register is not only a laborious exercise but is also very costly. For developing countries with limited resources this is a major challenge. This is further compounded by the fact that the majority of the population resides in the countryside where, unlike the towns and cities, there are no formal addresses. South Africa is no exception to this problem. In addition it has the bigger problem of informal settlements in the urban areas as part of the legacy of apartheid. Informal settlements are sprawled all over the urban areas and exist as a survival strategy for the many poor families who have migrated from the countryside in search of employment. Many such informal settlements do not even have names, let alone street names and numbers. Capturing an address as a unit of residence for a specific homestead in such settings is impracticable.

Adding to the problem of addresses on the voters' roll is the issue of the voting district, also a creation of the IEC and formalised into law. The voting district is a small unit comprising not more than 1 500 voters in a given area. It is not an electoral constituency within which votes are consolidated to return specific results for a specific political outcome; but it is an administrative unit designed to assist the Commission in locating voting stations. The boundaries of voting districts are fluid and at times impossible to discern, particularly in densely populated areas and informal settlements. This has resulted in many people registering in incorrect voting districts because voters often go to the closest voting station to register even if it falls in a different voting district from where they live. This problem is magnified in densely populated areas such as downtown Johannesburg where one block of flats could easily qualify as a voting district. To compound the problem the IEC decided to criminalise registration in an incorrect voting district thus rendering millions of South Africans criminally liable. This is a perfect example of a decision by an electoral management body that can have what Elklit and Stephan (2001) described as an indelible effect on the credibility of elections. The national common voters' roll is a list of all the eligible voters in an election and is therefore one of the cornerstones of election

1 Author's note: I speak on this subject with reasonable insight because I was the Chief Director responsible for the Voters' Roll at the Electoral Commission during this period. Suffice it to state that I opposed this idea of adding addresses in the voters' roll and also the idea of making the voting district a legal entity.

credibility. The compilation of the voters' roll requires extra caution to ensure that no eligible voter who wishes to exercise his or her right to vote is denied such a right.

TLOKWE BY-ELECTIONS

The infamous case of the Tlokwe by-elections that began in August 2015 has cast a dark shadow on the credibility of South Africa's elections, following the Constitutional Court ruling that deemed the Tlokwe by-elections unfair and unfree. The following is a summary taken from the Constitutional Court judgement (Constitutional Court 2015):

Towards the end of 2013 eight (8) members of the Tlokwe local municipality (Xolile David Kham, Johannes Sesing Johnson, Aaron Pasela Mhlope, Johanna Shonu Xaba, Ntombi Beauty Dikube, Dikeledi Catherine Molefe, Velilele James Zicina, Khotso Ratikoane) broke away from the African National Congress and decided to contest the by-elections as independent candidates calling themselves 'independent candidates united against corruption'. They contested elections in various wards on various dates between August and December but were unsuccessful. The first by-election was on 7 August 2013 in ward 9 where one of the breakaway councillors contested but lost. The second by-election was held in ward 18 on 18 September 2013, where Mr Kham, one of the breakaway councillors, was a candidate and also lost. He lodged a complaint with the IEC in terms of section 65 of the Local Government: Municipal Electoral Act, stating that ineligible voters had been registered and allowed to vote in Ward 18 even though they did not reside therein. The IEC dismissed the complaint. The remaining six candidates were to contest by-elections in wards 1, 4, 11, 12, 13 and 20 scheduled to take place on the 23 October 2013. They lodged objections to the IEC regarding these elections and a fresh date was fixed for 11 December 2013. They also objected to this date complaining that they received the segments of the voters' roll late i.e. on the 4th of December instead of the 11th as stated in the elections time table. In addition the segments that they received did not contain the addresses of voters as required by the Act. The IEC rejected their objection. The candidates approached the Electoral Court requesting a postponement but due to the death of former President Mandela the court could not sit to hear the matter and the elections proceeded. All these candidates

lost at the polls and subsequently approached the Electoral Court for an order to set aside the results of these by-elections.

