

Of *all* people, by *all* people, for *all* people?

Perceptions of economic inequality and democracy in
Africa

Submitted by:

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Thesis presented for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the Department of Political Studies.

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

October, 2021

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Signed by candidate

Cape Town, 18 October 2021

Of course, no thesis or work of this magnitude is possible in isolation. I am therefore deeply grateful and indebted to a number of people.

First, I would like to thank my supervisors, Professor Bob Mattes and Professor Jeremy Seekings. Both have challenged me on many occasions to rethink my approach and what I thought I knew. Both have flagged my blind spots and pushed me to do better, look closer and try harder. Both have been nuisances in the best possible way. Despite Bob moving to Scotland early on and Covid restrictions meaning that little personal exchange was possible for much of the latter half of my doctoral studies, I feel a great sense of personal gratitude towards both and hope that- in whatever capacity or place- our paths cross again in the future.

Both Bob and Jeremy have not only guided me academically but have supported my research activities through funding as well as teaching and research opportunities. In this context, I am especially grateful to Jeremy and the Institute for Democracy, Citizenship and Public Policy in Africa (located at the University of Cape Town) who have supported me through scholarships throughout my Masters and doctoral research. I would also like to thank the staff at the Center for Social Science Research (also located at the University of Cape Town) who have always gone out of their way to assist me in any administrative matter. I would also like to thank Professor Rajen Govender who played a central part in fostering my analytic abilities and who took the time to discuss the more technical nuances of my thesis on several occasions.

Second, I would like to thank Afrobarometer, whose data I rely on for my thesis analyses. Since 2014, I have worked for Afrobarometer as part of the data management team. I have also participated in capacity building work for Afrobarometer. Through my work with the organization, I have not only learnt technical skills in the collection, handling and analysis of survey-data in Africa, but I have also been exposed to diverse and rich research and debate on and in Africa today. Having the opportunity to discuss ideas and receive diverse views on elements of this thesis has been a deeply enriching and rewarding experience. I am deeply thankful to Afrobarometer for their support and the opportunities they have provided me with.

Last, but certainly not least, I am deeply thankful for the personal support that I have received from friends and family. I would like to thank the countless friends who have lent me an ear to articulate what I am doing and to whom I apologize for seemingly endless trail-of-thought monologues (at least in the first years). I would like to thank my parents and family for supporting me and motivating me when progress came more slowly. But most of all I need to thank my wife Alèri, who has never questioned my ambition, always found ways to dampen the blows, take my mind of things when times were difficult, and who has somehow managed to raise our perfect little son while I was battling with chapter edits and supervisor comments. This thesis is especially for you, and our little family.

Thesis abstract

In this thesis I explore whether perceptions of individual economic inequality are linked to the legitimacy of democracy in Africa. Past research has suggested that high levels of economic inequality may affect the legitimacy of democracy, by reducing support for democracy and discouraging political participation. However, these findings have largely been described for cases in the global North. Little evidence is available for cases in Africa. This reflects an important omission in the literature. Africa – as a region – is simultaneously characterized by some of the highest levels of economic inequality in the world, and many democracies retain autocratic elements non-fully consolidated hybrid-regimes. This thesis addresses this omission.

Much of the existing research on the consequences of economic inequality uses country-level measures of economic inequality, such as the Gini coefficient or the Palma ratio. This is problematic for two reasons. First, a growing body of research suggests that ordinary people widely misjudge levels of economic inequality and that people's perceptions of economic inequality are often weakly associated with actual, objective, levels of economic inequality. At an individual level people's attitudes and behaviours are thus probably informed by their perceptions of economic inequality rather than objective levels of economic inequality. Second, high-quality comparative data on economic inequality are predominantly only available for a limited number of economically developed countries. For countries in Africa, such data are often of poor quality, only available in irregular intervals and not easily comparable. This limits the empirical analysis of such cases. I bridge both problems by using representative survey data collected in 34 countries between 2016 and 2018 by the Afrobarometer value-survey (n>45000). Specifically, I compute measures of perceptions of individual economic inequality by using a survey question which asks respondents whether they feel relatively deprived (in regard to their living situation), relatively advantaged or equal to other people in their country.

To link perceptions of individual economic inequality with democratic legitimacy, I apply Norris' 2011 multi-dimensional conceptualization of 'political support'. Following Norris' conceptualization, I structure my thesis as a series of analyses focusing on the relationship between perceptions of individual inequality and the various dimensions of political support – support for democracy as a regime, satisfaction with how democracy is working, and trust in state institutions and representative government institutions. Lastly – as the legitimacy of democracy is reflected not only in people's attitudes towards and evaluations of democracy, but also in their actions – I explore whether perceptions of individual economic inequality are linked to civic and political participation.

Employing multi-level analyses, I find that that people who feel equal to others are more supportive of democracy and have more demand for democracy than people who do not feel equal to others. Conversely, my results show that both those feeling severely relatively

deprived and those feeling severely relatively advantaged tend to be less supportive of democracy and have less demand for democracy. Feeling relatively advantaged is significantly associated with more positive evaluations of how democracy is working in the respondent's country, while feeling relatively deprived is significantly associated with less positive evaluations. These results suggest that rather than emphasizing equality, people's expectations of the functioning of democracy in practice are driven by egocentric considerations. Likewise, people display egocentric motives regarding how much they trust representative government institutions and state institutions. I find that perceptions of individual relative deprivation are significantly associated with less political trust and that perceptions of relative advantage are significantly associated with more political trust. For all models, I find that the effect of perceptions of individual economic inequality remain significant, even when controlling for the effects of widely used explanations in the literature, such as partisanship, economic performance evaluations and perceptions of corruption. This indicates that how people feel compared to other people is an important explanation of how supportive people are of democracy, how they evaluate the functioning of democracy and how much they trust political leaders and state institutions. Lastly, I find that being materially poor and feeling relatively deprived do not appear to be consistently linked to being 'voiceless' or 'resigned' as the developmental narrative may suggest. The results show that people who feel relatively deprived are more likely to engage in communing activities, irrespective of poverty experience, but less likely to contact representatives when absolute lived poverty experience is considered. The models moreover suggest that people who have experienced more poverty are more engaged in communal activity, more likely to protest and more likely to contact representatives. Both perceptions of relative deprivation and experiences of poverty appear unrelated to voting.

Overall, this thesis provides a number of important contributions to areas of both democracy research and economic research that have been understudied in the past. The results suggest that perceptions of individual economic inequality across 34 African countries consistently correlate with people's attitudes towards and evaluations of democracy, their trust in political leaders and institutions, and their levels of civic and political participation. This tells us that how people feel compared to others matters in terms of the legitimacy of democratic regimes in Africa. In many cases the results suggest that perceptions of relative deprivation and perceptions of relative advantage do not simply work in opposite ways. Much emphasis in both the public discourse and the empirical literature has been placed on the role of being or feeling relatively deprived. The results in this thesis clearly demonstrate that those who feel relatively better off are of equal importance and need to be studied in the future. Moreover, this thesis contributes to the methodological literature by providing a novel approach to the study of the consequences of economic inequality in Africa by focusing on perceptions and the use of value-survey data. Especially in the context of Africa (and the wider developing world) where

high-quality macro-level data are often limited, the use of value-survey based experiential measures of inequality may open manifold new avenues of enquiry in a diverse set of fields of research.

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Chapter 1

Of *all* people, by *all* people, for *all* people?¹

Perceptions of economic inequality and democracy in Africa

¹ The title of this thesis – ‘Of *all* people, by *all* people, for *all* people’ – refers to Abraham Lincoln’s famous Gettysburg address in 1863. Since then, the phrase ‘government of the people, by the people, for the people’ has become widely synonymous with democratic rule. Notably, Lincoln does not mention ‘democracy’ once in his speech (Wilentz, 2015). In my title, I have changed the famous phrase to a question, asking ‘of *all* people, by *all* people, for *all* people?’. The replacement of ‘the’ with ‘all’ and the question mark speaks to the notion of ordinary people feeling that democracy is no longer controlled by majorities (but rather of only a ‘few’ people) and is no longer a functioning vehicle by which ordinary people can make their voices heard (but rather only by a ‘few’ people). A similar title has been used by Stiglitz (2011): ‘Of the 1%, by the 1%, for the 1%’.

1. Introduction

Although inequality “is devilishly complicated to analyze” (Pinker, 2018: 98) it has become something of a conventional wisdom in both political and public discourse (as well as the New York Times’ and Amazon best-seller lists) that democracy is under threat generally, but particularly from high and rising levels of economic inequality (such as income or wealth inequality). For example, former US President Barack Obama, in a speech in Greece in 2016 noted that growing inequality and awareness of inequality (through modern technology) created a sense among ordinary people that the ‘global elites and corporations’ lived by different rules which “feeds a profound sense of injustice and a feeling that our economies are increasingly unfair” (Obama, 2016; taken from Deutsche Welle, 2016). This sense of injustice may feed a “rising ‘tribalism’ and ‘nationalism’ that breeds suspicion of democratic institutions and government” (Deutsche Welle, 2016; quotation marks as in source). Similarly, US economist Joseph Stiglitz (2015: 379) notes that:

“Growing inequality within most countries around the world is one of the critical issues facing the world today. People everywhere sense that it is morally wrong. We sense that it cannot be justified. We sense that it is dividing our societies and undermining our democracies. And we are right in sensing this harm.”

This sense of ‘something being wrong’ can be found in the ‘Occupy’ movement and protests originating with the Occupy Wall Street protests in 2011. The movement used the phrase ‘we are the 99%’ in reference to the growing (perceived) disparity of the ‘elite’ 1% and the ‘other’ 99% (Levitin, 2015). The movement protested against economic inequality, social injustice, the student debt- crisis and the imbalanced influence of economic and corporate elites on politics in America. Similar movements soon emerged and took to the streets in hundreds of cities across dozens of countries (Rogers, 2011).² The increasing importance of addressing material and immaterial inequality is also reflected by the inclusion of reducing inequality as Goal 10 of the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals.

² While much of the emphasis in the public discourse has been on the growing ‘gap’ between the ‘1%’ and the ‘99%’, rising income and wealth inequality is far more complex. For example, rising levels of economic inequality (especially wealth) in the past half century have not only been the result of the ‘1%’ becoming ever more wealthy, but also the growing gap between the poorest and everyone else as well as the ‘0.1%’ and the ‘0.01%’ and everyone else, respectively.

A growing interest in material and non-material inequality has also been reflected in the media and in popular culture, especially since the 2007/2008 financial crisis. For example, Pinker (2018) notes a ten-fold increase in the proportion of New York Times articles published between 2009 and 2016 that contained the word 'inequality'. And in 2013, French economist Thomas Piketty's 700-page 'Capital in the Twenty-First Century' (describing the changing ratio of return on capital versus the rate of growth of the economy in the 20th century) became an international bestseller – selling over 2.5 million copies in 40 languages (Horobin, 2019) and launching at Number 1 on Amazon's bestseller list (Moore, 2014). Piketty's subsequent book – 'Capital and Ideology' (2020) – feeds the public interest with even more of the economist's work and ideas, spanning 1,000 pages in the English version and over 1,200 pages in the French language versions, respectively. This success reflects how topical economic inequality has become in public and political discourse.

Africa is a critical case

Indeed, economic inequality *within* countries has risen in many of the world's most advanced democracies and economies over the last four decades (Alderson et al., 2005; Atkinson & Piketty, 2007; Solt, 2008; Milanovic, 2012; Stiglitz 2012; Alvaredo et al., 2013; Piketty & Saez, 2014; Piketty, 2015).³ Research suggests multiple direct and indirect paths by which high levels of economic inequality may affect democracy in the short and long-run (see discussion below).⁴ However, the literature on the linkages between economic inequality and democracy has to

³ Historically, within-country inequality in North America and Western Europe declined between the late 19th century and the early 1970s (Boix, 2010; Atkinson et al., 2011; Alvaredo et al., 2013). The abolition of aristocracy-based states, the increase in international trade, the industrial revolution, as well as rising working-class incomes, helped create what is commonly referred to as a 'middle class' in many Western societies. This 'middle class' was able to save income, buy goods and consume services and thereby played a central role in creating economic growth. Economically, this middle class was pivotal, as it possessed enough financial means to consume, but rarely enough to invest. This meant that much of what the middle class was earning was in the short to mid-term reintroduced into the economy. For example, in the United States – in the decades following World War II – real income growth was roughly equal at the 95th percentile, the median and the 20th percentile (Stone et al., 2020). Since the 'golden age of equality' in the 1950s and 1960s, levels of inequality within many countries in Europe and Northern America, by one measure or another, have returned to, or are encroaching on, levels comparable to a century ago and earlier (Alvaredo et al., 2013; Bourguignon, 2015). Evidence suggests that, while historically inequality was mainly an inequality of income, the pattern of inequality has shifted towards inequality of wealth since the 1970s. This – as Piketty (2014) famously argues – is because the average returns on wealth (through investments etc.) have far outperformed increases in wages over the past four decades. While (slowly) rising nominal incomes have benefited a majority of people in the western world, higher returns on wealth mean that the majority have become poorer, relative to the wealthiest over the same period of time. The growing divide between the richest and the rest was furthermore aided by decreases in the top income tax levels and reduced intergenerational mobility in most developed economies (Aaronson & Mazumder, 2008).

⁴ Besides being negatively linked to democracy, research suggests that high levels of economic inequality are linked to a number of negative outcomes such as declines in perceived well-being, self-reported health and overall life satisfaction, and increased individual stress and social dysfunction (Aneshensel, 1992; Soobader & LeClere, 1999; Diener, 2000; Wilkinson, 2002; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2006; Kaltenhaler et al., 2008; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009 & 2010; Pickett & Wilkinson, 2010; Pittau et al., 2010 and Delhey & Dragolov, 2014).

date focused primarily on developed countries of the global north, or newly democratizing countries in central and eastern Europe (see, for example, Loveless, 2013). Little evidence is available in this regard for cases in the developing South, such as Africa.

This is a serious gap in the literature, as Africa forms a critical case in understanding the linkage between economic inequality and democracy. Indeed, as South African economist Murray Leibbrandt (2021) points out, “inequality remains the developmental challenge of our time”.

On the one hand, Africa – as a region – is marked by the highest rates of inequality globally (Beegle et al., 2016) and the salience of inequality is recognized in the public and political discourse in Africa. For example, Mkandawire (2014: 177) challenges the ‘Africa rising narrative’ focused on economic growth rates, and notes:

“while there are reasons for optimism when looking at the African continent today, we should not privilege a narrow focus on GDP growth as a measure of success. One of the great challenges is to ‘address the social problems that the new economic growth spawns, such as inequality — problems that are too often neglected by the Africa Rising narrative’”.

On the other hand, many African democratic regimes display both democratic and non-democratic elements (see discussion in section 2). Considering much of the ‘Afro-pessimism’ among international donors and the media in the 1970s and 1980s, manifest progress appears to have been achieved by many Africa countries over the past decades.⁵ For example, as Diamond and Plattner (2010) note, at the beginning of the 1990s only Botswana, the Gambia and Mauritius could be deemed democratic. In contrast, by the end of the 1990s only three of the 48 countries in sub-Saharan African countries had not held competitive national, multiparty elections.

Since Africa’s ‘democratic decade’ in the 1990s, however, many states have failed to fully consolidate and display both democratic and autocratic elements (Gyimah-Boadi, 2004; Bratton & Mattes, 2009; Bratton, 2010; Diamond & Plattner, 2010; Gyimah-Boadi, 2015). Although regularly held, elections frequently remain of questionable quality and in some cases violently contested, as recent disputes in Kenya (in 2017), Gabon (in 2016) and Ivory Coast (in 2010) highlight. All too often, leaders turn a deaf ear to the demands of the people once the elections pass, and powerful political elites focus on rewarding themselves or their networks of loyal supporters (De Walle & Butler, 1999; Ake, 2000; Lindberg, 2006; Lynch & Crawford, 2011; Cheeseman, 2015). In many African countries multi-party systems lack institutionalization and remain distanced from their constituents and even though many constitutions call for rigorous

⁵ Some of this apparent progress is explained by the low starting point to begin with. Of course, it is impossible to summarize or simplify the diverse country experiences into one homogenous narrative (Allen, 1995). As Chazan (1992: 14) points out, it is important to recognize that “there is not one but many Africa’s” with diverse and unique histories of regime transition and transformation.

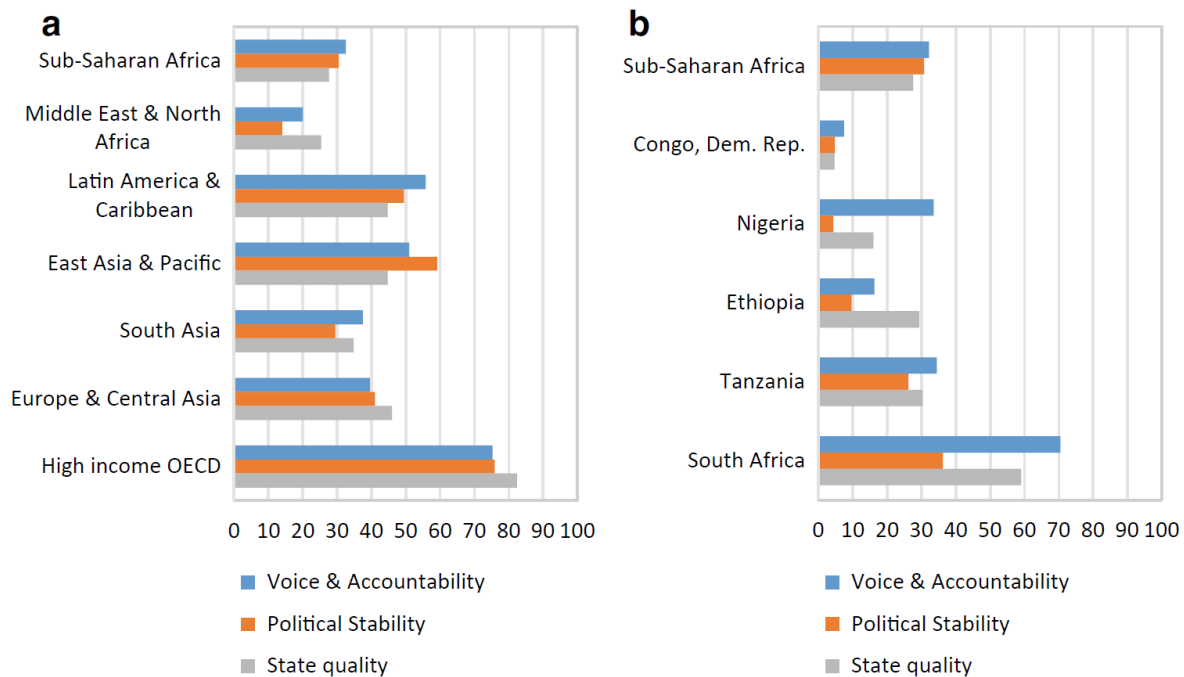
checks of those in power, legislatures remain weak (Bogaards, 2000; Gyimah-Boadi, 2001; Lindberg, 2006; Lynch & Crawford, 2011; Cheeseman, 2018).