It is also important to note that the IEC conducted its own independent investigation in the matter. It found that there were indeed problems with the voters' roll and that voters had voted in wards where they were not ordinarily resident. However, the IEC concluded that this number was minuscule and could not have changed the outcome of the results. On 19 March 2015 the Electoral Court confirmed this position and dismissed the case of the applicants who then approached the Constitutional Court, which ruled as follows:

- a) It is declared that the by-elections conducted in the Tlokwe Local Municipality on 12 September 2013 in ward 18 and on 10 December 2013 in wards 1, 4, 11, 12, 13 and 20, were not free and fair.
- b) The outcome of those by-elections is set aside and fresh by-elections are to be held in terms of section 25 of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998.
- c) It is declared that when registering a voter to vote in a particular voting district after the date of this order the Electoral Commission is obliged to obtain sufficient particularity of the voter's address to enable it to ensure that the voter is at the time of registration ordinarily resident in that voting district.
- d) It is declared that in all future municipal elections or by-elections the Electoral Commission is obliged in terms of section 16(3) of the Electoral Act 73 of 1998 to provide all candidates in municipal elections, on the date on which they are certified, with a copy of the segment of the national voters' roll to be used in that ward in that election including the addresses of all voters, where these addresses are available.

Constitutional Court 2015, para. 5

This judgement had a far-reaching effect on the entire voters' roll and the credibility of past and future elections. The court however made an important addition to its ruling in order to cover the possible ramifications of its judgement on previous elections. It stated that the ruling was not retrospective and therefore would not affect the validity of any election or by-election held prior to the date of the order (Constitutional Court 2015, para. 6).

This judgement sent a shiver of unease through the corridors of the IEC. The concern was whether it would be able to administer the local elections scheduled for 2016, because the judgement effectively meant that the IEC had to find the

missing addresses for a large number of voters in the voters' roll. This was not only a very long process but also a very costly exercise. It then approached the Constitutional Court for either an appeal or alternatively to seek clarification of the judgement. In its papers the IEC indicated that it needed a few years to correct the voters' roll as well as a considerable sum of money, and that the exercise would not be completed in time for the local elections scheduled to take place in August 2016. Whilst awaiting the Constitutional Court ruling the IEC went ahead and proclaimed the results of the 2016 election. In doing so they certified a voters' roll that was technically incomplete and also subjudice as it was still pending in the Constitutional Court. One political party (Shosholozza Progressive Party) that had been disqualified from the elections for failure to submit candidates in time, approached the Electoral Court and tried to stop the process. They argued that the IEC had acted in contempt of court by certifying a voters' roll that had been deemed invalid and unconstitutional. The Electoral Court surprisingly dismissed the matter.

The Constitutional Court finally reached its verdict on the application by the IEC and confirmed its earlier decision, namely that the national common voters' roll lacking the addresses of certain voters was invalid and inconsistent with the rule of law.

The following is a ruling of the Constitutional Court (2016 paragraphs 5-9):

5. The Electoral Commission's failure to record all available voters' addresses on the national common voters' roll is inconsistent with its rule of law obligations imposed by section 1(c) of the Constitution and invalid.
6. The declaration of invalidity in paragraph 5 is suspended and:
 - 6.1. The duty of the Electoral Commission to record all the available addresses of voters on the national common voters' roll for the purpose of the August 2016 local government elections is, except for the Tlokwe Local Municipality, suspended.
 - 6.2. The Electoral Commission must by 30 June 2018 have obtained and recorded on the national common voters' roll all addresses that were reasonably available as at 17 December 2003.
7. The order in paragraph 6 does not apply to local government by-elections.
8. At six-monthly intervals calculated from the date of this order, the Electoral Commission must file a report with this Court, setting out:
 - 8.1. The number of outstanding post-December 2003 addresses it has since obtained and recorded on the national common voters' roll;
 - 8.2. The number of post-December 2003 addresses still outstanding;

- 8.3. The steps taken and to be taken to obtain outstanding post-December 2003 addresses;
- 8.4. Any other matter it may consider necessary to report on.
9. The Electoral Commission must pay the costs of appeal and application for direct access of the independent candidates, the Democratic Alliance and the Inkatha Freedom Party, including the costs of two counsels.

To save the day, the Concourt invoked section 172(1) of the Constitution, which reads:

- When deciding a constitutional matter within its power, a court–
- (a) must declare that any law or conduct that is inconsistent with the Constitution is invalid to the extent of its inconsistency; and
 - (b) may make any order that is just and equitable, including–
 - (i) an order limiting the retrospective effect of the declaration of invalidity; and
 - (ii) an order suspending the declaration of invalidity for any period and on any conditions, to allow the competent authority to correct the defect (Constitution Act 108 of 1996).

The important point here is that the Constitutional Court did not backdate the suspension of the invalidity to cover the actions of the IEC in certifying an invalid national common voters' roll for the 2016 local elections. It is my contention that the local elections of 2016 were unfair and unfree because they were based on an invalid voters' roll certified by the IEC before the Concourt judgement. Thus that judgement did not grandfather the process to legitimise or validate the certification of the voters' roll.

This vindicated the application by the Shosholoza Progressive Party to the Electoral Court i.e. that the IEC had certified a national common voters' roll that was invalid because it lacked addresses. In addition, it also included the Tlokwe segment which was now specifically excluded by the Concourt judgement. The Constitutional Court made reference to this point in its ruling on paragraph 84 when it stated that the IEC would not be able to certify a voters' roll that lacked 12.2 million voters. The irony is that the IEC had already certified this voters' roll even before the Constitutional Court made its ruling, which stated as follows:

I (Justice Madlanga J.) have spelt out the difficult position in which the IEC finds itself. Ordinarily, it would be easy to dismiss its request on the basis that the situation in which it finds itself is of its own making.

But the reality is that – unlike litigation between private individuals where a party’s fault would affect it and it alone – here if something were to go wrong, the implications are serious and likely consequences dire. To put it bluntly, the IEC would not be able to certify the voters’ roll for want of the 12.2 million addresses. Without a certified voters’ roll, there can be no elections.

Constitutional Court 2016 para. 84

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Remove the voting district

The voting district has compounded the problem of the voters’ roll because millions of people have registered in the wrong voting districts. This may not have direct consequences for election results so long as the wrong voting district remains within the correct ward. It is only when people cross the ward boundaries to register in incorrect voting districts that this becomes consequential for election results, especially for municipal elections. It is only when people violate the electoral district boundary such as the municipal ward that electoral fraud can occur. Voters bussed between voting districts within the same ward would not affect election results. It is only when voters are bussed across ward boundaries that election results can be affected. In an attempt to correct this anomaly and to reduce possible electoral fraud the IEC criminalised registration in the wrong voting district. In 2016 the IEC released the following statement: ‘The Electoral Commission reminds voters that it is a criminal offence to register where they are not ordinarily resident and it will not hesitate to pursue criminal charges against any person found to have violated this or who may have encouraged others to violate this provision’ (Electoral Commission 2016). The voting district has also rendered the technical accuracy and validity of the voters’ roll problematic.

Our political system has three tiers of government i.e. local, provincial and national. Each tier has a specific constituency from which candidates are elected; these are called electoral districts and each of them has a pertinent segment of the voters’ roll.

For the National Assembly, the country is the electoral district and the voters’ roll is the entire national common voters’ roll. The accuracy of the voters’ roll for this electoral district is arguably 100%. This means that every South African with the correct documents is eligible to vote as long as they can prove that they live in South Africa or are South African citizens. There are no cross-boundary problems where people in one electoral district cross the boundary to vote in another.

The second tier legislative structure is the National Council of Provinces whose members are elected from the provinces. The voters’ roll used here is the

provincial segment. South Africa has nine provinces meaning that there are nine electoral districts for this election. Here there are cross-boundary problems in the registration of voters because provincial boundaries have no physical fences, so people may cross a boundary unknowingly and register in a different province. In some instances communities have deliberately crossed boundaries to register as a form of protest because they prefer to be in that province. This happened for example in the areas between Northwest Province and Gauteng, and Limpopo and Mpumalanga. To resolve this problem the IEC introduced targeted registration specifically in order to target cross-boundary areas and clean up the voters' roll. In this instance only nine boundaries have been identified.