Increasingly we see elected presidents and prime ministers change the constitution and weaken institutions' checks and balances to extend or outright abolish term-limits. In the past two decades, 16 African countries have changed or abolished term-limits and a further 8 countries have no term limits set-out in their constitution. Frequently we see rules of who can rule and for how long have been changed multiple times to allow the incumbent to stay in power, such as Uganda (2005, 2017), Guinea (2001, 2020), Togo (2002, 2019), Chad (2005, 2017) and Burundi (2015, 2018).⁶ In other cases, electoral committees are used to change and restrict opposition in elections, such as most recently in the 2020 presidential elections in Cote d'Ivoire. Indeed, as Siegle and Cook (2021b) note, term limit norms have dramatically deteriorated since 2015. Gyimah-Boadi (2015) concludes that, while many African states have achieved progress in a variety of areas in the past several decades (as evidenced by the embracing of elections and constitutional norms; the emergence of a free media and civil society; and the establishment of regional, supranational bodies to affirm pro-democratic conventions and protocols), these achievements represent "democratization's low-hanging fruit" and much of this progress has been on paper only (Gyimah-Boadi, 2015: 103).

Thirty years after Africa's 'democratic dawn' in the early 1990s, Africa's democracies are characterized by variance and differentiation rather than a common, "continental trajectory" (Bratton & Mattes, 2009; Mattes & Bratton, 2016). According to the World Governance Indicators (data from 2018), political regimes in Africa score lower on average on voice and accountability, political stability, and state quality, than all other world regions, bar the Middle East and North Africa (see figure 1.1a, below). Moreover, the data clearly show within-region variation, both across countries and across indicators. Moreover, the data clearly show within-region variation both across countries and across indicators (figure 1.1.b).⁷ This within-region variance is important to note at the outset of the thesis as it needs to be considered in how data are used. Specifically, I account for country differences by using multi-level models which allow for random intercepts at the country level. I discuss this in more detail in chapter 2.

⁶ The information here is taken from Siegle and Cook (2021a).

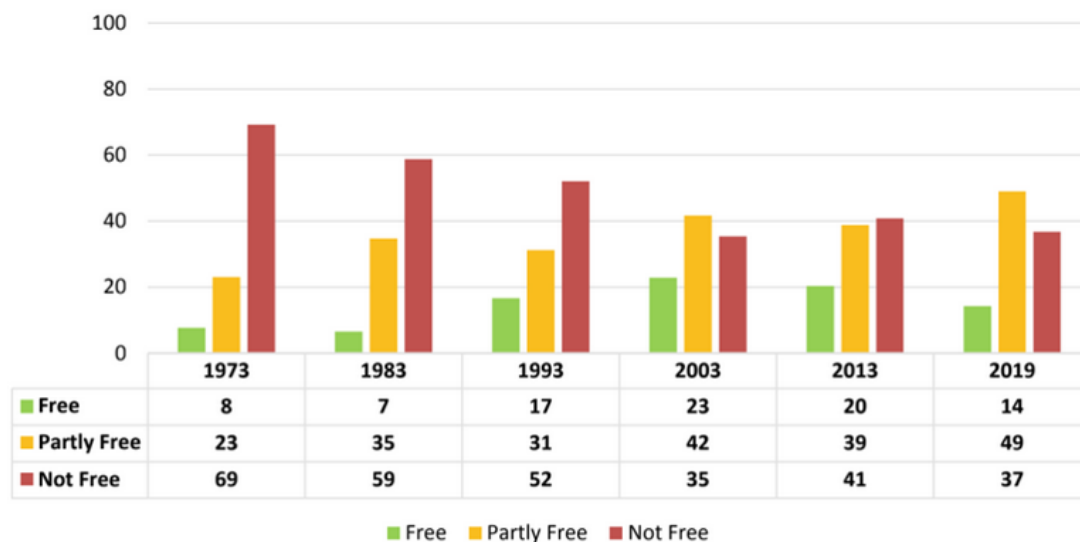
⁷ Given the large degree of variance within regions, it would have been helpful for Møller (2021) – from whom the figure is taken – to have also report distributions. Unfortunately, this was not the case. As evident in figure 1.1.b the regional mean is likely overly influenced by 'extreme' cases, such as South Africa (and presumably Botswana, Lesotho and Namibia, which are also highly unequal countries).

Figure 1.1: World Governance Indicators by world region and within Africa. Data from 2018⁸

To many observers – and reflected in the Freedom House data below – the past decade has even been characterized by a ‘backsliding’ of democracy in many African countries, although this trend is not unique to Africa but must be seen in a broader, global backsliding of democracy (Hellmeier et al., 2021). As shown in figure 1.2 below, democratic consolidation has stagnated in Africa since the early 2000s. Using the Freedom House’s ‘freedom score’, it is evident that while the share (as a %) of ‘free’ countries rose between 1983 and 2003, the share has since dropped. This decline in ‘free’ countries has been accompanied by a rise in ‘partly free’ countries, while the proportion of ‘not free’ countries has remained only marginally. Undoubtedly, African countries today are freer than they were in the 1970s or 1980s, but much of the democratic momentum apparent in the 1990s appears to have been lost.

⁸ Taken from Møller (2021: 76). Unfortunately, I was not able – even when consulting the technical documentation by the authors of the source data (Kaufmann et al., 2010) – to confirm if the regional averages in table 1.1.a are weighted by population size. My guess would be that they are unweighted- i.e. each country contributes equally to the regional mean regardless of the respective country size. My guess is informed by the fact that the authors (Kaufmann et al., 2010) produce country level indicators (which would make the simple – unweighted- calculation of a regional mean easier) and nowhere discuss the country size (which would be needed to compute such weights).

Figure 1.2: Freedom House scores for African countries between 1973-2019 (%)⁹



Why would inequality be linked to democracy in Africa?

In this thesis, I explore whether this democratic stagnation can be (partially) explained by perceptions of material inequality though the effect such perceptions have on political legitimacy (see discussion in section 3 of this chapter). Two reasons inform this route of enquiry. First, democracy was expected to improve people's absolute and relative material well-being and has failed to do so in many cases. Secondly, theoretical and empirical research outside of Africa suggest that economic inequality can undermine democracy by reducing popular support for democracy, threatening political equality, suppressing political participation and weakening the government's incentive to address inequality through policy. I briefly discuss both reasons in the following.

Democratization in Africa was enabled and driven by diverse and, in many cases, unique circumstances and motivations, but a common theme was the expectation of improved material well-being under democratic rule. Despite economic growth at national level in many African countries over the past 30 years, many of these expectations of material well-being have not been met at individual level (Kapstein & Converse, 2008; Lewis, 2008). As Lewis (2008: 96) summarizes:

“The trend toward democratization that swept the African continent in the early 1990s kindled hopes that political reform could lead to economic regeneration. However, a crucial paradox of growth without prosperity surrounds Africa's new democracies. While political liberalization bolsters

⁹ Taken from Møller (2021: 74). Calculations draw from Freedom House 2020 data.

economic policy reform and enhances some of the requisites for economic performance, these improvements do not seem to foster significant reductions in poverty or inequality."

These unmet expectations might produce increasing pressures on democratic regimes and stifle further consolidation. While democratic procedures have been at least formally introduced in many countries, these political achievements (even if only at face value) cannot make up for shortcomings in regard to economic expectations at individual level. As Lewis (2008: 97) notes regarding democracy in Africa:

"[h]owever desirable democracy may be in its own right, political liberalization does not ensure economic regeneration or improved popular welfare. [...] Some observers suggest that if democratic rule cannot deliver improvements in the lives of average citizens, these regimes will lose support and legitimacy, leading to more contentious and violent politics or even regime breakdown."

These observations do not come as a surprise but were foreseen even at early stages of Africa's wave of democratization in the 1990s. As Claude Ake (1993: 240- 242) remarked in regard to the unique case of democratization in Africa:

"In order for African democracy to be relevant and sustainable it will have to be radically different from liberal democracy. For one thing, it will have to de-emphasize abstract political rights and stress concrete economic rights, because the demand for democracy in Africa draws much of its impetus from the prevailing economic conditions within. [...] Ordinary Africans do not separate political democracy from economic democracy or for that matter from economic well-being. They see their political empowerment, through democratization, as an essential part of the process of getting the economic agenda right at last and ensuring that the development project is managed better and its rewards more evenly distributed. [...] [The] feasibility of democratization will depend partly on the correlation of this process with better economic prospects".

As mentioned above, little research has explored linkages between material inequality and democracy in Africa from a comparative, empirical perspective. Elsewhere, however, a rich literature exists which posits manifold connections between material conditions and political conditions. Political and legal equality are essential to the idea of democracy – one person, one vote. Given the assumption of rational voters in economic voting theory, the median voter theorem posits that political outcomes in a democratic system should be closest to the interests of the 'median voter' and least like the interest of more extreme positions which only fewer people support. With increasing economic inequality, the assumption would be that the (self-interested) majority (who are becoming relatively less well-off compared to the increasingly well-off elite) support various means of redistribution to address the issue of inequality. This, over time, should lead to a reduction in inequality. Arithmetically, the median-voter theorem suggests that individuals and groups in society who are 'unusually rich' would hold far less

influence in elections and hence over policy outcomes than 'average Joe', his 'average friends', his 'average co-workers' and his 'average neighbors'.

This assumption of 'power in numbers' in shaping policy in democratic systems in the global North is being undermined by the ability of an economic elite ('the few') to wield disproportionate political power. A (privileged) minority can disproportionately influence policy making through campaign funding, lobbying, disenfranchisement of the poor and shaping policy making and public discourse through direct candidate funding, private think tanks and media (see, for example, Stiglitz, 2011; Gilens, 2012). This imbalance changes the dynamic and source of power within democratic rule, favoring the wealthy over the many. As Stiglitz (2012:166) puts it, the rules of democracy are changed to "one dollar one vote".

A rich academic literature – derived from cases outside of Africa – suggests that material and political conditions (such as economic equality and democracy) are linked – from a theoretical (see, for example, Dahl 1961, 1971, 2006; Rueschemeyer, 2004) and historical perspective in the democratic transition literature (see, for example, Boix, 2003; Houle, 2009). It is widely held today, that economic conditions, such as inequality, are associated with certain political regime types. Past research has posited both causal directions. Reuveny and Li (2003) argue that regime types predominantly influence economic redistribution (Reuveny & Li, 2003), while the work of Boix (2003), Acemoglu and Robinson (2000, 2006) and Przeworski et al. (2000) suggests that democratization is most likely under specific levels of inequality. More recently Houle (2009; 2016) has argued that economic inequality affects democratic consolidation, but not democratization as such.

High levels of economic inequality have also been linked to the long-term health of democracy.¹⁰ From an empirical perspective, economic inequality has been linked to numerous negative outcomes regarding people's attitudes and behaviors, such as decreasing support for democracy, less political participation, decreases in political interest and decreases in social trust and tolerance and participation in voluntary associations (Uslaner 2002; Uslaner & Brown, 2005; Solt, 2008; 2010; Andersen & Milligan, 2011; Andersen, 2012; Krieckhaus et al., 2014).

It has been suggested that this privileged economic and political position of 'the few' over 'the many', is gradually eroding popular support for democracy and democratic norms and attitudes among the majority (see for example Krieckhaus et al., 2014 or Stiglitz, 2012). When

¹⁰ For an overview of research on the linkages between economic inequality and democracy, see: Bollen & Jackman (1985), Muller (1988), Burkhart (1997), Boix (2003); Reuveny & Li, 2003; Acemoglu & Robinson (2006); Houle (2009).

the political, societal and economic system is consistently and repeatedly seen to be serving the few, over the many, the many might start questioning the system.

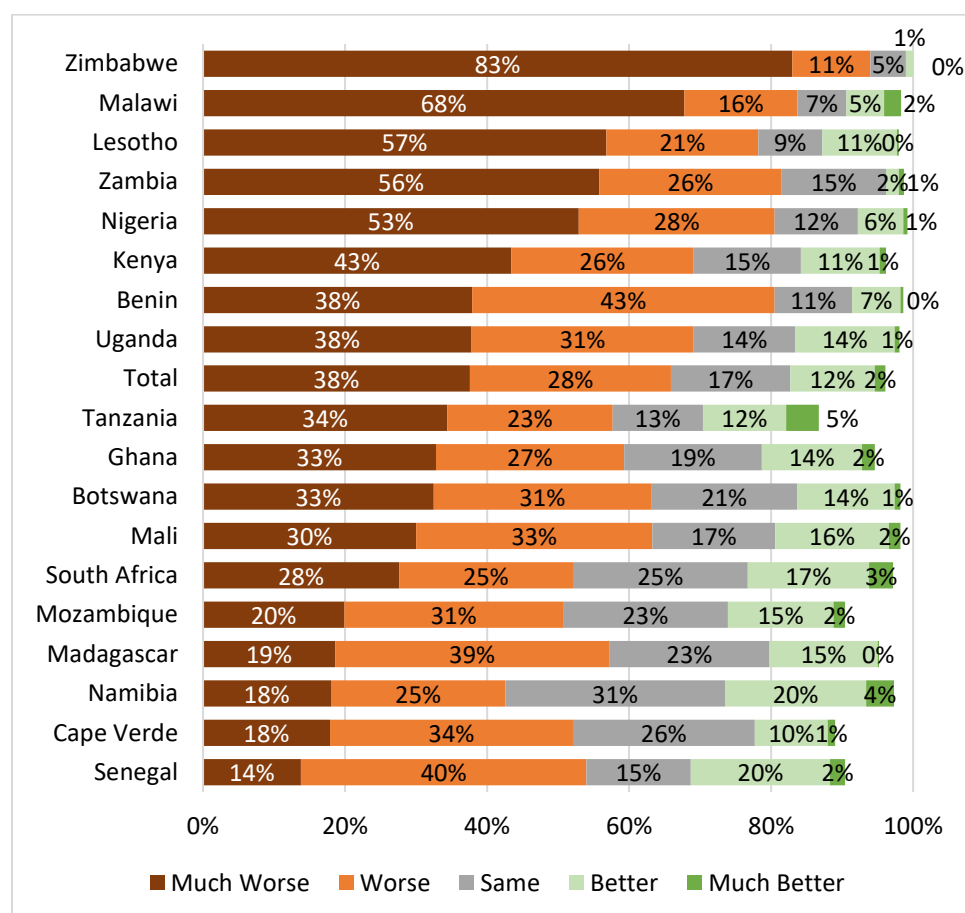
Income and wealth inequality not only weaken support for democracy, but also weaken democracies' ability to address the effects of inequality (see also discussion in chapter 3). To decrease inequality, public policy is required. However, inequality reduces trust (see above) that is needed to pass and enforce such public policy to decrease inequality and thus increase trust. Rothstein and Uslaner (2005) argue that many countries with low social trust and high inequality thus face a "social trap", rendering them unable to meaningfully address the issue of inequality. They explain that "[t]here will be no political support for [...] programs since rich benefit from high-level corruption and see the poor as the poor" (2005: 70). Even if policy were passed, the functioning and efficiency of government institutions would be a concern. They further argue that inequality produces corruption and that people adapt to corruption, cope, and plan around institutional corruption. These coping and adapting mechanisms, which developed over time, impede the successful implementation of inequality-reducing (and thus social trust increasing) policy. Rothstein and Uslaner (2005: 71) conclude that "poor and inequalitarian countries thus find themselves trapped in a situation of continuing inequality, mistrust, and dysfunctional institutions". Indeed, the Commitment to Reducing Inequality (CRI) index for 2017 and 2018 (produced by Development Finance International (DFI) and Oxfam) suggests the countries who were most committed to reducing inequality were all industrialized welfare states from Northern Europe, while the least committed countries all came from the Global South (Lawson & Martin, 2018).¹¹ Although this thesis explicitly does not study democratic consolidation over time, these findings suggest that the impact of economic inequality on the legitimacy of democracy may have a long-term effect on democratic consolidation and sustainability.

In fact, representative Afrobarometer survey data tell us that many Africans see increasing inequality and say that governments are failing to close gaps between rich and poor.

In Round 3 (2005/06), Afrobarometer asked respondents to evaluate the change in the gap between rich and poor in their country compared to the past. Majorities in 17 out of 18 countries reported that the gap had become 'worse' or 'much worse' rather than improved or stayed the same (see figure 1.3, below). In the remaining country – Namibia – 48% gave such assessments. In many cases – such as in Zimbabwe (83%), Malawi (68%), Lesotho (57%), Zambia (56%) and Nigeria (53%) majorities even give the most extreme response, saying that the gap had become 'much worse'. In all countries, only minorities (25% or less) saw an improvement of the gap between rich and poor compared to the past.

¹¹ The Commitment to Reducing Inequality Index is collected for 157 countries and measures government action on social spending, tax and labor rights.

Figure 1.3: Perceived change in gaps between the rich and poor compared to the past.18 countries. Afrobarometer Round 3 (2005/2006). N=25079¹²



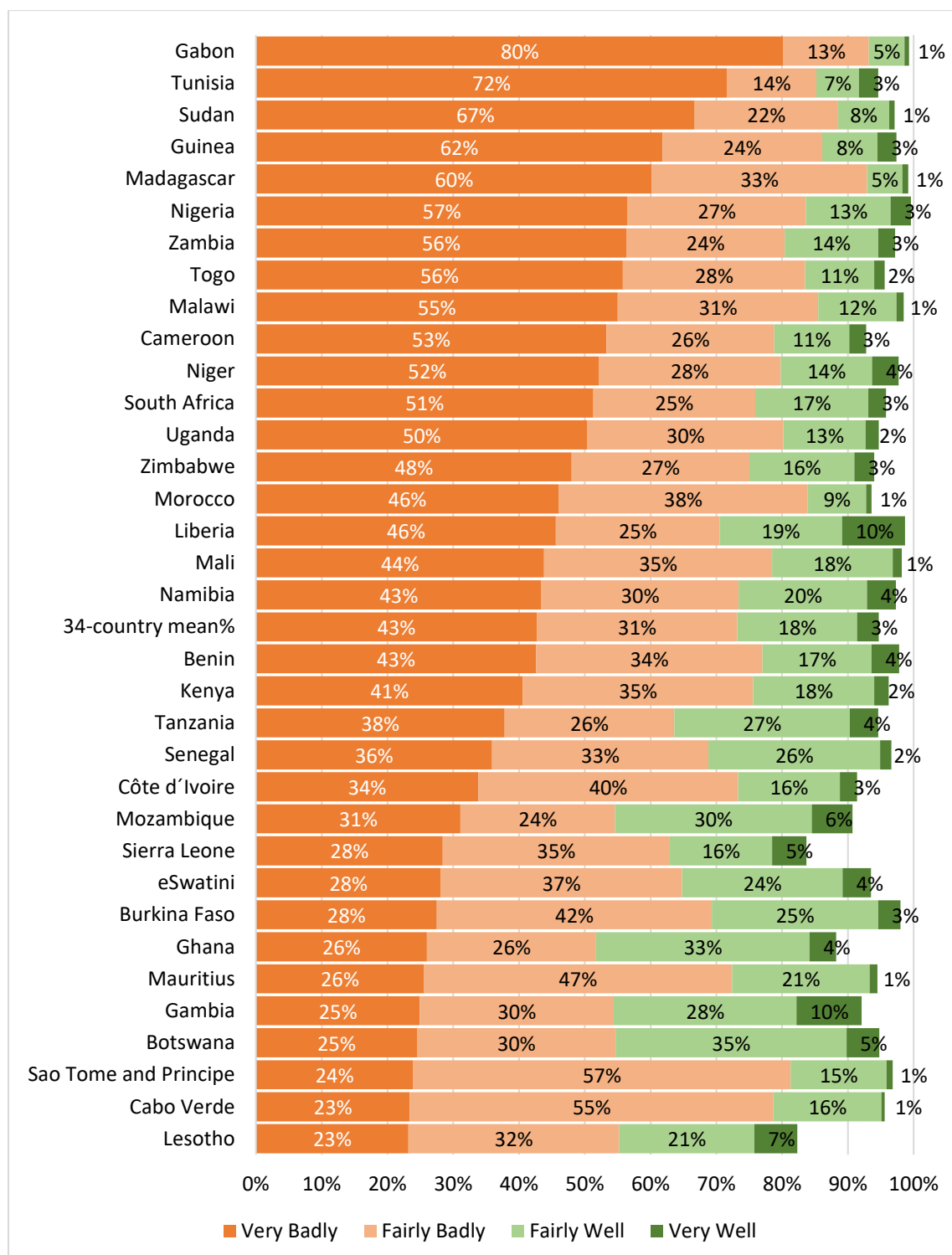
Moreover, there appears to be a considerable policy deficit. In a survey conducted between 2016 and 2018 in 34 African countries, over seven in ten (74%) respondents across Africa said that the government was doing ‘very badly’ or ‘fairly badly’ in narrowing income gaps between rich and poor, while 18% said that government is doing ‘fairly well’ and 3% say government is doing ‘very well’ (see figure 1.4, below). Across the 34 countries surveyed in Round 7 of the Afrobarometer (the most recent fully available round¹³) we find considerable variance in how respondents evaluate the performance of their government in addressing narrowing income gaps between rich and poor. Around two of three respondents in Gabon (80%), Tunisia (72%) and Sudan (67%) say the government is doing ‘very badly’ and a majority

¹² Afrobarometer Round 3 was conducted in 2005 and 2006 in 18 countries (Benin, Botswana, Cape Verde, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe). Respondents were asked: *Please tell me whether each of the following aspects of our economic situation in this country are better or worse than they were a few years ago, or whether they have remained the same: The gap between the rich and the poor?*

¹³ To access data used in this chapter see: Afrobarometer (2019). For the survey codebook see Afrobarometer (2020a). For information on the sampling methodology, see: Afrobarometer (2020b).

in all 34 countries say that government is doing badly (very or fairly badly). While only minorities give positive response, Botswana (35%), Ghanaians (33%) and Mozambicans (30%) are most

Figure 1.4: Evaluations of how government handling narrowing income gaps between rich and poor. Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018). 34 countries. N=45700¹⁴



¹⁴ Respondents were asked: *How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say? Narrowing gaps between rich and poor.*

likely to say that government is doing 'fairly well'. Ten per cent of Gambians and Liberians even say that the government is doing 'very well', although the 34-country mean is far lower, with only 3% giving such response.