The third tier legislative structure is the municipality which uses the municipal segment of the voters' roll as the primary constituency. However, our electoral system at local level combines proportional representation and first-past-the-post winners. Thus the municipality is further broken down into wards, making the ward the smallest constituency in our electoral system. South Africa has more than 250 municipalities of various sizes and configurations and thousands of wards. Cross-boundary registrations between municipalities are very common, as are those between wards. The targeted registration drive entails a visit to all the municipal boundaries and more than 4 200 ward boundaries. Technically, this means that the accuracy of the voters' roll declines at every tier, making the ward segment the least accurate. In addition, the IEC introduced the voting district which is not an electoral constituency but an administrative unit. This action created more than twenty thousand new boundaries (22 600 in 2016) and was made without any anticipation of the extent of the problem. The voting district should remain an administrative unit used only to determine the location of voting station. This is to ensure that they are proportionate to voting populations at given times and given spaces but is fully cognisant of the fact that voting numbers are a moving target. From an operational point of view, this means that targeted registration will be done around the electoral districts only, instead of attempting to clean up tens of thousands of boundaries. The simple solution is to use the voting station as a control point i.e. once registered at a voting station the voter can vote only there and nowhere else. To manage numbers in each voting station for the purposes of logistical supplies, census data can be used to plot voting stations.

The conclusion is simple; the smaller the constituency the more cross-boundary violations will occur, especially with informal settlements and rural areas where no formal addresses exist. In conducting its own investigations into the Tlokwe matter the IEC found that more people had registered outside their actual voting districts than the complainants had indicated. To try and correct this problem the IEC chose to remove these additional registrations from the

voters' roll, thus effectively disenfranchising those voters. Disenfranchising voters because they are registered in an incorrect voting district, an entity that has little significance in election outcomes, is more problematic. The solution is to remove the voting district as a legal unit in our elections and use it for planning purposes only.

Remove the requirement of addresses on the voters' roll

The idea of capturing voters' addresses in the voters' roll adds insult to injury. The technical accuracy of the voters' roll was already significantly compromised by introducing and legalising the voting district. The address is an important entity to place a voter in the correct segment of the voters' roll and the correct electoral district/constituency so that they can exercise their right therein. But I contend that it is not the responsibility of an electoral management body to provide addresses to political parties for the purposes of pre-election canvassing. Although our Constitution defines the role of the IEC in promoting democracy, it can also be argued that this role merely refers to conducting a free and fair election and that the role of finding voters for political parties lies outside the scope of the elections management body. The extension of the IEC mandate to include this role has, it can be argued, compromised the very essence of the primary role that the IEC was established to perform; i.e. to deliver free and fair elections as proven by the Tlokwe matter.

From the above discussions it is clear that the solution to the problem of the voters' roll lies in amending the legislation to remove the requirement of addresses in the voter's roll. This would be the quickest and most cost-effective manner to correct the voters' roll and improve its technical accuracy. Other options would be to use modern technology like geographic positioning systems (GPS) that would accurately locate addresses. This would require a huge outlay of resources because it would mean door-to-door visits to capture addresses. In many places like the informal settlements and rural areas officials would have to create the addresses on the GPS platforms in order to capture the exact address name on the voters' roll. This is indeed a mammoth task. In its June 2017 six-monthly reports to the Constitutional Court (as required by the judgement) the IEC conceded that the process was very slow. A meagre 1% of addresses had been updated in the period between December 2016 and June 2017, and an amount in excess of R300 million will be required to complete this task by the required date of 30 June 2018 (*Mail and Guardian* 27 July 2017).

The argument that addresses on the voters' roll assist political parties in their campaigns cannot be proven; and even if this is the case, the cost of this exercise outweighs the benefits for our democracy.

I conducted the following small survey (sample 90) in three communities in Midrand to check if indeed political parties visited voters at their homes to canvass for votes using the addresses provided in the voters’ roll.

Questions

1. Were you contacted by any political party agent during the local elections and how?
2. Did they know your name or did they ask for any specific person by name when they arrived?
3. What did the party agents want or ask you to do?