Structure of chapter

This chapter is structured as follows. In the following section (section 2) I discuss democracy and economic inequality in Africa. Then, in section 3, I lay out the overarching conceptual framework of this thesis by which I connect economic inequality and democracy. In this context, I present a series of research questions which I will address in the different chapters of this thesis. Lastly, in section 4, I overview the structure of this thesis and provide brief previews of the core findings of each chapter.

2. Context: democracy and inequality in Africa

2.1 Democracy in Africa

Democratization in Africa largely occurred during the 1990s. While most African states gained independence from colonial rule during the 1950s and 1960s, many quickly saw military, one-party or strong-man rule entrenched (Bratton & Mattes, 2009). For many newly independent states, the first decades after independence were 'lost' decades in the economic and democratic sense, marked by slow development and, in many cases, non-responsive leaders and institutions. By the 1990s many of the promises made at independence – of socioeconomic improvement and higher standards of living – had not been met or had shown regress, and Africans took to the street to demand change.

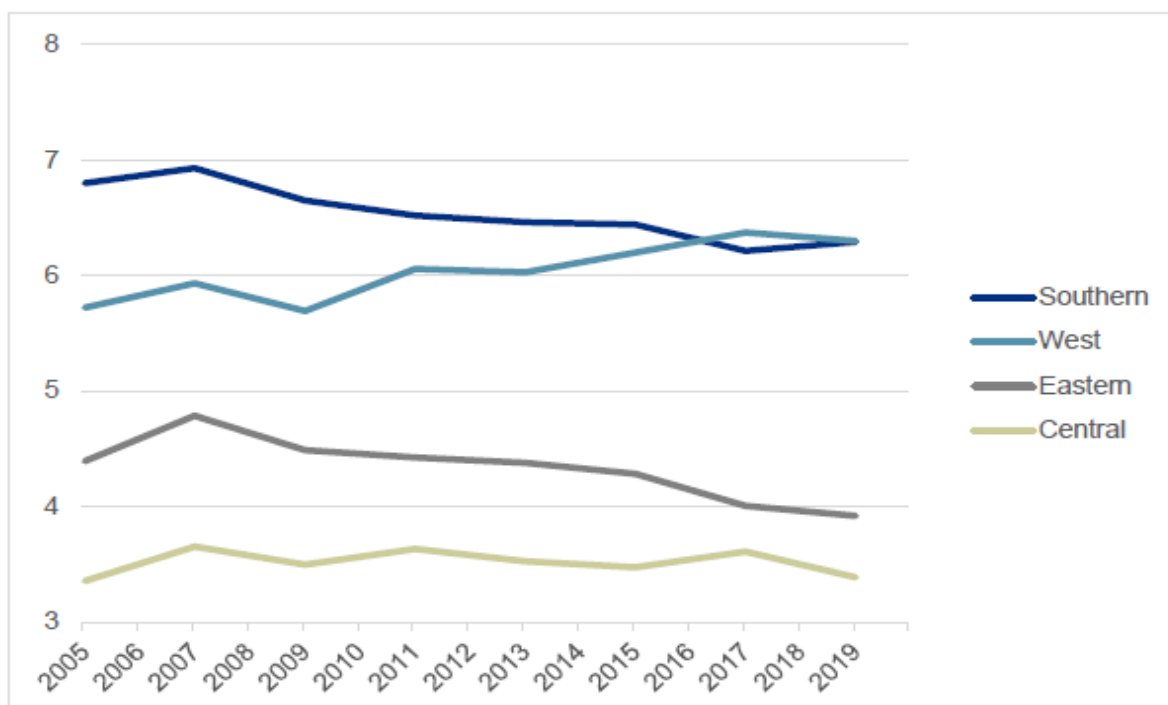
As Bratton (2008) notes, Africa's democratic-wave occurred at the overlap of several historical developments. First, starting with the second global oil crisis and economic depression of the 1970s, many African personalist regimes faced shrinking revenues. Second, the end of the Cold War resulted in the collapse of elite patronage networks, by which the global superpowers had supported many leaders through financial and military means. Third, the growing debt crisis of many African states and rise of the 'Washington consensus' in the debt policy of donors increased external pressure to introduce market liberalization as well as domestic reforms. These overlapping factors, as Geddes (1999) notes, diminished the ability to sustain clientelist networks and loyal regime cadres, and thereby aided the breakdown of personalist African regimes.¹⁵ These factors contributed to what authors have coined as Africa's 'democratic decade' in the 1990s. Generally speaking, transition to democracy in Africa is characterized by a number of factors which distinguish many African cases from other global examples. A widely held theoretical assumption at the time argued that transitions begin only when the established regime begins to divide. However, many African transitions were largely driven from below, and "rulers [were] driven by calculations of personal political survival" (Bratton & Van de Walle, 1997: 83).¹⁶ Leaders either pre-emptively conceded freedoms and introduced tentative reforms or faced wide opposition movements which often included direct or indirect military alliances. Unlike many European and Latin American cases, democratic transitions in Africa were rarely characterized by elite pacts (Bratton & Van de Walle, 1997). Rather, transitions were largely facilitated through the overlap of structural factors that weakened personalist regimes and their clientelist support structures, and a wide, cross-cleavage mass-opposition that was able to mobilize and publicly demand reform.

¹⁵ See also Bratton & Van de Walle 1997: 100.

¹⁶ For the assumption that democratic transition begins only when divisions emerge in the existing authoritarian regime, see O'Donnell & Schmitter (2013).

As shown in the figures 1.5 and 1.6, below, experiences with democracy have varied across Africa. Figure 1.5 displays the average democracy scores by region within Africa between 2005 and 2019 using the Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI).¹⁷ The index measures political transformation, economic transformation and governance, and is coded so that higher scores mean more transformation and lower scores mean less transformation towards democracy and a market economy. As the figure displays, countries in Southern and West Africa score highest on the BTI while countries in Eastern and Central Africa score lowest. Of course, these regional averages may mask changes in BTI scores for countries within regions, but the scores generally suggest that average BTI scores across regions have remained fairly stable over the past decade and a half.

Figure 1.5: Average Democracy scores for African regions 2005-2019. Bertelsmann Transformation Index¹⁸



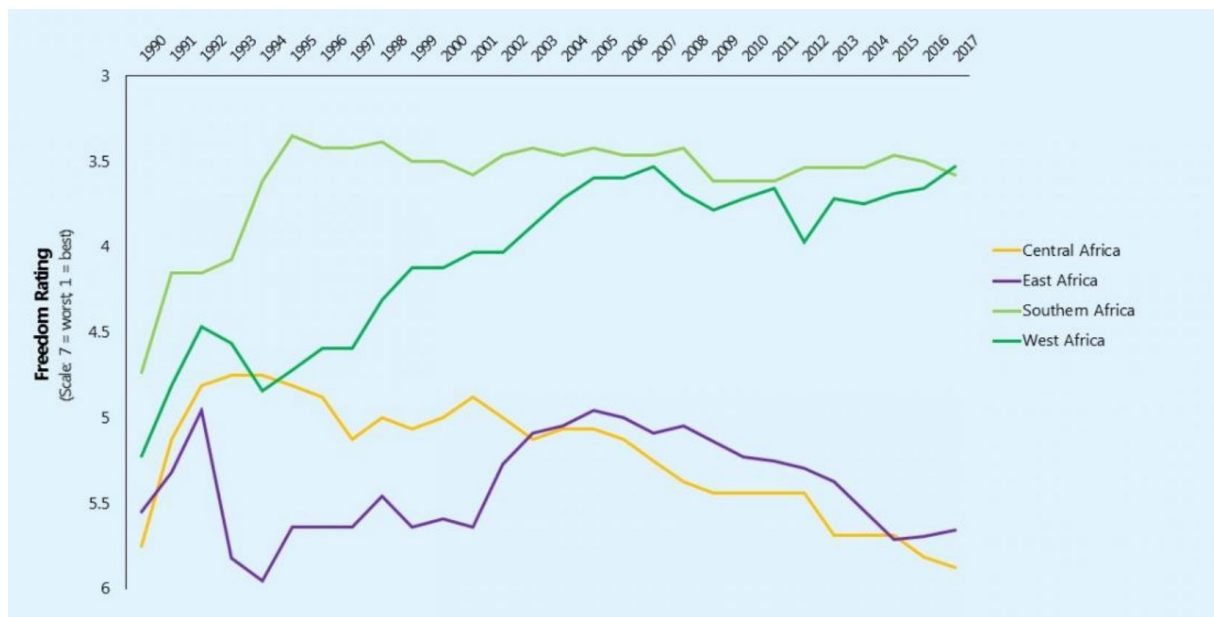
A similar picture emerges if we consult a second measure of democratic progress – the Freedom House rating. Figure 1.6, below, displays the regional average scores of the Freedom

¹⁷ The Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI) is comprised of 17 criteria (each comprised of between 1 and 6 indicators) and organized along 3 dimensions of transformation: political transformation, economic transformation and governance. The BTI measures how “developing countries and countries in transition are steering social change toward democracy and a market economy” (Bertelsmann Index website, 2021). The index is computed using a numerical rating based on qualitative expert surveys. In the figure, African regions do not include all countries within a given region, to preserve consistency of the time-series. The following counties were not included: Equatorial Guinea, Republic of the Congo, Gabon (Central); Djibouti, South Sudan (Eastern); Eswatini, Lesotho (Southern); Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania (West).

¹⁸ This figure is taken from Cheeseman (2020: 7).

House rating between 1990 and 2017.¹⁹ The Freedom House rating is coded so that higher scores mean less freedoms and lower scores mean more freedoms. Analogous to the BTI scores, we see distinct regional differences. As a region, Southern and West Africa score the best freedom scores while East and Central Africa score the worst scores which echoes the differences in BTI scores. Figure 1.6 also displays the different trajectories of regions before 2005. Here stronger regional differences emerge across time. In all regions, the early 1990s were characterized by a relative improvement of freedoms according to the Freedom House score. In Southern Africa this improvement (due to the democratization in Namibia and South Africa) has been followed by stable scores since 1995. Conversely, West Africa (which is also comprised of a far larger number of countries than Southern Africa) has seen a much more gradual improvement of freedoms as per the regional Freedom House score, and scores only began stabilizing from the mid-2000s.²⁰ Central and East Africa also saw an improvement of freedoms in the early 1990s but, in both regions, freedom scores have since regressed and returned to levels recorded in the early 1990s. In Central Africa, this regression has been gradual while in East Africa freedom scores have been more fluctuating in the 1990s before improving in the early 2000s and regressing since.²¹

Figure 1.6: Regional averages of Freedom House ratings 1990-2017²²



¹⁹ The Freedom House score is comprised of scores on the electoral process, political pluralism and participation, the functioning of the government, freedom of expression and of belief, associational and organizational rights, the rule of law, and personal autonomy and individual rights.

²⁰ West Africa is a good example of interpreting the regional score with caution. While scores improved at the regional level, these changes mask divergence within the region. Between 2005 and 2017, scores improved for a number of countries such as Cote d'Ivoire, Togo and the Gambia, but they also worsened in Mali, Niger, Guinea-Bissau and Mauritania (Temin, 2018).

²¹ The entire East African region has been characterized by worsening scores but decreases between 2005 and 2017 have been strongest for Ethiopia, Burundi and South Sudan (Temin, 2018).

²² This figure is taken from Temin (2018).

2.2 Inequality in Africa

Depending on what form of inequality we are measuring, we might argue that inequality has increased, decreased, or remained the same over time. In this thesis, I focus on economic inequality *within* countries,²³ rather than global or international inequality.²⁴ I argue that if economic inequality is to be associated with the functioning of democracy at the national level or how people feel about democracy (at that level), it is most plausible that inequality *within* countries is what matters most or exclusively to people. By economic inequality I refer to inequality of outcomes – such as wealth or income – not inequality of opportunity. As Pinker (2018: 98) points out, inequality “is devilishly complicated to analyze” and multiple ways of measuring ‘income’ or ‘wealth’ have been employed in the literature in regard to understanding what produces economic inequality as well as what consequences economic inequality has. Throughout this thesis, I will clearly distinguish between different forms and measures of inequality employed in past research. However, as I will layout in brief in this section, and in detail in chapter 2, I argue that many inequality measures are not useful for research on the consequences of such inequality in Africa, and probably in the wider developing world.

Africa – as a region – is marked by some of the highest levels of within-country economic inequality in the world (Beegle et al., 2016; Chancel et al., 2019) and – bar Latin America and the Caribbean – is characterized by higher levels of economic inequality than other developing regions²⁵. For example, figure 1.7, below displays the median score for net income by world region between 1980 and 2011 using the Gini index. Sub-Saharan Africa – displayed with the red line – clearly has a higher level of income inequality than advanced economies and other world regions, such as Europe and Central Asia, Middle East and North Africa and, for most of the time period displayed, Asia and Pacific. A similar picture emerges when we consider the share of total national income held by the top 10% of income shares between 1980 and 2016 (see appendix 2 of chapter 1). Sub-Saharan Africa – as a region – ranks only

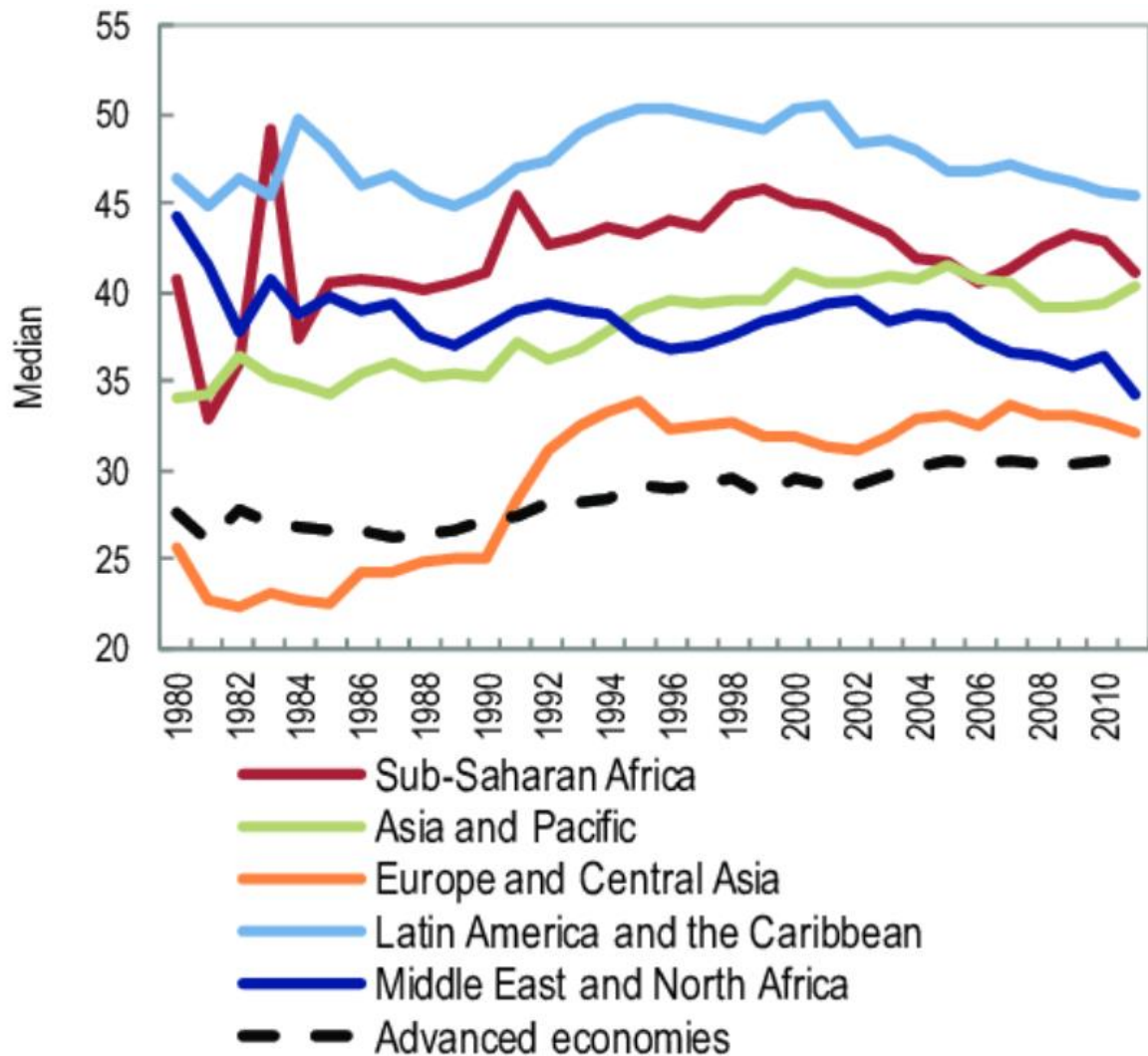
²³ Within the context of within-country inequality, we may not be concerned about the distribution among individuals, but rather between groups. Such inter-group differences and comparisons are described as ‘horizontal’ inequality in the inequality literature. ‘Horizontal inequality’ describes the “political and economic inequalities between culturally-delineated groups”. Based on the seminal work of Frances Stewart (2000, 2016), horizontal inequality acknowledges that perceptions of inequality may not only occur among individuals within a defined group (which is described as *vertical* inequality) but *between* defined groups (see also Stewart et al. 2005). Such groups, Horowitz (2000) points out, often occur on the basis of simple divisions, but, as Cederman et al. (2011) argue, quickly develop distinct group identities which create ‘in-group’ and ‘out-group’ comparisons. As Langer and Smedts (2013) note, horizontal inequality is multidimensional and encompasses socio-economic status (inequality of assets, income), cultural status (hierarchical status of different groups’ cultural norms, customs, and practices) and political dimensions (inequality of political opportunity and power between groups).