My findings are listed in Table 1 below:

Table 1
Percentage use of addresses to canvass support by political parties

Area	Answers									
	Contacted by party agents		How			Did they know your name		Reason for visit or contact		
	Yes	No	Visit	Letter	Phone	Yes	No	Vote	Register	Other
Rabie Ridge	23.3	76.6	16.6	0	6.6		100	0	0	23.3 Free T-shirts
Olivenhoutbosch	6.6	82	3.3	0	3.3		100		6.6	None
Vorna Valley	26.6	73.3	0	10	16.6		100	13.3	13.3	None
Total %	18.8	64.4	6.6	3.3	8.8		100	4.4	6.6	7.8
Total Actual	17	58	6	3	8		90	4	6	7

The findings in the above table indicate the following:

1. A small number of voters were directly contacted by political parties (18.8%) and an even smaller number of voters were paid a physical visit by political party agents (6%). The largest number of people visited in Rabie Ridge explained that one political party visited them to provide them with free t-shirts. This was obviously a random process that was not based on whether or not people were registered.

In fact two people who received t-shirts confirmed that they were not registered to vote.

2. Only 3.3% of voters who were contacted by political parties were contacted by mail. In probing voters about the type of mail received, they all confirmed that the mail received in their mail boxes was in the form of pamphlets which were not specifically addressed to an individual. This is the only and closest evidence to demonstrate that addresses could have been used to contact voters. The fact that random pamphlets were used means that this evidence does not support the argument for voters' roll addresses.
3. The fact that party agents did not know the names of the people they visited is damning evidence proving that addresses in the voters' roll are not used by political parties to canvass votes.

It is a common practice across the political spectrum that political parties often use community halls to address voters. If they do door-to-door campaigns to canvass support they merely walk around knocking on doors and talking to people, some of whom are not even registered to vote. The current trend amongst political parties is to use social media e.g. SMS, or text messaging, to communicate with voters.

Electoral reform

The voters' roll conundrum provides an important trigger factor for the IEC to undertake a comprehensive electoral reform process aimed at improving electoral processes.

Electoral reform is an integral part of democratic development. In broad terms, electoral reforms are undertaken to improve the electoral process by promoting the electoral rights of citizens and by operationalizing key principles such as impartiality, inclusiveness, transparency, integrity and accuracy. Continuous reflection, reform and adaptation of the legal framework governing electoral processes that are based on experiences, reviews and assessments are necessary in both old and new democracies.

IDEA 2014, p. 5

IDEA (2014) also identifies three key areas of electoral reform i.e. political, administrative and legal; and it is my contention that all three areas need to be looked at by the IEC. However, of top priority for the subject in question would be the following reforms:

1. Amend the section 16(3) of the Electoral Act to remove the requirement of addresses in the voters' roll. It is because of this provision that the Concourt ruled that the voters' roll was unconstitutional because it violated the law written to promote a constitutional principle. If this law is amended then the violation falls away.

To assist political parties in their campaign work, the IEC may be requested to provide a list of the available addresses of voters on a sheet separate from the voters' roll. This would protect the integrity and constitutionality of the voters' roll. The magnitude of collecting the 12.2 million outstanding addresses is insurmountable and thus the IEC had requested a four-year moratorium to rectify this problem. Unfortunately this was rejected by the Constitutional Court and the IEC was given a period of only two years. This period is insufficient to collect 12.2 million addresses especially considering the fact that the IEC had failed to perform this task in over a decade, that is from 2003. To enforce this the Concourt issued a supervisory order forcing the IEC to provide six-monthly progress reports. Given the time span and available budget it is my contention that the IEC will resort to the tactic of removing voters from the roll, as happened in Tlokwe, in an attempt to comply with this requirement. I view this as more serious than having a voters' roll without addresses because the effect is to disenfranchise the voter and is thus contrary to the right to vote as enshrined in the Constitution. The Concourt also discussed the possibility of amending the Act but was not able to enforce it because of time constraints and the fact that Parliament was not party to the matter, as stated below:

During argument, the possibility of a referral of the matter to Parliament to resolve it by, for example, passing legislation that may suspend the applicability of section 16(3) was raised. I see at least two problems with this. First, Parliament is not a party before us. One has no idea what its reaction might be to an *expectation* that it should do something. The operative word is "expectation", not "order", because I do not see how – in these circumstances – we can make an order against a non-party. Second, it is just too late in the day to expect that Parliament will enact that legislation in time for the conduct of the elections within the constitutionally set deadline. This is complicated by the fact that after Parliament, the legislation will have to be presented to the President for him to play his role in terms of section 79 of the Constitution. To my mind, the parliamentary route does not remove the looming risk.