²⁴ For a discussion of global and international material inequality please see appendix 1 of chapter 1 and Milanovic (2011, 2016).

²⁵ This is based on Alvaredo & Gasparini (2015: 12), who examine Gini coefficients for the distribution of household consumption per capita (for 2010) using PovcalNet data (2013). For an overview of factors explaining between country inequality and change thereof see appendix 4 of chapter 1.

second to the Middle East among world regions. Furthermore, these levels of high inequality are fairly stable across time.

Figure 1.7: Median score of Gini coefficient of net income inequality by world region. 1980-2011²⁶

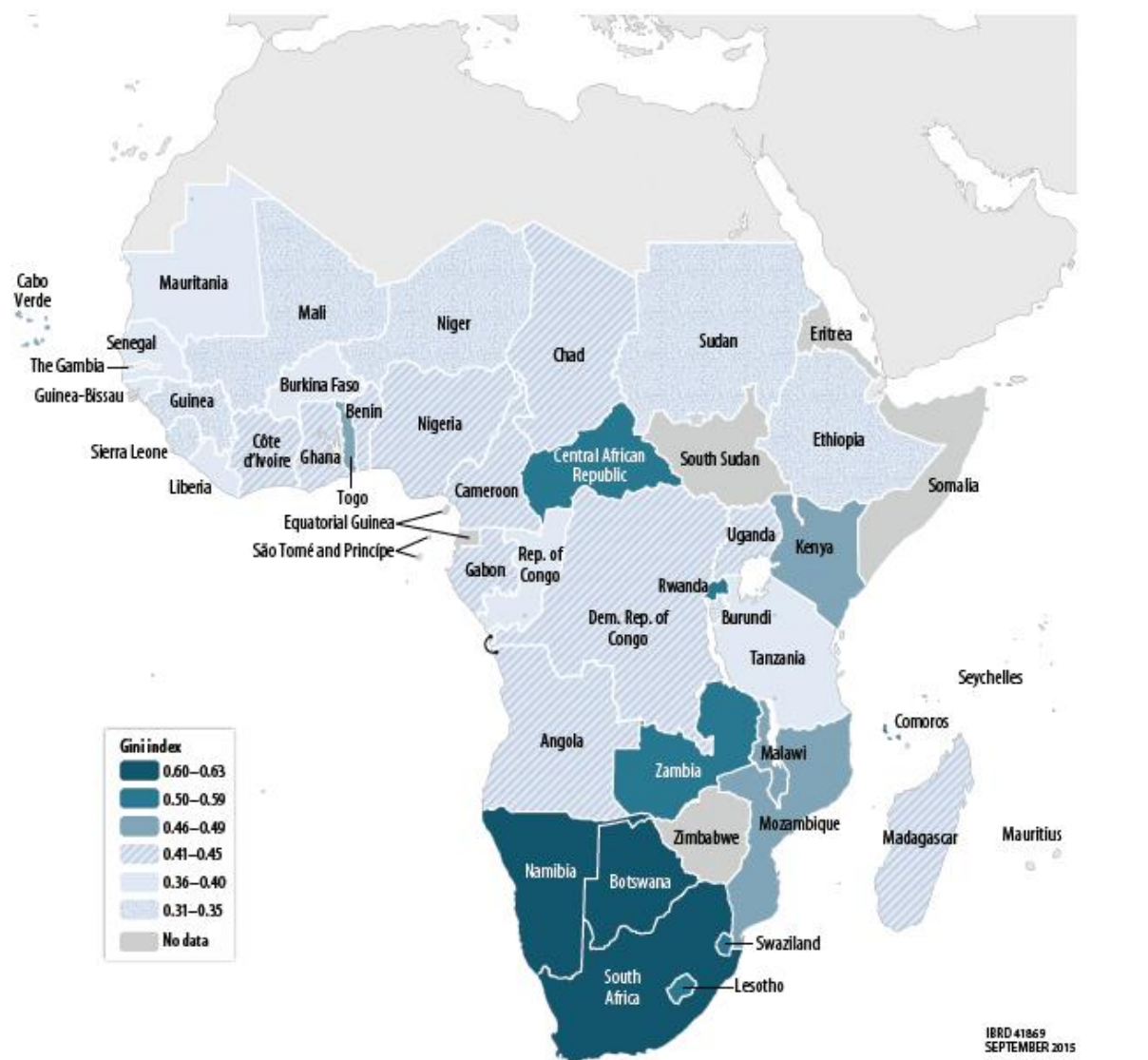


Levels of within-country economic inequality vary considerably by region within Africa. Southern Africa shows the highest levels of income inequality, scoring Gini coefficients of around 0.5, while Northern Africa displays the lowest levels between 0.31 and 0.35 (see appendix 3 of chapter 1). Comparing regions over time, levels of inequality have remained stagnant since the 1990s, with only slight drops in Southern Africa and Western Africa. As displayed in figure 1.8 (below) levels of income inequality are particularly high in South Africa, Namibia, Botswana, Central African Republic, Zambia, Comoros and Mozambique (among

²⁶ Taken from Hakura et al. (2016). Regional medians are calculated using the (population- unweighted) country scores.

several others). Figure 1.8, below, displays the Gini coefficient of income inequality in 2013, with darker colors representing higher Gini coefficient of within-country income inequality.

Figure 1.8: Gini coefficient across African countries in 2013²⁷

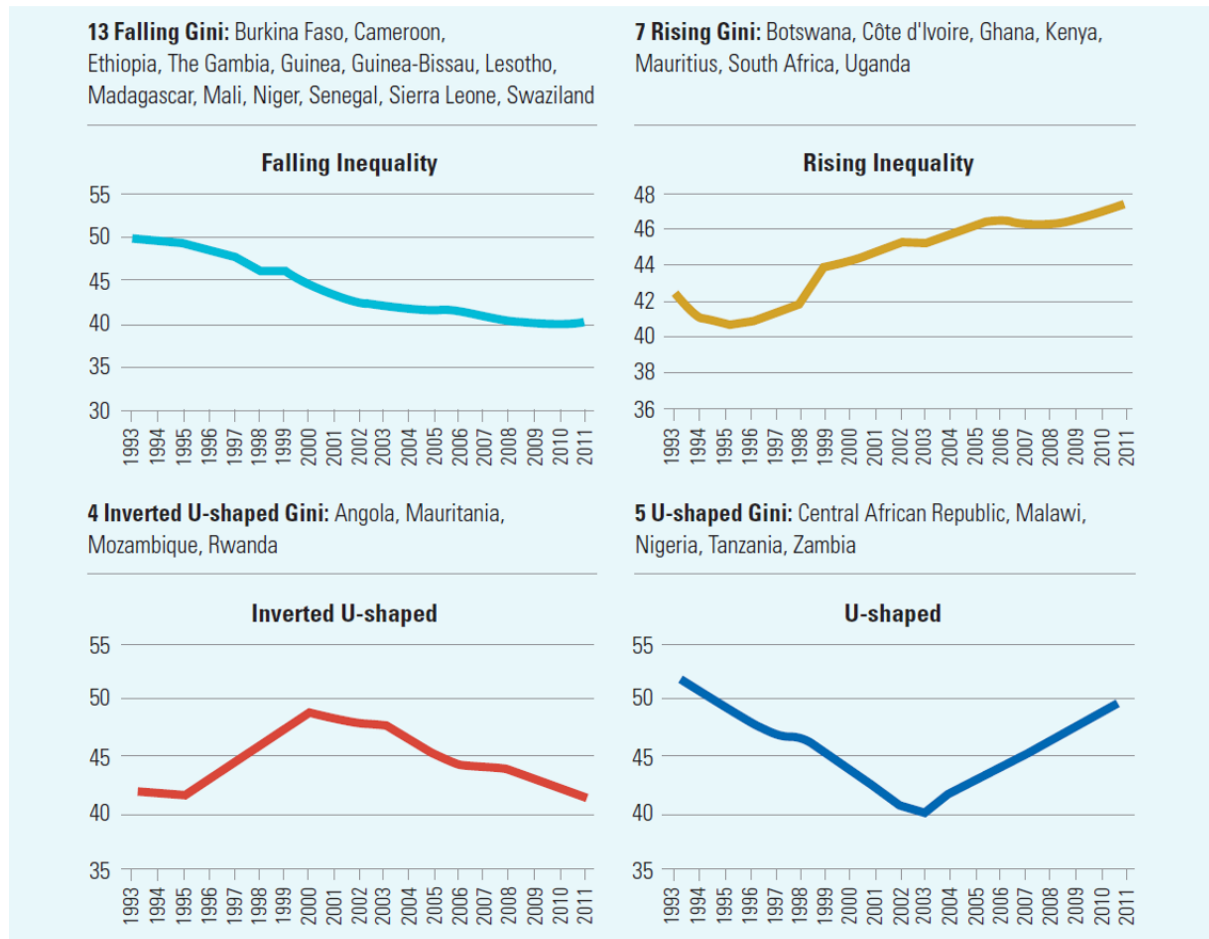


Besides masking country and regional differences, the continental trends described above mask convergent trends at country level. From a regional perspective, within-country inequality has risen only slightly between 1993 and 2011 (Beegle et al., 2016). However, trends are far from homogenous across countries. Indeed, Cornia (2019) finds four distinct patterns of economic inequality across African countries between 1993 and 2011 (see figure 1.9, below). Looking at unweighted Gini coefficients for consumption expenditure per capita, Cornia (2019) finds falling inequality in 13 African countries and rising inequality in seven countries. Further, nine

²⁷ Taken from: Beegle et al. (2016: 15).

countries do not follow a linear trend, with inequality in four countries following an inverted U-shape and inequality in 5 countries following a U-shaped trend.

Figure 1.9: Diverging trends in consumption expenditure per capita inequality (unweighted Gini coefficient) between 1993-2011²⁸



Moreover, Beegle et al. (2016) notes that the continent-wide Gini score for Africa is increasingly explained by between-country dispersion of countries, rather than rising within-country inequality. This suggests that countries' inequality between countries are becoming bigger relative to inequality within countries (Beegle et al., 2016).

2.3 Am I getting the story wrong? (or: Kuznets and Rawls in Africa)

Given that levels of inequality remain high (or at least relatively stagnant) in most countries, could we find a connection between the two observations in Africa – high and stagnant levels of inequality on the one hand, and the prevalence of regimes with autocratic elements on the other hand? In a nutshell, I have discussed that high levels of economic inequality may

²⁸ Taken from Cornia (2019: 31) using the IID-SSA dataset.

undermine democracy in Africa for two reasons. First, economic inequality may unbalance political power in favor of the rich minority. This undermines fundamental principles of democracy and may weaken how much people want democracy. And second, democracy in Africa was expected to address individual material grievances resulting from poverty and high levels of inequality, but to date has not in many cases.

There are two challenges to this logic, each of which I will try to address in this section. First, if high levels of inequality undermine democracy, we would expect that the most democratic countries are also those with low levels of inequality. However, this is not the case. In fact, some of Africa's most highly 'rated' democracies such as South Africa, Namibia or Botswana are the most unequal. How do I explain this apparent contradiction? First, the drivers of democratization and democratic consolidation should not be conflated. In a comprehensive empirical review, Houle (2009) finds not only that high levels of inequality only weakly (albeit significantly) increases the probability of democratic transition, but also that high levels of economic inequality significantly increase the probability of 'backsliding' amongst exist democracies. In other words – although Houle does not focus specifically on cases in Africa – the drivers of transitions to democracy may not be the same as the drivers of the successful consolidation of democracy. In fact, for South Africa and Namibia, it is precisely because of the extreme levels of economic, social and political inequality (and the racial nature thereof) that democratization led to such a 'leap-frogging' in terms of achieving free and fair elections, horizontal accountability and independence of the judiciary. Thirty years later, it is similarly high levels of inequality that is undermining democracy.

Moreover, it is important to recognize that countries – in terms of economic development and levels of inequality – started from very different points in regard to their democratic experience. Economic development and inequality are highly varied between countries in Africa. Cornia (2019) suggests that this geographical pattern is a reflection of colonial systems of land tenure.²⁹

²⁹ Differences of *within*-country inequality can be explained by pre-colonial cleavages, colonial exploitation of these cleavages and post-colonial 'microfactors of inequality'. Post-independence, historical patterns of inequality were often sustained by networks of patronage and systems of exclusion, in particular in regard to offices of state administration, education systems and the military (Cohen, 1981; Jenkins & Kposowa, 1992; Howe, 2001; Nugent, 2012). Such mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion have been described by Tilly (1998) as 'microfactors' of inequality. Tilly (1998) distinguishes between three forms of microfactors: hierarchization, exclusion and exploitation. Microfactors facilitate the creation and continuation of '*durable patterns of inequalities*'. Such patterns are also aided through 'opportunity hoarding' in which groups with shared characteristics establish "preferential relationships that ensure them the control of resources" (Somaini, 2011: 1182) among each other. The role of such microfactors is also reflected by Beegle et al. (2016), who note that high levels of within-country inequality in Africa are partially explained by high inequality of opportunity-factors at birth determining the future likelihood of leaving poverty. For instance, within-country levels of inequality show significant variation across location and gender, with rural dwellers and women much more commonly being poor than men and urbanites and enjoying less opportunities and services (Sahn & Stifel, 2000, 2003; Wodon & Blackden, 2006). In addition, most African countries are ethnically heterogenous countries, which many argue not only tend to have higher inequality, but also face higher political impediments to combat inequality through redistribution. This is because people are less supportive of redistribution between ethnic groups in heterogeneous societies (Luttmer, 2001;

In Southern Africa, estate- and plantation- based white settler agricultural economies grossly distorted equality. Colonial economies in Western and Central Africa, on the other hand, were largely based on communal land tenure systems, which distorted wealth distributions less dramatically.³⁰ This pattern fits a broader argument by economist Simon Kuznets, who posited that the relation between economic inequality and development follows a 'N-shaped' curve – i.e., that as countries develop, they first become more unequal and then (at higher levels of development) become less unequal. As such, some countries were characterized by higher levels of economic inequality at the outset of their democratic experience. Importantly, democratization in Africa occurred as a result of both endogenous and exogenous factors. In particular, the latter occurred independently of country-levels of development and inequality. Indeed, Przeworski et al. (2000) show that wealth (or economic development more broadly) has no effect on democratization (but it does promote consolidation).

A second challenge to my question is that not everyone agrees that high or increasing inequality is necessarily unfair or in all instances unjust. It is important to note that equality and fairness should not be used synonymously. Even in countries that are considered very fair by its citizens, a certain degree of political, social, economic inequality will exist. What level of income or wealth inequality (for example) is 'acceptable' is strongly influenced by structural factors such as history, institutions and culture of a given society, which shape beliefs about inequality, class consciousness and mobility (Alesina et al., 2004).³¹ Importantly the concept of inequality says nothing about absolute levels of poverty, but only relative poverty. As such, more unequal societies may still suffer from less absolute poverty and people in more equal but poor societies may suffer more greatly. Famously, this is what Rawls (1971, 1985) referred to as 'just inequality', namely that inequalities can be seen as just in so far as they work to the advantage of the worst-off in a society and that everyone in society enjoys equality of opportunity. Similarly, Harry Frankfurt (1987: 21) argues: "[f]rom the point of view of morality, it is not important everyone should have *the same*. What is morally important is that each should have *enough*" (italics in original).

However, the pattern for Africa suggests a more complex story. As displayed in figure 1.10, below, reductions in poverty (which ought to be the main emphasis according to the

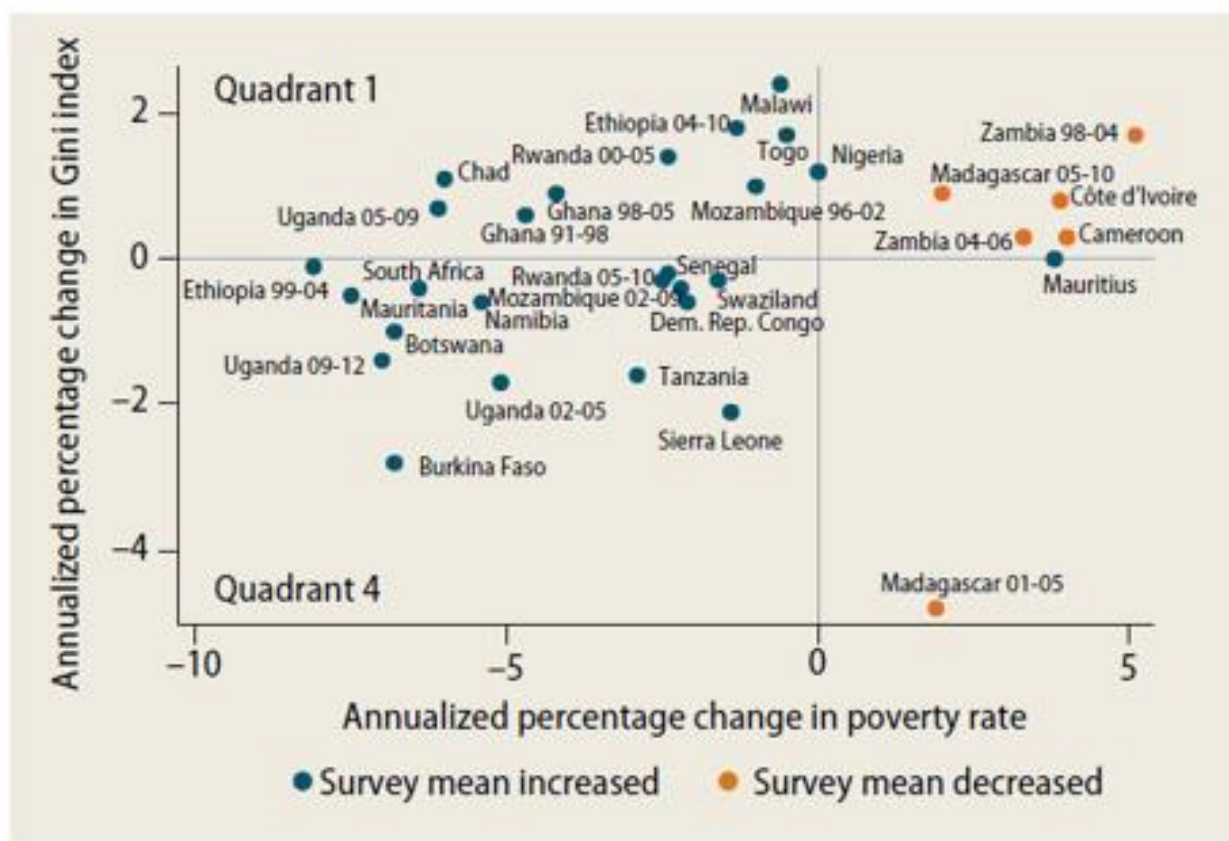
Alesina et al., 2004). In addition, high levels of inequality make political solutions less likely as high-inequality societies commonly suffer from less generalized trust and higher corruption. This results in people being less willing to support redistributive measures (out of lack of trust) and leaders will be less motivated to pursue difficult policies (as they focus on enriching themselves). This combination of high inequality, low generalized trust and high corruption is described by Uslaner (2007) as the 'inequality trap' that many African states face today.