The Constitutional Court in its ruling on the matter made a profound observation when it stated that the absence of addresses may, and not will, result in elections being unfair: 'The absence of addresses might – not will – result in elections being unfair' (Constitutional Court 2016 para. 19).

It may therefore be necessary for the IEC to undertake a wider study with a larger sample to test whether political parties are indeed using addresses to canvass for voter support. If this is not the case the IEC should be freed from the costly and arduous process of providing addresses on the voters' roll. Following the amendment of the Electoral Act, the IEC could approach the Constitutional Court to review its decision on the Tlokwe matter. I am certain that the court would view this in a positive light because the IEC would no longer be in breach of an Act of Parliament and thus of the Constitution. Reading the Constitutional Court judgement, Justice AJ Wallis makes reference to a similar study when he states that:

I can see force in the contention that in order for an election to be fairly conducted it is necessary that the participants have available to them not simply a list of voters' names and identity numbers but also some means of identifying and contacting them, of which the voters' addresses is the most obvious. But it is unnecessary in the light of section 16(3) to reach a firm conclusion on this question and I would hesitate to do so without further enquiry into the electoral systems of other democratic countries and the requirements for the preparation of voters' rolls there.

Constitutional Court 2015, para. 94

2. Remove the voting district as a legal entity and keep it as an administrative unit and thus decriminalise the millions who are registered outside these imaginary boundaries called voting districts. Increase the effort on targeted registrations on ward boundaries as the smallest units of electoral districts to clean up cross-boundary registrations.
3. The traditional paper voters' roll used during elections must be replaced by an electronic voter register that functions like a speed paypoint. The voter's identity card or book is scanned and a slip is printed and issued to the voter, who then presents it to an official who files it away before issuing a ballot paper. This would provide the paper trail that political parties have been concerned about.
4. The ballot paper must be replaced with an electronic voting machine as is the current trend internationally. It is disappointing that one of

Africa's leading economies is still stuck in the past in the manner in which it delivers its election results. The manual process is laborious, exhausting and takes too long to return results. Election officials are overworked and some stay without sleep for more than 24 hours, working to count ballot papers. This is unfair labour practice in a time when we have the appropriate alternative technology at our disposal. By using electronic voting machines, results would be counted and verified in a matter of minutes. If stations close at 9 or 10pm staff finish and retire to their homes to rest; but in the current state they stay up counting ballots for hours and even days without sleep.

CONCLUSION

If the above mentioned proposals can be considered, the burden of the IEC to provide addresses would be relieved at the stroke of a pen with the additional benefit of a substantial monetary saving.

Electoral legitimacy and the integrity of the electoral process are of enormous importance in South Africa. It is appropriate to end this paper with the following quotation from the Constitutional Court.

Electoral legitimacy and the integrity of the electoral process are of enormous importance in South Africa. Many people, in many different ways, struggled and fought to secure the right to vote for all people in South Africa. It was a right denied to the vast majority of this country's citizens. Many devoted their lives to the struggle for democracy. Others were imprisoned, banned, harassed and exiled. No-one who was in, or has seen photographs of the patient queues that waited for hours to cast their votes in the first democratic election can have any doubt that the right to vote is a precious one for all South Africans. The struggle of all those who worked to bring democracy to this country is properly honoured when we conduct free and fair elections to determine the will of those who now have the right to vote. It is vital therefore that we are jealous of the privilege so hardly won. In determining a just and equitable remedy, where an election has been held not to be free and fair, these considerations must form the backdrop to the performance of the Court's role as the guardian of the Constitution and the IEC's performance of its obligation to ensure free and fair elections.

Constitutional Court 2015, para. 78

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