³⁰ Other, related, arguments as to the origins of variance in inequality in Africa are proposed by Mkandawire (2010) and Heldring & Robinson (2012), for example.

³¹ The question of 'American exceptionalism', for example, asks why Americans generally do not report as negative views on inequality as Europeans do, despite experiencing higher levels of inequality than many Europeans (Glaeser, 2008: 637). It is argued that Europe's history of rapid institutional changes in the 19th century meant that left-wing politicians and parties, the internationalists movement and labor unions repeatedly influenced the writing of constitutions, creating strong welfare states which mitigate extreme inequality.

arguments set out above) have more often been associated with reductions in inequality, than with increases in inequality (comparing quadrant 4 with quadrant 1). As such, addressing the later might also improve the former. What is more, countries which have seen an increase in poverty have almost exclusively (bar Madagascar 2001- 2005) also seen an increase in inequality. Of course, the comparable data are very limited (which is a fundamental challenge to comparative research in Africa - something I discuss in greater detail in chapter 2), and the results displayed here do not suggest a strong association. Nonetheless, even only tentatively, this would suggest that countries that have become more unequal have in fact not done so in a just way (by making it beneficial to the worst off) but actually that more people have become poor.

Figure 1.10: Changes in poverty rate and Gini index in Africa between 1991-2012³²



2.4 The role of perceptions

Africa is a critical case but how we think and go about measurement of material inequality is crucial. There are numerous ways how inequality can be measured but most of the literature

³² This figure is taken from Beegle et al. (2016: 16). The figure depicts countries from the World Bank Africa Poverty database that have comparable surveys.

uses aggregated measures of economic inequality that are based on reported income, consumption and expenditure using household surveys.

This is problematic for two reasons. First, the availability of comparable high-quality data on income and wealth in many developing countries are limited (Alvaredo, 2011; Devarajan, 2013; Carletto et al., 2015). For the context of Africa, Cornia and Martorano (2018) recently compiled their 'seven sins' of measurement error which influence the assessment of income inequality. These errors are incurred from using different statistical assumptions and data harmonization across countries, changing survey design in a country over time, underestimating capital incomes or assets held abroad, as well as under sampling top income earners. A further limitation (which Cornia & Martorano (2018) don't explicitly mention) that I will discuss in detail in chapter 2 is the uneven availability of comparative surveys across countries. While – on average – surveys in countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are not conducted less often than developing regions such as East or South Asia, the number of comparable surveys is much lower. This average (mean) of surveys conducted moreover masks variance between countries. These factors form a central impediment to understanding the relation between economic inequality and democracy across a more varied sample of countries.

Second, a growing body of research suggests that ordinary people are not able to accurately determine levels of country-level economic inequality, estimate average levels of income, or place themselves within national income or wealth distributions (Kaltenthaler et al., 2008; Norton & Ariely, 2011; Eriksson & Simpson, 2012; Cruces et al., 2013; Loveless, 2013, 2016; McCall & Chin, 2013; Chambers et al., 2014; Engelhardt & Wagener, 2014; Niehues, 2014; Bartels, 2016; Gimpelson & Treisman, 2018). In fact, research suggests that objective and subjective levels of economic income inequality are frequently uncorrelated, or only weakly correlated (Loveless & Whitefield, 2011; Loveless, 2013; Binelli & Loveless, 2016). Given this incongruence of objective scores of inequality and subjective perceptions of inequality, it has been suggested that human behaviour, attitudes and values are better understood through perceptions of inequality, rather than by actual (objective) levels of inequality (Dahl, 1971; Gustavsson & Jordahl, 2008; Loveless, 2013). As Dahl (1971: 95) notes:

"Between a condition of objective inequality and the response of a disadvantaged person lie the perceptions, evaluations, expectations—in short, the psyche of the individual."

Loveless (2013: 476) echoes this and notes that:

"if perceptions of inequalities can both move independently of actual economic situations and can affect individuals in a manner unconstrained by membership in income groups, they may independently connect with individuals' social and political engagement."

In my thesis, I address these issues by employing nationally representative survey data collected by the Afrobarometer for 34 African countries between 2016 and 2018 (N> 45000)³³. Indeed, as I demonstrate in chapter 2 for 34 African countries, aggregated scores of people's subjective relative living situation are not significantly correlated with income inequality as measured by the Gini coefficient.³⁴ This means that people appear no more or less likely to feel deprived in countries with objectively higher levels of income inequality. Conversely, people in countries with more equal income distributions (lower Gini coefficients) are not significantly more likely to say that they feel equal to others. A detailed discussion of the data and measurement variables is presented in Chapter 2.

So far, we have discussed that levels of economic inequality in many African countries are high, and that consolidation of democracy remains incomplete, with regimes consistently displaying a mix of democratic and authoritarian elements. This thesis seeks to explore one aspect in which the two observations might be linked. Importantly, I am not interested in studying democratic consolidation at a country level or across time (here Houle (2009) provides an excellent study). As overviewed in this section, regime forms in Africa vary tremendously, and many include both formal democratic elements as well as authoritarian elements. Locating a definitive position of a country within a process of democratic consolidation or democracy–authoritarian continuum is difficult, if not impossible. My interest is rather to focus on the individual-level conditions that stable democracies require: legitimacy.

³³ Specifically, I compute several measures of *perceived* individual inequality using a survey question which asks respondents: *In general, how do you rate your living conditions compared to those of other South Africans/ Batswana/ Kenyans (e.g.)?* Substantive responses to this question were: *much worse* (coded as '1'), *worse* (2), *same* (3), *better* (4), *much better* (5). From this variable, I distinguish between 'perceived relative deprivation' – respondents who say they are 'much worse off' or 'worse off' than others – and 'perceived relative advantage' – respondents who say that they are 'much better off' or 'better off' than others. Respondents who say they feel 'the same' compared to others are seen as perceiving to be equal to others in this regard. For a detailed discussion of the data see chapter 2.

³⁴ In this thesis I refer to this as a measure of people's perceived relative living situation. As such, I use the terms 'conditions' (as it is in the question text) and 'situation' interchangeably.

3. Conceptual framework and research question

Given the focus on *subjective perceptions*, we ask: Do perceptions of individual economic inequality hurt democracy in Africa? This question cannot be readily answered as it is unclear what we define as, and how we measure, the 'hurting of democracy'. To address this problem, I apply legitimization theory of democratic consolidation. The legitimization theory of democratic consolidation argues that a sustainable democracy requires "people who are willing to support, defend and sustain democratic practices" (Mattes, 2007: 14).³⁵ Following De Waal and Ibreck (2013), many regimes in Africa are hybrid-regimes which include elements of democratic and non-democratic regimes. Similarly, Mattes and Bratton (2016) note that democracies are never *either* consolidated or non-consolidated. Rather, democratic consolidation occurs on a continuum.³⁶ This means that all regimes are at various stages of democratic consolidation. Following Linz and Stepan (1996), Rose et al. (1998), Diamond (1999) and Linde and Ekman (2003), we can argue that whether democracies move towards the higher end or the lower end of the 'consolidation continuum' is informed by how much legitimacy the system can obtain. As Linde and Ekman (2003: 392) note:

"It is conventional wisdom among social scientists that a stable democracy requires citizens who believe in the principles of democracy. [...] Although democratic consolidation and democratic legitimacy are two different things, these concepts are obviously interconnected. Consolidation cannot occur if the democratic regime lacks popular legitimacy, or if democracy is seen as more imperfect than its alternatives".

3.1 Conceptual framework

Despite high levels of economic inequality in many African countries, democracy appears to find wide approval among ordinary citizens. Using Afrobarometer data, Gyimah-Boadi (2015) finds that three in four respondents prefer democracy to one-man, one-party or military rule in 2012. This support may, however, be declining. Using survey Afrobarometer Round 6 (2014/15), Mattes and Bratton (2016) find that while most Africans still prefer democracy, the share has dropped to 67%. As Diamond (2016) notes however, this downturn in support is not specific to Africa, but part of a 'global democratic recession' (Mattes & Bratton, 2016: 2). Support for

³⁵ Legitimation theory of democratic consolidation is not without critics. For example, proponents of institutional explanations of consolidation argue that functioning democratic institutions produce democratic citizens, rather than being a product of democratic citizens. See for example DiPalma (1990) or Norris (2004) for overviews of this argument.

³⁶ Different conceptualizations of democracy exist in the literature today. As a consequence, different operationalizations of democracy exist as well, all including slightly different dimensions of democracy and indicators to measure such dimensions. Different measures of democracy all have unique advantages and disadvantages, and none are without criticism.

democracy and preference for democracy over non-democratic alternatives is moreover highly varied across African countries.³⁷ For example, while more than eight in ten respondents in Burundi, Senegal, Botswana and Mauritius supported democracy, less than half reported such attitude in Swaziland (45%), Mozambique (45%) and Sudan (44%). And while more than nine in ten Mauritians (93%), Kenyans (91%) and Zambians (90%) reject military rule, only 43% of Mozambicans and 33% of Egyptians do. What is more, levels of support appear to be drifting further apart, with some countries becoming more supportive over time, and other less supportive or the same.

Legitimacy is more than simply being supported by 'enough' people. Easton's (1965, 1975) seminal work suggests that how we think about legitimacy of authority must be differentiated by the 'political object' of citizen attitudes.³⁸ Early survey studies querying political support quickly found that people may still have unfavorable views of political leaders but may want to uphold the "basic political arrangements" (Easton 1975: 437). Easton concluded that some evaluations appeared to relate to what political actors and institutions do, and how they do it, while other evaluations were more closely linked to "basic aspects of the system" (Easton 1975: 437). Easton proposed that political support can be better understood by distinguishing between objects of support and types of support (Easton, 1965). Political support can describe both attitudes and actions towards political objects (Easton, 1965, 1975).

Political support, Easton argued, could be thought of as a continuous scale ranging from *diffuse* types of support to *specific* types of support. Diffuse support refers to evaluations "of what an object is or represents – to the general meaning it has for a person – not for what it does" (Easton, 1975: 444). Specific support, meanwhile, is linked to perceived performance or outputs of political actors, such as the successful economic policy of a president or the lowering of crime rates by security forces. Easton's concept of object is threefold: political community, the regime and the incumbent authorities. 'Political community' – the most diffuse level of support – entails the cultural entity which "transcends particularities of formal governing structures and inscribes the elemental identity of the collectivity constituting the polity" (Klingemann, 1999: 33). 'Regime' entails principles, processes and formal institutions which transcend incumbents. And lastly, 'incumbent authorities' – the most specific form of support – are leaders and officials who hold power within offices and institutions at a given time.

Following Lipset (1960) and Easton (1965, 1975), political support is important for political systems as it lends legitimacy to the systems of authority and to those who rule. But not all forms of support are equally important (Easton, 1965, 1975; Dalton, 2000). A regime can survive for some time without strong (specific) incumbent support, but not without (more diffuse) regime or

³⁷ All data in the paragraph are taken from Mattes and Bratton (2016).

³⁸ Easton, in his seminal works (1965, 1975), famously suggested that "support is not all of a piece" (Easton, 1975: 437). Easton's work strongly built on earlier work by Seymour Lipset (1960).

political community support. A 'reserve' of public support or confidence allows governments to do what needs to be done without using coercion. This 'upfront' approval makes government rule for the people, without the need for slow and cumbersome constant seeking of approval for decisions or paths of action. This level of autonomy can allow government to make better decisions and produce positive outcomes, which in turn increase the support the government enjoys in the eyes of the wider population. Ultimately, this can create a positive, 'democratic' spiral. Conversely, under conditions of weak support, governments are more weakly positioned to govern and thus a negative, downward spiral may be the result (Mishler & Rose, 1999: 78). The analogy of spirals speaks of the importance of contingency in the relation between democratic support and democratic stability. Mishler and Rose state that "stable or increasing levels of support facilitate stable democracy, whereas declining levels of support undermine democracy and threaten its collapse" (Mishler & Rose, 1999: 78). Given the accumulative effect of positive performance on diffuse support, Easton and Lipset argued that diffuse support is much more stable and long lasting, while specific support can fluctuate more readily. The linkage between democratic longevity and political support, as outlined by Easton, is crucial to the argument and conceptual framework of this thesis. Only a regime which can accumulate a 'reserve' of support, will survive in the long run. As such, we can link perceived inequality to the longevity of democracy if we can demonstrate that perceived inequality is linked to political support.

Table 1.1: Categorization of political support³⁹

Diffuse Support Specific Support	<i>Level of Analysis</i>	<i>Affective Orientations</i>	<i>Evaluations</i>
	Political Community	National Pride Sense of national identity	Best nation to live in
	Regime: Principles	Democratic values	Democracy best for of government
	Regime: Performance	Participatory norms Political rights	Evaluation of rights Satisfaction with democratic process
	Regime: Institutions	Institutional expectations Support party government Output expectations	Performance judgements Trust in institutions Trust in party system Trust bureaucracy
	Authorities	Identify with party	Candidate evaluations Party support

³⁹ Adapted from Norris (2004, 2011).

Easton's conceptualization of three objects of support has since been refined by Norris (1999, 2011), who proposes a five-dimensional operationalization of political support (see table 1.1, above).⁴⁰ As in Easton's original model, Norris's most 'diffuse' objects of support are the political community and regime principles. The third, fourth and fifth objects of support reflect aspects or dimensions of Easton's original 'incumbent authority' category. The third level of regime performance concerns the actual performance of a regime in practice, as opposed to the ideal form which is queried in the regime principles level. Norris rightly points out that this 'middle level' is fraught with ambiguity and conceptual unclarity. The regime performance taps the 'lived experience' and 'constitutional reality' of a regime. The fourth level in Norris' model focuses on support for regime institutions and entails attitudes towards governments, parliaments, the legal system, security forces, parties and the bureaucracy, to name a few. Following Easton's original scale of type of support, regime institution support is more specific than regime performance as it is limited to institutions. Lastly, support for political actors reflects the most specific form of support. This level examines support for the incumbent or holder of an office at the given time of the survey, such as the president or politicians as a 'class'. In the past, support for political actors has been widely gauged by using survey questions about trust in incumbents and political actors such as political parties.

3.2 Research questions

These levels of support are associated with specific evaluations and attitudes, which can be operationalized using survey data. This framework allows us to disaggregate and operationalize the concept of legitimacy in a series of analyses testing the linkages between perceptions of economic inequality and the dimensions of political support, respectively. Following this framework, we can now formulate a primary research question as well as a series of secondary research questions.

In this thesis, my primary research question is:

Do perceptions of individual economic inequality affect the legitimacy of democracy in Africa?⁴¹

I address the primary research question by testing a series of secondary research questions which reflect the different dimensions of political support. These secondary research questions are directly testable through empirical analysis. Following the continuum of dimensions of

⁴⁰ As Norris argues, the five-fold distinction is more valid as "factor analysis strongly suggests that the public makes these distinctions, and there are divergent trends over time in support for different levels" (Norris, 1999: 13).

⁴¹ I discuss the reasons for choosing *perceptions* of inequality (as compared to *objective* levels of inequality) in greater detail in chapter 2 of this thesis.

political support ranging from diffuse to specific support as suggested by Norris (2011), the secondary research questions are:

1. Does perceived individual-level inequality shape regime-level support for democracy?
2. Does perceived individual-level inequality shape evaluations of democratic regime performance?
3. Does perceived individual-level inequality shape evaluations of regime institutions and incumbents?

But the legitimacy of a democratic system cannot only be gauged from people's support but also by their actions. As such, I also ask:

4. Does perceived individual-level inequality shape the extent of people's civil and political participation?

3.3 So what? (or: Why is it even important to study Democracy in Africa?)

Why should we care if something may have an effect on democracy in Africa? Indeed, as Dahl (1998: 44) asks, "why should we support democracy?". Norris (2012) suggests that democracies should be seen as favorable (and therefore as something worth striving for or preserving) for two groups of reasons. The first group of arguments revolve around normative and moral arguments of legitimacy of governments based on the will of the people and embedded within a universalistic narrative of human-rights, equity and individual determination. For example, Dahl (1998: 44- 61) suggests democracies are better at avoiding tyranny, ensuring essential rights and general freedoms, and allowing for individual self-determination and moral autonomy. Dahl also argues that democracies are characterized by more holistic human development, better protection of essential personal interests and greater political equality.

The second group of arguments are focused on the instrumental benefits of democracy – democracy being favorable for 'what it does'. While the literature puts forward a number of benefits of democracy versus other (non-democratic) regimes, the empirical evidence supporting these benefits is far from clear. In fact, many of these benefits have not been found to be consistently linked to democracy. For example, it has been argued that democracy has a positive effect on economic growth and development. Indeed, Carbone et al. (2016) – in a study of 43 sub-Saharan countries between 1980 and 2010 – find a significant (albeit weak) positive effect of 'degree of democratization' and 'duration of democracy' on gross domestic product (GDP) growth. However, others have found the mixed empirical evidence in regard

to a *direct* effect (Sirowy & Inkeles, 1990; Przeworski & Limongi, 1993; Przeworski et al., 2000; Gerring et al., 2005).⁴² Rather democracies have been linked to higher human capital, higher foreign investments, lower inflation and higher levels of economic freedoms which indirectly link democracy to economic growth and development (Sirowy & Inkeles, 1990; Helliwell, 1992; Tavares & Wacziarg, 2001; Doucouliagos & Ulubaşoğlu, 2008; Asiedu & Lien, 2011).

In fact, for much of the post-World War II era, the common thinking among Western governments, international organizations (IOs), such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, and national donor agencies was that different political regimes worked best under specific economic conditions. Following work by Samuel Huntington (1968) it was held that low development (and low-income) countries could benefit from the political stability and efficiency and economic control of autocratic rule to reduce absolute poverty and foster economic growth. This view – further supported by the rise of the ‘Asian tigers’ and China as well as slumping growth rates in the (democratic) West in the 1970 and early 1980s – remained dominant even after the end of the Cold War. For example, in 1993 the World Bank released a report on the ‘East Asian miracle’ in which the instrumental benefit of authoritarian rule in early development was emphasized. Beyond claims of efficiency, it was also argued that democracy requires informed and able citizens to ‘counterweight’ the interest of political actors. Following seminal work by Seymour Lipset it was argued that without such counterweights, democracies may fall victim to opportune populists who mislead gullible citizens for their own benefit. In low-development countries, such “social maturation” (Halperin et al., 2009: 4) could only follow economic development in a sequence of modernization. Moreover, especially in Africa, a large degree of ethnic fractionalization and strong tribal loyalties might further bring into question the feasibility of democratic rule in low-development and developing countries.⁴³

This ‘common wisdom’ was fundamentally challenged by Halperin, Siegle and Weinstein’s seminal work on the ‘democratic advantage’ in 2005.⁴⁴ Halperin et al. demonstrated that for low-development and developing countries in Africa, democracy provides tangible advantages. As Halperin et al. (2009: 64) conclude:

“Poor democracies have grown as fast as poor autocracies and they have significantly outperformed the latter on most indicators of social well-being. They have also done better at avoiding catastrophes. Development can also be measured by social indicators such as life expectancy, access to clean drinking water, literacy rates, agricultural yields, and the quality of public health services. On nearly all these quality-of-life measures, low-income democracies dramatically outdo their autocratic counterparts.”

⁴² This debate and literature should not be confused with the debate as to the causes or necessary preconditions to democratic rule. Here there exists a strong argument that democracy thrives and most likely persists in more economically developed countries (Lipset, 1960; Przeworski et al., 2000).

⁴³ For recent a discussion of populism in Africa, see Resnick (2017).

⁴⁴ The book was first released in 2005. In the text I refer to a later edition published in 2009.

Others have pointed to peace and stability being associated with democracy. Dating as far back as Immanuel Kant's description of the 'pacific confederation' of liberal republics in 1795, it has been held that democracies are more peaceful and less prone to initiate or escalate conflict (sometimes referred to as democracy's 'peace dividend') (Babst, 1964, 1972; Rummel, 1983; Chan, 1984; Weede, 1984; Morgan & Schwebach, 1992; Russett, 1994; Doyle, 2008). Other empirical research argues that this "empirical law of international relations" (Levy, 1989: 270) is limited to conflict between democracies and holds only if one applies a fairly high threshold as to what is deemed a war (Gleditsch, 1992; Thompson, 1996; Gates et al., 1996; Gleditsch & Hegre, 1997; Ray, 1998; Hegre et al. 2001). Domestically, too, research suggests that democracies prevent excesses in repression and abuses of human rights (Hibbs, 1973; Mitchell & McCormick, 1988; Poe & Tate, 1994; Davenport, 1995, 2007) although some suggest that the relationship between democracy and repression follows an inverted U-shape (Fein, 1995).

It is therefore not only important to understand the consequences of perceptions of inequality in Africa in the academic pursuit of expanding what we know about inequality and democracy in a previously understudied geographical context. It is not only important to test the linkages between *perceptions* of economic inequality and democracy to better understand how we can more meaningfully measure inequality. It is important to understand whether perceptions of inequality are associated with how people think and feel about and engage with democracy, because the lives of ordinary people change to the better or worse, when democracies prosper or wither. Democracies give ordinary people a voice in their lives and how their countries are run. Democracies can alleviate or limit human suffering such as poverty, conflict or political repression, and can encourage both human and economic development.

4. Thesis structure

Drawing from Easton's and Norris' conceptual framework of political support discussed in section 3, this thesis tests the relation between subjective individual inequality and political support from diffuse support to specific support. Specifically, this thesis is structured as follows.

In chapter 2, I explain the use of a perceptual measure of inequality, rather than an objective one. I present findings from recent research which suggests that people misjudge levels of economic inequality as well as their relative position within an income distribution. From this discussion I motivate the decision to employ a perceptual measure of individual economic inequality using value-survey data. I conclude the chapter by testing the validity and reliability of this measure.

In chapter 3, I test whether perceptions of individual inequality are associated with how people relate to the political system. In particular I examine whether perceptions of relative deprivation and advantage are connected with how much people support democracy as a regime form. I also test whether perceptions of relative deprivation and advantage relate to support for alternative regime forms. People may support democracy but also be supportive of other, non-democratic regimes at the same time. This is referred to as 'demand for democracy' and reflects whether a respondent is supportive only of democracy, or whether other forms of rule are acceptable to the respondent as well.

The results suggest that both people who feel relatively deprived and who feel relatively advantaged are less supportive and demanding of democracy, compared to those who feel equal to others. This suggests that people's attitudes towards regime forms in principle are tied to feelings of equality. Both those who feel relatively deprived or relatively advantaged appear to be less supportive of democracy as a regime type and favor non-democratic rule, such as one-man rule or military rule. The negative effects are stronger for people who feel relatively advantaged, for demand for democracy, than for those who feel relatively worse off, for support for democracy. This suggests that while relative deprivation is linked to feelings of indifference and possibly political resignation, those who see themselves in a position of privilege appear more open to non-democratic alternatives.

In chapter 4, I turn to how people evaluate the functioning of democracy in practice. This is tested by asking whether people's perceived relative living situation is associated with how satisfied they are with how democracy is working in their country. Unlike support for democracy as a regime, satisfaction with the actual functioning of said regime in practice is shaped by egocentric consideration. The results show that respondents who feel relatively deprived are significantly less satisfied with the functioning of democracy, compared to those who feel relatively advantaged. The results suggest that evaluations of how democracy is functioning are shaped by egocentric relative assessments, rather than sociotropic assessments. Moreover, the results in this chapter clearly show that the effect of perceived relative situation is significant even when controlling for the effect of absolute living conditions. Beyond 'having enough', people appear to reward democracy (through their support) for 'having more' than others.

As noted by Easton and Lipset, regimes can survive for some time with little specific support for their leaders, but not for long without diffuse, regime support. However, specific support for institutions and elected officials helps government and state run more efficiently and without the need to use constant coercion or force to enforce its right to make decisions. In chapter 5, I test the relation between perceived relative living situation and such specific forms of political support using trust in state institutions and trust in elected government institutions as proxies for specific support. My results suggest that people who feel relatively deprived are significantly less trusting compared to those who feel equal to others, while those who feel relatively

advantaged are significantly more trusting than those who feel equal to others. Again, these results suggest egocentric motivations. What is more, I find that how people feel compared to others is a significant and (relative to other explanations) strong predictor of trust in elected representatives, even when controlling for widely held explanations of such trust such as partisanship, performance evaluations and perceptions of corruption. Irrespective of whether people feel close to the ruling party, or whether they think the government is doing well, or how much corruption they perceive in government, if people feel better off than others then they are more trusting of elected representatives than those who feel equal to others. This is striking and may reflect strong neopatrimonial and clientelist ties that pervade in African politics to this day.

Rising economic and social inequality and injustice has become firmly anchored in public and political discourse in recent years. For example, the 'Occupy' movements have taken to the streets and vocalized their grievances of feeling disenfranchised and 'second class citizens' compared to wealthy elites and corporations. In Africa, the external narrative on participation has been less focused on inequality and injustice than on poverty. Quite to the contrary, however, sentiments of relative deprivation and inequality appear to be driving South Africans to protest service delivery or Burkina Faso to protest cost of living, for example. In chapter 6, I test the effects of perceived individual inequality and absolute poverty on political and social participation, respectively. Following Verba et al. (1971) and Verba and Nie's (1972) conceptualization of modal forms of participation, I distinguish between voting, communing, contacting and protesting. The results show that poorer respondents are more likely to engage in communal activities, contact representatives and authorities, and protest. Individual absolute poverty is however not significantly correlated with voting behaviour. Relative comparisons are also linked to levels of participation, albeit not consistently across different modal forms. I find that feeling relatively deprived is significantly correlated with more frequent communal activity, but not with voting, contacting and protesting. Moreover, my models suggest that feeling relatively advantaged compared to others is significantly correlated with more contacting of elected represented authorities. I find no significant correlation for income inequality (Gini coefficient) once human development and electoral democracy is held constant at country level.

5. Conclusion

The past decade has seen a growing public awareness and debate around topics pertaining to economic and social inequality and fairness. Increasingly, the debate has turned to exploring the linkages between systems of authority and levels of inequality. In democratic societies, high levels of income and wealth inequality have been seen to be indicative of a

'system that favors the few over the many'. In many cases the discourse of inequality intersects with issues surrounding race, gender or class, and systemic exclusion of groups from accessing material and non-material benefits. To many, these notions of unfairness and skewedness endanger stable democracies as people lose faith in the system. As Kapstein and Converse (2008: 66) note in regard to the prospect of sustainable democratic rule in Africa:

"The bottom line is that growth alone will not necessarily promote the life chances of all the individuals in a given society, and those who are left by the wayside may lose confidence in democracy."

Indeed, from a historical perspective, economic inequality and democratic rule have been linked for some time in the literature (although much of the transition literature views levels of inequality as a moderating variable in the transition from non-democratic to democratic rule). More recent country-level research by Houle (2009) suggests that economic inequality affects democratic consolidation but not transition to democratic rule. At the individual level too, research has found that people in more unequal countries are less supportive of democracy, are less trusting of one another and political institutions, and are less participatory (Uslaner, 2002; Uslaner & Brown, 2005; Solt, 2008; Krieckhaus et al., 2014). These findings suggest that economic inequality may be linked to the legitimacy of democracy in the eyes of ordinary people.

This thesis provides a first comprehensive study of the multi-dimensional linkages between economic inequality and democratic legitimacy at the individual level in Africa. As such, this thesis makes a series of important contributions to the existing literature. And besides the furthering of research, this thesis has very practical relevance. Democracies afford people the ability to participate in how their country is run and ensure their views are represented at the political level. Democracies are arguably also better at providing stable conditions for human and economic development, and are less prone to conflict and violence. In short, there are very tangible reasons why it is important to understand whether the high levels of economic inequality present in many African countries should be linked to democratic rule in Africa.

Unlike much past research (outside of Africa) I employ a *perceptual* measure of economic inequality. Empirical research for much of Africa is severely limited by the lack of high-quality administrative data. Moreover, a growing body of research suggests that people often misjudge levels of country-level economic inequality, or their own position within income or wealth distributions. It has therefore been suggested that *perceptions* of inequality are better predictors of people's behaviour or attitudes (see discussion in introduction section as well as chapter 2). In this chapter I have set up my thesis in terms of the research topic, research questions, context and research design. In chapter 2, I discuss this literature in greater detail and how I measure perceptions of individual economic inequality using value survey data.

References - Chapter 1

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Chapter 2

Measuring inequality as if people mattered⁴⁵

⁴⁵ This title is in reference to Schumacher (1973).

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1. Introduction

Much has been said about the (negative) consequences of high (and, in some cases, rising) levels of economic inequality. But how we think about economic inequality conceptually and how we then measure economic inequality have a big influence on how unequal we believe the world to be. Numerous methods of constructing scores of equality and inequality exist. Indeed, Pinker (2018: 98) points out that inequality “is devilishly complicated to analyze”.

In this thesis, I use a subjective measure of inequality rather than objective measures. I draw data from Afrobarometer surveys collected in 34 African countries between 2016 and 2018 (N> 45000). Specifically, I compute measures of perceived individual inequality using a survey question which asks respondents how they rate their 'living conditions' compared to other people in their country (full discussion in section 3 and 4 of this chapter). People were asked:

“In general, how do you rate your living conditions compared to those of other South Africans/ Batswana/ Kenyans (e.g.)?”

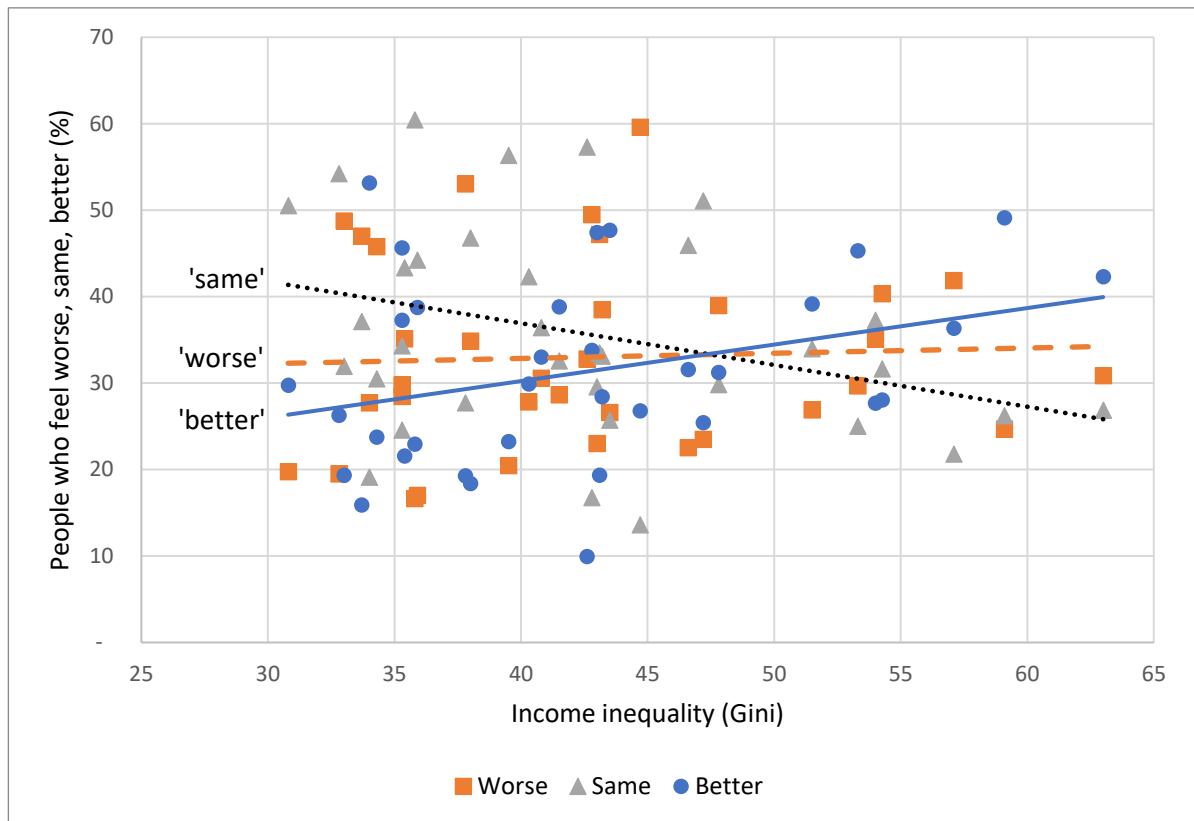
Substantive responses to this question were: *much worse* (coded as '1'), *worse* (2), *same* (3), *better* (4), *much better* (5). I describe this variable in greater detail in section 3. What people understood their 'living conditions' to be is not directly apparent from the question text alone. As such it is not directly clear whether this question is a measure of perceived economic, social or even political inequality. I run a series of tests in section 4 of this chapter to better gauge what this variable likely measures.

Three reasons inform the use of subjective, perceptual data to measure economic inequality in this thesis.

First, previous research in other countries outside Africa suggests that many people do not accurately understand or estimate levels of economic inequality or their relative position within income or wealth distributions (discussed in detail in section 2 of this chapter). Indeed, looking at survey data from 34 African countries, people in objectively more unequal countries (in terms of income inequality) are no more or less likely to report that they feel equal to others. Figure 2.1, below, displays a scatterplot of country-level income inequality (using the Gini coefficient) and the share of respondents per country who feel worse off than others ('much worse' or 'worse'), equal to others (those who said they feel 'the same'), or better off than others ('much better' or 'better'), respectively. In fact, at country-level I find no significant

correlation between income inequality and the share of respondents in a country who say they feel equal to others, worse off or better off, respectively.

Figure 2.1: Share of people who feel equal to others, worse off or better off, by income inequality (Gini coefficient). 34 countries. Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)



Worse: $r = 0.05$, $p > 0.05$; Same: $r = -0.34$, $p > 0.05$; Better: $r = 0.32$, $p > 0.05$ ($N = 34$)

From this lack of correlation between objective measure of inequality and subjective perception of inequality follows an important question: How can we explain people's behaviour, attitudes or values at individual level, if our explanation points to a cause that people are clearly not aware of (at least not accurately)? Whether people feel poor or not, there are very real deprivations that they will suffer in reality. Poverty may shape people's lives (and thereby attitudes and behaviors, etc.) regardless of whether they perceive themselves to be poor or not. Inequality may be different in this regard in that the consequences of inequality are primarily a function of how one perceives inequality (both in general and one's own relative position versus others).

From this incongruence between what people perceive and what we objectively measure inequality to be, Loveless (2013) argues that it is *perceptions*, rather than objective income levels, that informs and guides peoples' response to levels of inequality. He (2013: 477) states that:

“Unlike individuals’ levels of income, it is *because* of the subjective and often normative origins of perceptions that better informs our understanding of how individuals assess and respond to the level of inequality [...] the effect of individuals’ perceptions of excessive levels of inequality is likely to affect their democratic values regardless of how much income they have or how (in)accurate their perceptions of the actual level of national inequality”.
(*italics in original*)

The second reason that I use a subjective measure is the limited availability of high-quality national accounts (Alvaredo, 2011; Devarajan, 2013; Jerven, 2013; Carletto et al., 2015). Often, available national accounts data regarding income distributions or tax records are poor, especially in developmental contexts (see discussion in section 2). However, such accounts data are needed to compute measures of inequality (such as wealth or income inequality based on tax records, for example).

Reasons one and two are succinctly summarized by Gimpelson and Treisman (2018: 1):

“A strange inconsistency underlies much recent scholarship. On one hand, theories assume that individuals know the income distribution. On the other, scholars complain that data available to test these theories — even in developed democracies — are “dubious” (Ahlquist and Wibbels 2012) and “massively unreliable” (Cramer 2005). If experts despair at the quality of data, it seems odd to assume the public is perfectly informed.” (references in quote)⁴⁶

Third, inequality of outcome is often reduced to a money metric by economically minded and trained scholars who collect comparative data on inequality. From the poverty literature we know that this thinking about and measuring poverty in a purely monetary approach is too narrow and falls short of capturing important dimensions of poverty (and by extension inequality of outcome) in a more differentiated way (Atkinson & Bourguignon, 1982; Bourguignon & Chakravarty, 2003; Foster et al., 2010; Alkire et al., 2015). Research on poverty and poverty-lines, for example, widely recognizes the need for more holistic conceptualizations and measurements of poverty. Sen’s (1985, 1999) seminal work on capabilities and the function of commodities underlines the importance of understanding the ends of people’s needs, rather than focusing exclusively on the lack of the means to these given ends. Sen’s contributions have sparked a number of alternative methods of measuring poverty, such as Klasen’s deprivation measure, Clark and Qizilbash’s ‘core poverty’ or Barrientos’s measure of multidimensional deprivation (Tsui, 2002; Hulme & McKay, 2013). While each of these measures

⁴⁶ Expecting the public to be ‘perfectly’ informed is probably an unrealistic expectation. I interpret Gimpelson and Treisman’s (2018) use of the term to reflect that people are fairly accurately informed. In many instances, localized knowledge of people is highly valuable and forms the basis of policy decisions. For example, community-based targeting mechanisms are often employed in regard to social grants and localized programs as locals will probably have a better understanding of needs and requirements. The quote by Gimpelson and Treisman (2018) needs to be understood in the context of how economic inequality is widely measured: at the national level. Indeed, in this context it is unreasonable to expect that people have accurate (or even perfect) knowledge of levels of inequality.

reflect a range of dimensions of poverty and well-being, they have also been criticized for being overly broad, ambiguous in definition and simplistic in aggregation of the various components (Thorbecke, 2007; Hulme & McKay, 2013).⁴⁷

Related to the issue of reductionist measures of poverty is that objective measures of poverty – and by extension inequality – may be flawed. Monetary income and consumption are difficult to measure and are often associated with significant measurement error, such as recall error (Hulme & McKay, 2013). In addition, ambiguity can make measures difficult or impossible to compare. What counts as income? Are people reporting on gross or net income? How are grants and other transfers considered? As I discuss in detail in sections 3 and 4 of this chapter, I employ an Afrobarometer survey item in this thesis to measure people's reported subjective relative living situation. The survey item asks people to compare their relative 'living conditions' to other people in their country.⁴⁸ This measure allows for broader notions of poverty and inequality to be captured and is less likely to suffer from reliability issues — as the respondent is asked to give a more general assessment, rather recall specific figures or items. Of course, this generality is not without problems as I discuss in section 3 of this chapter.

In the remainder of this chapter I motivate the operationalization of the key variables in my thesis. This chapter is structured as follows. In the following section (section 2.2) I discuss core reasons why I chose to use a subjective measure of economic inequality, rather than objective measures. I then discuss the data used in this thesis as well as the operationalization of my explanatory variables (sections 2 and 3) and I provide descriptive statistics. Lastly, I assess the validity and reliability of the explanatory variable as a measure of perceived individual economic inequality (section 4).

2. Motivating the use of a subjective measure of inequality

How we think about, and then measure, economic inequality has a considerable impact on what we might say about the consequences of economic inequality. Past research has posited that economic inequality has a myriad of effects, most of which are considered negative and detrimental to healthy and strong democracies. Research on the consequences of economic

⁴⁷ As I discuss in later parts of this chapter, the Afrobarometer produces a multidimensional measure of poverty, which it calls the 'Lived poverty index'. This index gauges people's poverty experience in regard to going without food, water, medical care, cooking fuel and cash income.

⁴⁸ As noted in the introduction chapter, I use the terms 'living conditions' (as it is in the question text) and 'living situation' interchangeably.

inequality has largely focused on objective measures of inequality – such as inequality within or between countries.

Measures of inequality are frequently expressed as ratios. For example, the Palma ratio (a frequently used dispersion-rate measure) describes the ratio of the gross national income (GNI) of the top 10% and the bottom 40%.⁴⁹ Analogous to the Palma ratio, the Gini coefficient – arguably the most widely used measure of economic inequality – is based on the ratio between the actual distribution of consumption or income (for example) and a perfect equal distribution within a given population.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ These groups are chosen based on Palma's argument (the 'Palma proposition') that changes in levels of national inequality over the past half-century are mainly explained by changes in the shares of GNI in the two groups, while the share of the 'middle' 50% has remained relatively stable over time (Palma, 2014; Cobham et al., 2016). The Palma ratio has been most useful in work on top-income and wealth groups such as the 'Top Incomes Project database' which uses tax data to shed light on the increasing acceleration of inequality caused by a smaller and smaller group at the extreme top of the population (Atkinson et al., 2011; Alvaredo et al., 2013; Piketty & Saez, 2013; Alvaredo et al., 2017). Others have applied the logic of producing ratios based on the top and bottom 20% or top and bottom 10% (e.g., Castillo, 2011) or focused exclusively on the share of income or wealth held by a defined group, such as the top 5% or 1% (e.g., Piketty & Saez, 2003; Auten & Splinter, 2018; Piketty et al., 2018).

⁵⁰ While the examples used here refer to material goods – such as income or wealth – the concept of inequality and the idea of relative proportions within a given population has also been applied to non-material goods such as opportunity (see for example: Boudon, 1974; Breen & Jonsson, 2005). A smaller Gini coefficient (suggesting more equality) results from the actual distribution in a population being closer to a perfectly equal distribution, while a higher Gini coefficient results from the actual distribution being more dissimilar from a perfectly equal distribution. In a perfectly equal group of individuals, each individual would earn or hold the exact same income or share of an asset. If one were to order the cumulative share of the population from the poorest to the richest and plot them against the cumulative share of income, the distribution-curve would be a perfect line at a 45° angle. This is referred to as the 'line of equality'. Contrarily, in a perfectly unequal group, the richest individual would hold 100% of cumulative assets or income. The curve describing this group would lie flat on the x-axis and shoot up at 100%. Neither is ever the case in reality. Even in societies that are considered very equal, perfect equality does not exist and poorer individuals earn a smaller share of the total income than richer individuals. The curve describing the actual distribution of income (or consumption, wealth, etc.) in a given population is called the 'Lorenz curve'. The Lorenz curve (unless identical with the line of equality) divides the area between the line of equality and a perfectly unequal distribution into two areas. The areas describe how much the Lorenz curve deviates from the line of equality (A) and total inequality (B). The Gini coefficient is simply the ratio of 'A' to the total area 'A+B'. A smaller Gini coefficient (suggesting more equality) results from the area 'A' being small and the area 'B' being large. This means that the actual distribution in a group is closer to the line of equality and further away from complete inequality. Conversely, a higher Gini coefficient results from A being large and B being small. This suggests that the actual distribution is far away from the line of equality. The mathematical principles of calculating the Gini coefficient allow for a further observation. A Gini score corresponds to half the difference of two randomly chosen individuals' income from the mean income within the population. For example, a Gini coefficient of 30 indicates that 2 randomly chosen individuals would be expected to have an income or asset share difference of 60% of the income or asset mean score. One of the limitations of the Gini coefficient is the lack of decomposability. Given the increasing interest in what groups contribute to overall levels of inequality, other measures – such as generalized entropy measures (e.g., Theil's indexes or Atkinson's measure) – have been developed. Generalized entropy measures can be interpreted as the percentage difference of the indicator score of a randomly selected individual and the populations' average indicator score. Importantly, generalized entropy measures can be decomposed to indicate the contribution of between-group and within-group inequality to total inequality. Especially in the context of ethnic and social cleavages in Africa, this characteristic is relevant. Commonly, most of the inequality in a country is due to within-group inequality. Only a small share of inequality is accounted for by between-group inequality (Beegle et al., 2016). Most inequality databases contain several inequality measures reflecting calculations using different indicators. To allow for easier comparison and analysis across databases, most databases today adhere to common standards in definition, operationalization and measurement of indicators and follow best practices in terms of quality assurance, dissemination, and analysis of

The assumption in much of the literature on the consequences of economic inequality is that objective measures of inequality are (at least approximately) in line with how ordinary people see such inequality. Inherently the argument put forward by much past research on the consequences of economic inequality is that objective, aggregated measures of inequality can help understand the relations between economic inequality and people's attitudes, values, or actions at an individual level. However, any micro level explanation of the consequences of economic inequality can only rely on objective measures of economic inequality (whether at individual or country level) if we can reliably find evidence that objective and subjective measures of economic inequality are highly correlated. However, recent research increasingly points to this being an unsupported assumption. A relatively new but growing literature suggests that perceptions of economic inequality, rather than objective measures, are more valid to understanding human behaviour or attitudes. Widely, research now shows that people commonly misjudge levels of economic inequality or where they fall within income and wealth distributions. I discuss this research in the following section.

2.1 Validity and reliability issues of country-level inequality scores

In this section, I discuss an emerging literature which suggests that people have an inaccurate understanding of country-level inequality, are unable to place themselves within national income and wealth distributions accurately, and find it difficult to understand and thus respond to economic concepts.

2.1.1 People misinterpret levels of country-level inequality

A body of literature suggests that people are, by and large, poor at estimating country-levels of economic inequality (Kaltenthaler et al., 2008; Loveless & Whitefield, 2011; Loveless, 2016). Perceptions of inequality and objective economic inequality are only weakly connected (Kaltenhaler et al., 2008; Norton & Ariely, 2011; Loveless & Whitefield, 2011; Tverdova, 2012; Bartels, 2018; Gimpelson & Treisman, 2018).

For example, Gimpelson and Treisman (2018) – using 2009 International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) data for 40 countries – find that in three quarters of these countries most respondents (a majority) could not correctly identify the level of economic inequality.

inequality data. The most commonly followed standard today is the Canberra Group Handbook on Household Income Statistics, first introduced in 2001 and updated in 2011. The OECD Framework for Statistics on the Distribution of Household Income, Consumption and Wealth (2013) expands on the Canberra Handbook 2011 (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, 2011). For an overview of different databases see Ferreira et al. (2015).

Respondents were given five types of national inequality, depicted in diagrams as more or less distorted pyramids (called “stratification belief diagrams” (Heiserman & Simpson, 2021: 4)). Each diagram was subtitled with a short description such as “[a] society like a pyramid with a small elite at the top, more people in the middle, and most at the bottom” (Gimpelson & Treisman (2018: 31). Respondents were then asked which diagram best describes the situation in their country. Gimpelson and Treisman estimate the income Gini score for each diagram and compared it the actual Gini score of the respondent's country.⁵¹ The authors found that commonly people picked incorrectly. In fact, the authors conclude that “respondents picked correctly only slightly more often than they would have by chance” (Gimpelson & Treisman, 2018: 32). Gimpelson and Treisman (2018) also widely find that people misperceive changes of economic inequality across time.⁵² What is more, Gimpelson and Treisman (2018) find that the ability of ‘getting it right’ varies across the countries in the sample. Across all cases, only 29% correctly identified their country-situation if compared to post-tax-and-transfer Gini, and only 24% correctly did so when compared to the pre-tax-and-transfer Gini. This means that, in some countries, objective measures and subjective perceptions of inequality correlate (moderately), while the two are uncorrelated in other countries. This should limit the use of objective measures in cross-country studies as there are likely differing levels of incongruence between the objective and subjective levels of inequality across sample countries.

While it is commonly found that people are inaccurate at estimating actual levels of income inequality at national levels, evidence does not point toward people consistently under- or overestimating levels. In a study of the USA, Norton and Ariely (2011) find that Americans strongly underestimate wealth inequality, even across the partisan divide.⁵³ Conversely, Chambers et al. (2014) find that Americans overestimate income inequality and change thereof in the past decades as well as exaggerate the incomes of the top 1%. It is plausible that underestimating wealth and overestimating income is probably the result of the increasing imbalance of the income to capital returns ratio. It is known that wealth inequality has increased more than income inequality in the USA over the past decades. In both studies, nonetheless, respondents were inaccurate in assessing inequality.

Loveless (2013) – for nine central and eastern European countries – finds no significant correlation between perceptions of social and income inequality and objective levels of

⁵¹ Gimpelson and Treisman compute Gini scores for both post-tax-and-transfer income as well as pre-tax-and-transfers income.

⁵² The authors use data for five years prior to the interview.

⁵³ Much of the operationalization in Norton and Ariely (2011) has been questioned. While later studies using different measures found a smaller underestimation, they nonetheless confirmed that American do widely underestimate inequality (see Eriksson & Simpson (2012)). Underestimating can have important consequences on people’s attitudes towards and preference for redistribution, taxes and salary levels (see for example Graetz & Shapiro (2011) on attitudes towards taxation).

income inequality (using the Gini index)⁵⁴. Given this non-correlation, Loveless (2013) asks whether there is explanatory potential in pitting *perceived* inequality alongside objective, group-based inequality as a predictor of democratic political culture.

2.1.2 People incorrectly estimate average incomes

Linked to the widespread misinterpretation or misestimation of country-level economic inequality, is the misestimation of mean incomes or mean levels of wealth. This misestimation may bias where people subjectively locate themselves within perceived income distributions. For example, Gimpelson and Treisman (2018) – using the 2009 International Social Survey Programme data for 40 countries – find that people had an inaccurate estimation of the mean income in their country. In all but one of these countries (all but New Zealand) the people's estimation of the mean was not even on the right side of the median (meaning people underestimated the mean income⁵⁵). Given the incorrect idea of what average incomes are, people are thus also making incorrect assessments as to where they fall in regard to the mean income.

A fairly recent literature directly studies where and how people locate themselves relative to others in income or wealth distributions.⁵⁶

In a recent global study of 10 countries (N=30000), Hoy and Mager (2019), find that majorities of people misestimate their actual (objective) position within national income distributions.⁵⁷ To gauge the 'accuracy' of people's self-placement, Hoy and Mager (2019) first asked respondents to place their household's annual income in one of five 'bins' which were marked as income brackets and then asked respondents which quintile their household fell into in the

⁵⁴ Loveless (2013) uses both the Gini index for 2007 as well as the change of the Gini index from 2002 to 2007. See Loveless (2013: 478ff). For perceptions of social inequality, Loveless used a survey question which reads: "Some people say that there is too much social inequality in our society. Others say that there is no or almost no social inequality in our society. What is your view?" Respondents were presented with the following response options, including "too much social inequality", "about the right amount of social inequality", "not enough social inequality", and "there is no or almost no social inequality".

For perceptions of income inequality Loveless used a survey question which asks respondents to respond to the statement that "differences in income in this country are too large." Response options range from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". See Loveless (2013: 479ff) for more details.

⁵⁵ Castillo (2011) suggests that this may be due to the fact that information about high salaries could be difficult to estimate for individuals who earn much less.

⁵⁶ In this section I focus on studies that have explored self-placement in a comparative perspective. I am aware of a number of studies focusing on single countries. Seminal work was undertaken in Buenos Aires, Argentina by Cruces et al. (2013), which I discuss elsewhere in this chapter. A study on the association between objective and subjective relative placement using data for Spain is available in Fernández-Albertos & Kuo (2018), using data for Sweden in Karadja et al. (2017) and using data for Australia, India, Mexico, Morocco, the Netherlands, Nigeria, South Africa, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States in Hoy & Troth (2019). These studies all find evidence in line with the median bias.

⁵⁷ Hoy and Mager (2019) conducted an online survey in Australia, India, Mexico, Morocco, the Netherlands, Nigeria, South Africa, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.

national income distribution.⁵⁸ The authors find strong evidence of a “median bias” among the objectively poorer (Hoy & Mager, 2019: 16), which means that the (objectively) poorest income quintiles overestimate their relative position.⁵⁹ This overestimation was found consistently among majorities in all 10 countries, but most strongly in Nigeria, where 94% of the poorest two quintiles overestimated their relative position.

This study is problematic for the African cases for several reasons. First, the study uses a representative sample of the population with internet access (as the survey is distributed online). This is problematic as many Africans don't have access to, or regularly use, the internet, which probably biases the sample in several ways. The Round 7 Afrobarometer data (2016-2018), for example, suggest that around half of Nigerians (52%) say they ‘never’ use the internet as do 39% of Moroccans and 36% of South Africans.⁶⁰ Hoy and Mager acknowledge this source of bias and apply weights for gender and age (Hoy & Mager, 2019: 10). However, the authors do not sufficiently acknowledge the impact such sampling methodology has on biasing the sample in terms of class—likely excluding many of the poorest. Based on Afrobarometer Round 7 data⁶¹, 75% of Moroccans, 59% of Nigerians and 54% of South Africans who experienced high levels of lived poverty say they ‘never’ use the internet. This severely limits the representativeness of the survey. Another problem is the income brackets that the authors employ to measure objective relative position within the income distribution. As income levels are very different across the sampled countries, the ‘income groups’ were adjusted for each country to represent the respective national income distributions. Due to the large income range in countries with very large income inequality – such as South Africa or Nigeria – these quintiles (by definition) are very broad and likely miss much variance, especially at lower incomes.⁶²

In line with the median bias argument, some evidence also suggests that those who are objectively better off than the mean underestimate their relative position. For example, Bublitz (2017) in a study of 6000 respondents from six countries (Brazil, France, Germany, Russia, Spain and the USA) finds that bias (as the difference between objective relative income group and

⁵⁸ The authors did not ask respondents about income quintiles— which is likely difficult to understand for most. Rather, the authors used a question asking about ‘income groups’ and provided five response options (richest, 2nd richest, middle, 2nd poorest, poorest). As income levels are very different across the sampled countries, the ‘income groups’ were adjusted for each country to represent the respective national income distributions.

⁵⁹ The authors do not discuss or provide data whether this ‘median bias’ also results in an underestimation among those who are objectively better off than the ‘middle’.

⁶⁰ Respondents were asked: *How often do you use: The internet?* Response options were *never* (coded as ‘0’), *less than once a month* (1), *a few times a month* (2), *a few times a week* (3), *every day* (4).

⁶¹ Afrobarometer data itself likely under- samples the poorest. As such, the ‘poorest’ within the Afrobarometer sample are very likely not the very poorest in the actual population. See the discussion in section 3.

⁶² From the article, the article’s appendix and the online appendix, I was not able to ascertain the exact thresholds used to delineate the five income groups. However if – as the authors suggest in their online appendix – the “five options provided to respondents were roughly equal to the five quintiles of the national income distribution” (Hoy & Mager, 2019), then mathematically the income brackets will be very large.

subjective relative income group) is positive for those in the lowest income group (meaning they overestimate their relative situation) and turns negative (and increases in size) as objective income increases.⁶³

People also appear to misinterpret relative positions in regard to groups. In a study of Ghana, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Nigeria and Kenya, Langer and Mikami (2013) find that horizontal inequalities (differences between groups) are commonly misperceived by individuals. The authors use an Afrobarometer question which asks respondents to evaluate their ethnic group's economic condition in comparison to other groups. Respondents are asked to assess whether the condition is much better, better, much worse, worse or the same. The authors recode the responses into a 3-point ordinal scale: superior (much better/ better), same (same) and inferior (much worse/ worse). The authors then compared subjective, group inequality to objective inequality and found only weak correlation, if any. The authors find that some groups are overly positive, while others are overly negative regarding their group's relative situation. Indeed, the authors find that subjective perceptions of one's situation and the objective (actual) situation 'matched' only for a small number of groups. Objective measures of inequality, Langer and Mikami argue, hence do not function as a strong predictor of perceived, subjective, inequalities. The two are weakly related and in most cases, show no significant association. Langer and Smedts (2013) – using a broader dataset of 19 African countries (2008/2009) – find complimentary evidence, underlying people's inaccurate perception of horizontal inequalities and suggesting that people draw heavily from perceptions of political inequality and their own absolute situation to infer their group's situation.

2.1.3 Perceptions of inequality rather than objective measures have concurrent and predictive validity

Misperceptions of the state of the world can exert considerable influence on people's behaviour, attitudes and values (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974). Indeed, past research has found that subjective perceptions of inequality – rather than objective levels of economic inequality – better predict people's support for redistributive policies, attitudes toward social inequality or reported ideal levels of economic inequality.

Perceptions of inequality, rather than objective levels of inequality, appear to be better predictors of policy preference for redistribution. For example, using International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) data from 1987 to 2009 for 26 OECD countries, Engelhardt and Wagener

⁶³ It should be pointed out that I was not able to confirm how exactly Bublitz (2017) measured objective and subjective income. Analogous to Hoy and Mager (2019), Bublitz uses an online YouGov survey. She describes the way she measures bias in terms of quintiles of objective and subjective relative income, which leads me to assume that she measured both using the same questions as Hoy and Mager (2019).

(2014) find a positive link between perceived income inequality, perceived upward mobility and redistributive measures in democratic regimes. The hypothesized linkage of higher income inequality leading to more redistribution via the median voter theorem, had previously been described by Meltzer and Richard (1981) and Romer (1975), but empirical studies using objective measures had commonly failed to support the Meltzer-Richard model (Milanovic, 2000; Borge & Rattsø, 2004; Kuhn, 2011, 2013; Schneider, 2012; Engelhardt & Wagener, 2014; Kühn, 2015). Similarly, Niehues (2014) – using the 2009 ISSP data for 24 European countries and the United States – finds that the objective level of income inequality (using Gini index) did not correlate cross-nationally with support for redistributive policies. On the other hand, subjective, although inaccurate, perceptions of inequality did. Gimpelson and Treisman (2018) successfully replicate Niehues (2014) findings and show that perceived income inequality correlates strongly with demand for redistribution. More recently Kuhn (2019, 2020) finds similarly that subjective perceptions of inequality (rather than aggregated measures) predict attitudes towards social inequality.⁶⁴ As Gimpelson and Treisman (2018: 25) conclude, it is “beliefs about inequality rather than the actual phenomenon that influence[s] political outcomes”. Moreover, studies have shown that when people are asked to describe their ideal level of economic inequality, their responses are correlated to their *perceptions* of current levels of economic inequality, but not the actual (objectively correct) levels of economic inequality (Shepelak & Alwin, 1986; Hadler, 2005; Osberg & Smeeding, 2006; Castillo, 2011).

2.2 Why do people misinterpret information?

Correctly locating one's absolute situation within a national distribution is a difficult task and research suggests that people commonly misperceive both their own relative situation and levels of economic inequality in general. A number of reasons underlie this misperception.

Research suggests that people use heuristics when reporting their perception of inequality. For example, people may use their *absolute* situation to estimate their relative situation, without considering others (e.g., Binelli & Loveless, 2014). Cruces et al. (2013) – in a 2009 survey of 1100 households in Buenos Aires, Argentina – find that people significantly underestimate the dispersion of incomes, thus underestimating inequality. Interestingly, differences emerge based on absolute standing in the distribution. While a significant share of poorer individuals overestimates their relative standing, a significant share of richer individuals underestimates

⁶⁴ Kuhn (2020) calculates a Gini coefficient of subjective inequality perceptions using people's perceptions of wages of certain occupations and the relative size of the wage earners. The data are from the ISSP survey (1987, 1992, 1999, 2009) and is compared with Standardized World Income Inequality Database (SWIID) income data (for the measure of objective inequality). This approach was developed by Kuhn (2011) in earlier work and assumes that an “individual's set of actual wage estimates roughly describes the wage differentials he or she perceives to exist” and that “these wage estimates can be used to construct a simple yet highly intuitive measure of inequality perceptions at the level of the individual” (Kuhn 2019: 334).

their relative standing. This finding is echoed by Gimpelson and Treisman (2018), who – using the cross-national study of World Value Survey Round 5 (N=59) and the 2010 Life in Transition survey (N=34) – find that the poor tend to overestimate their relative position and the rich underestimate their position. As Cruces et al. suggest, this could be because individuals may tend to gravitate towards the mean when faced with limited social comparison or that poorer respondents may feel embarrassed and thus overreport their situation, while richer individuals may want to down-play their superior relative position (Cruces et al., 2013).⁶⁵ Similarly, research by Wegener (1990) in West Germany suggests that respondents tend to think about (and report) on their own earning when assessing average earnings.

This not only applies to individuals but also to perceptions of group differences. Langer and Mikami (2013) – for a sample of five African countries – find that respondents who are better able to meet basic needs are also less common to perceive their own group to be worse off than other groups. This, the authors argue, suggests that “people’s individual socio-economic situation to some extent affects their assessment of the prevailing socio-economic horizontal inequalities” (Langer & Mikami, 2013:22). In effect, individuals use their own situation to infer the situations of other people.

People may also draw from their immediate surroundings when assessing national levels of inequality. Cruces et al. (2013) find a strong positive correlation between a respondent’s objective ‘income rank’ within their neighborhood and the respondent’s *perceptions* of their national income decile. Importantly, objective income decile (at national level) is uncorrelated to perceived national income decile, once the local position is included. The strong correlation suggests that people compare their situation in regard to their *immediate* situation and conditions, and from that (incorrectly) infer about the population. Cruces et al.’s research moreover points to the importance of personal experiences as a central source of information about inequality. The authors find a person’s bias to use neighborhood distribution as the basis of overall relative position was weakened if people had friends from all social classes. In addition, they find that education is non-significant in estimating the ‘accuracy’ by which people assess inequality. This suggests that people base their understanding of inequality on what they have experienced or what they are exposed to through proximity or social interaction. Conversely, Gimpelson and Treisman (2018) suggest that the increased availability of media and the globalization of media could provide greater exposure to the ‘rich and famous’ and thereby skew how people think about levels of wealth and inequality, as well as about their own relative situation.

Moreover, people may use broader, non-economic considerations of equality, equity and fairness to assess *economic* inequality. Langer and Mikami (2013:7) refer to this as “cross-

⁶⁵ See, for a similar finding: Engelhardt & Wagener (2014).

dimensional 'contamination'". For example, individuals assessing horizontal, group-level economic inequality, may be informed by the group's experience of political inequality. Similarly, people may use general economic indicators and perceptions of national development as proxies for perceptions of inequality. For example, Loveless and Whitefield (2011) – in a study of post-Communist Central- and East-European countries – find that perceptions and evaluations of economic inequality were influenced by how individuals perceived the functioning of the economy and national development more generally.

Lastly, people may 'see inequality' through broader ideological perspectives (Corneo & Grüner, 2002; Alesina & La Ferrara, 2005; Alesina, & Fuchs-Schündeln, 2007; Alesina & Giuliano, 2011; Luttmer & Singhal, 2011). As Gimpelson and Treisman (2018: 50) note "Socialists everywhere may exaggerate income gaps, while conservatives may underestimate them. A Marxist may see capital concentrating, while a free marketeer sees wealth trickling down".

Whatever the reason, people are widely unable to correctly assess levels of economic inequality and their personal (individual or group-based) position within income or wealth distributions. As noted in the introduction, people's reaction to economic inequality can only meaningfully be understood from an individual-level by understanding how they see inequality. As discussed in this section, using an objective measure of economic inequity as a proxy for people's understanding is not valid or reliable. But in the context of developing countries, using perception-based measures of economic inequality may also address a second issue: available and high-quality administrative data.

2.3 Poor data quality and availability

Most comparative research uses aggregated country-level scores derived from either national accounts or consumption and expenditure surveys. In Africa, such approach to answering comparative questions is problematic for a number of reasons.

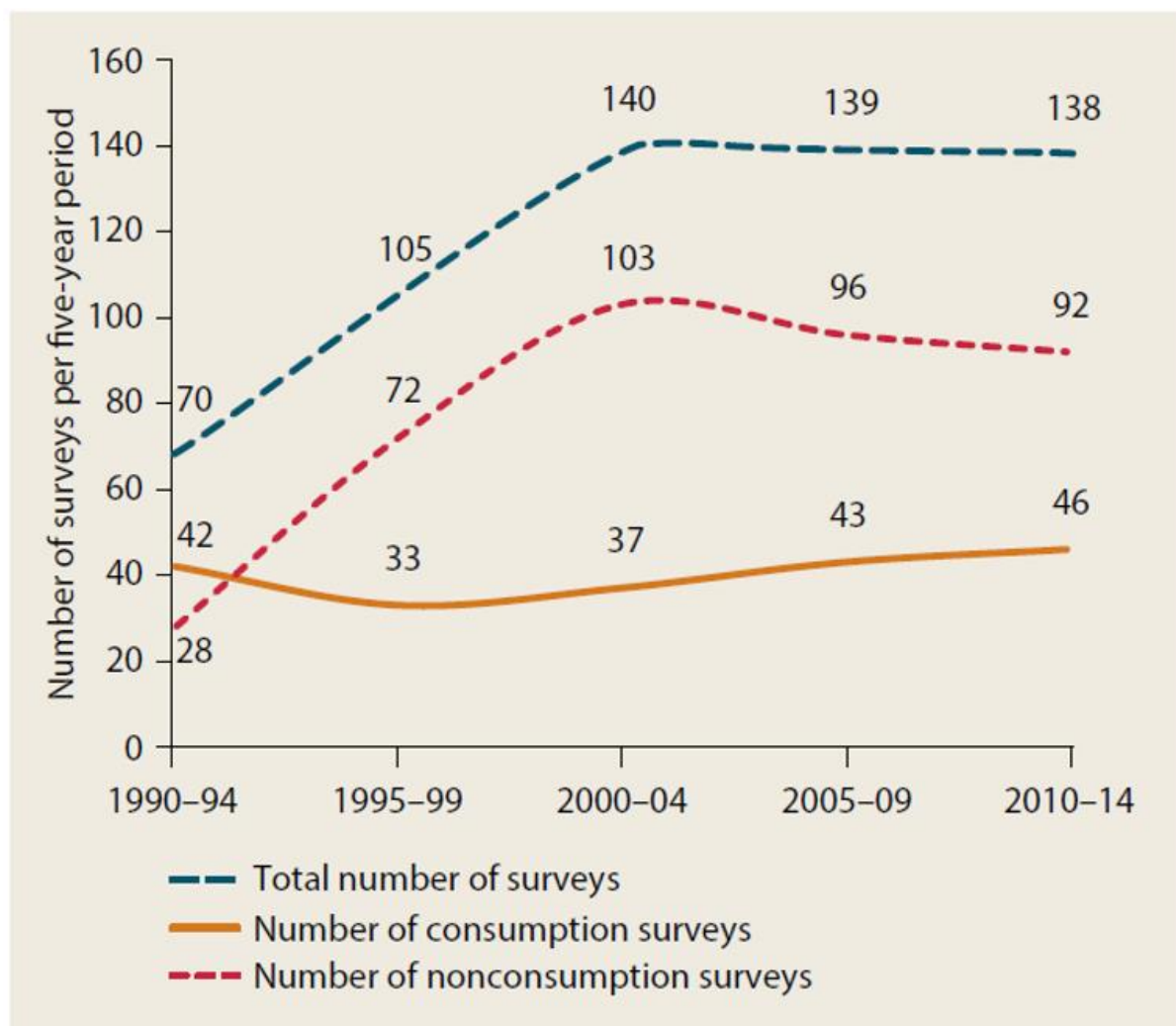
First, data quality is often of concern. At least since Morton Jerven's (2013) seminal book on 'poor numbers' in Africa, it is widely understood that national accounts data – such as is required to produce GDP scores (and with it trends of progress and growth overtime) – and even census data are often of weak quality. This poses significant challenges to producing country-level inequality scores which require high-quality data on incomes and tax-records.

A second problem is data availability. While the number of surveys in Africa has increased rapidly compared to a few decades ago, much of this increase is due to the increase in nonconsumption surveys⁶⁶ (see figure 2.2, below). This means that while much more data are

⁶⁶ Such as Demographic and Health Surveys, multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys, labor force surveys and ad hoc surveys (Beegle et al. 2016: 34).

being collected in Africa today than in the past, the availability of data needed to measure material poverty or inequality (income and wealth) is almost unchanged. This makes understanding inequality and poverty trends over time difficult and heavily reliant on imputations to bridge gaps in available data. These imputations are typically based on national accounts or surveys (e.g., consumption surveys), which are themselves often of questionable quality (see previous point).

Figure 2.2: Number and type of surveys conducted in Africa 1990-2014⁶⁷



A third problem is the limited comparability of available data to conduct comparative analyses in Africa. As a region, sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) consists of more individual countries than any other region in the world. Going by the number alone, this poses considerable challenges to conduct comparable surveys. Indeed, as Beegle et al. (2016: 34) demonstrate, while the number of surveys conducted in SSA (mean of 3.8 studies per country between 1990

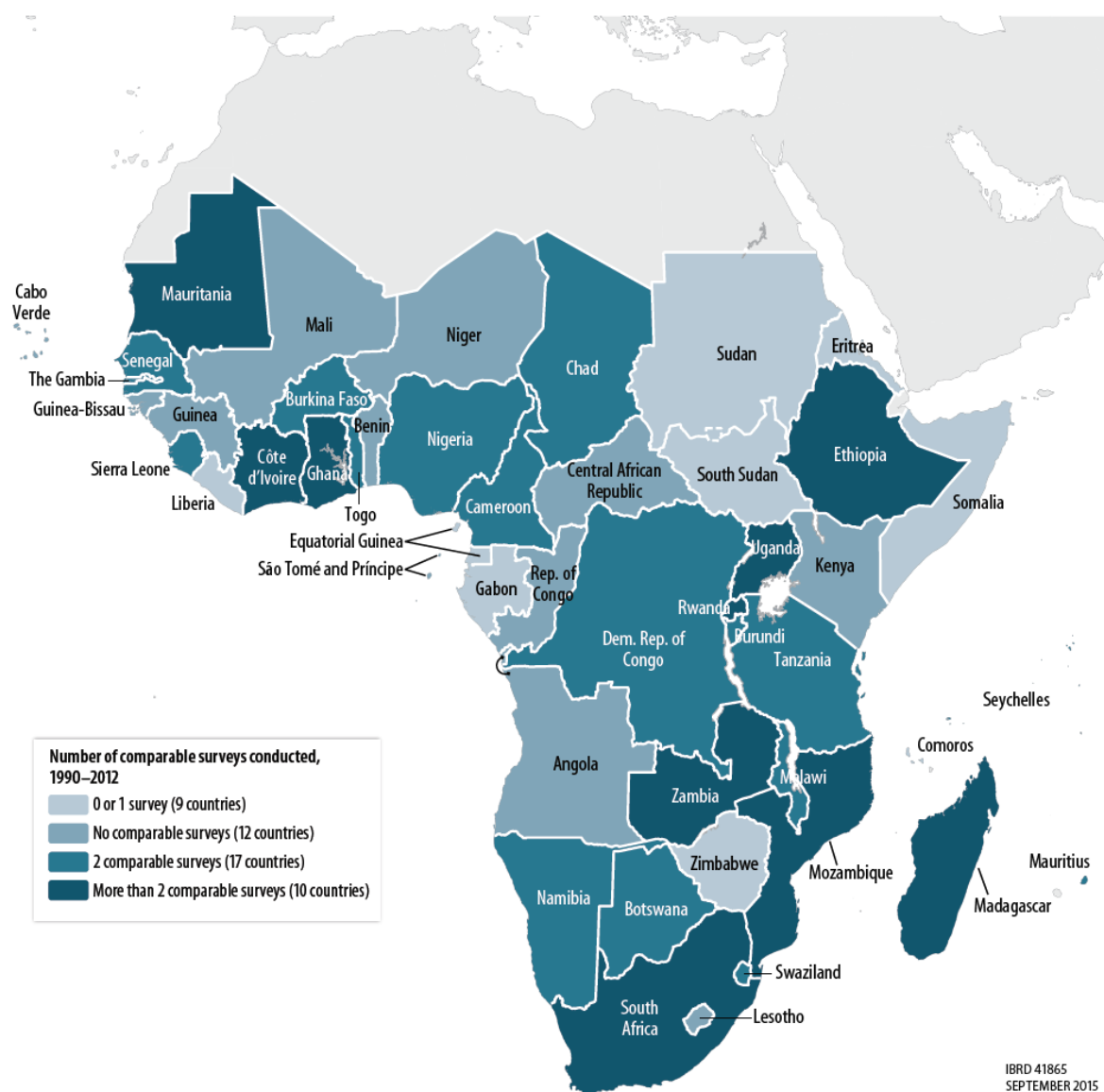
⁶⁷ Taken from Beegle et al. (2016: 34). Beegle et al. (2016) draw data from the World Bank microdata library, PovcalNET, World Development Indicators, and International Household Survey Network.

and 2012) is comparable to other developing regions such as East Asia and Pacific (3.9), South Asia (4.1) and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region (3.2), the number of comparable surveys is considerably lower. (SSA (1.6); East Asia and Pacific (2.8); MENA (1.8); South Asia (2.8)).⁶⁸

Data can be incomparable for several reasons. First, technical incompatibilities such as differences in sampling frameworks, measurement choices and data harmonization mean that different surveys are not easily (or at all) comparable. Not only do countries conduct surveys differently to other countries, but these technical choices change over time within a country too, making comparison over time difficult (Cornia & Martorano, 2017). Data can also be incomparable due to time incongruences. For example, some countries conduct consumption surveys every few years, while other countries might only do so once a decade. Comparing data that was collected at such different times can produce very misleading results. As displayed in figure 2.3, below, researchers conducting survey-based analysis can draw from a much higher number of comparable surveys in some countries, but from fewer or none in other countries. Between 1990 and 2012, one in four countries conducted no comparable survey and a further nine conducted only one comparable survey. This means that for over four in ten African countries there exists at most one comparable survey in the 22 years under scrutiny.

⁶⁸ Beegle et al. (2016) determine 'comparability' by looking at three factors: whether the survey was nationally representative; whether the survey was conducted during the same months (due to differences in response due to seasonality) and whether the survey used the same reporting instrument and period.

Figure 2.3: Number of comparable surveys conducted 1990-2012 in Sub-Saharan Africa⁶⁹



⁶⁹ Taken from Beegle et al. (2016: 33)

3. Operationalization

In my thesis I employ nationally representative Afrobarometer survey data collected for 34 African countries between September 2016 and September 2018.⁷⁰ The survey was conducted face-to-face, in the respondent's choice of language, using nationally representative samples.⁷¹ The dataset consists of 45812 cases, clustered in 34 countries. Country samples range from 1193 (Guinea) to 2400 (Tanzania, Ghana), yielding an error rate of 2% (N=2400) and 3% (N=1200), respectively. In some chapters, countries are omitted from the analysis as not all questions are asked in all countries (see data section in respective chapters).

3.1 Data concerns

Due to the sampling framework (which is nationally representative) the data are clustered within country units. It is therefore recommended to use multilevel modeling (MLM) as a single level analysis would not account for variation in the slopes and intercepts of the predictor variables across countries. These differences can be accounted for by including a second level in the analysis.⁷² My level 1 analysis is at the individual level, while my level 2 analysis is at the national level. One of the possible issues with my data is that my n at level 2 (country) is relatively small (N=34), compared to the n (n<45000) at level 1 (individual). Ideally, data used in an MLM analysis are structured with a large n at level 2 and a small n at level 1. A possible problem arising from my data could be the overestimation of effect size due to limited case number at level 2. Data with low case numbers at level 2 tend to yield overly small effect sizes when using random slope model. As such I test only random intercept models. MLM analysis allows for two estimation modes: maximum likelihood and restricted maximum likelihood. Restricted

⁷⁰My dataset includes the following countries: Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, eSwatini, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe. See appendix 1 of Chapter 2, for fieldwork dates. eSwatini - an absolute monarchy - is not included in the empirical analyses of this thesis. To access data used in this chapter see: Afrobarometer (2019). For the survey codebook see Afrobarometer (2020a). For information on the sampling methodology, see: Afrobarometer (2020b).

⁷¹ I apply national weights to ensure gender parity in each country. Importantly, I do not weight the data by population size. While countries with larger populations tend to have a larger sample size of N=2400, and countries with smaller populations tend to have national samples of N=1200, these sample size differences do not reflect the differences in actual populations. The incongruence in sample-to-population ratios may affect the reliability of comparisons of within country results.

⁷² In most chapters I also control for country level inequality using the Gini coefficient for income inequality. Here I use data from the Standardized World Income Inequality Database (SWIID). For an introduction and discussion of the SWIID see Solt (2009, 2016). For a discussion of the SWIID data available for the cases of this thesis, see the respective chapters.) All other individual- and country-level control variables are discussed in the context of the respective chapters.

maximum likelihood (REML) is advised to be used when the case number at level two is relatively small. This is the case in my dataset as I use only 34 country cases.⁷³

3.2 Identifying a suitable predictor

For perceived relative situation, Afrobarometer provides several items of interest. Uslaner (2008) and Chang (2007) use a question which asks respondents to evaluate “whether the gap between the rich and the poor in this country is better or worse than it was a few years ago, or whether it has remained the same”.⁷⁴ This measure of perceived inequality was surveyed in round 3 of the Afrobarometer survey. Rather than current levels of inequality, this question asks for perceived change in inequality.

Langer and Smedts (2013) use a different inequality measure from Afrobarometer Round 4. The question asks respondents to assess their ethnic groups' economic situation in comparison to other ethnic groups (worse, better or the same). Also, in round 4, although not used by Langer and Smedts, a question asks respondents to evaluate their ethnic group's political influence in comparison to other ethnic groups' influence. These questions aim at capturing perceptions of group-based, horizontal inequalities, rather than individual ('vertical') inequality within the overall distribution.

Lastly, Langer et al. (2017) use two variables to reflect an inequality cluster as part of a larger social cohesion measure. First, Langer et al. use a question which asks respondents how often their ethnic group is treated unfairly by government. This question touches on perceptions of political or general inequality. Second, the authors use a question which asks respondents how their living situation compares to others' living situation (the authors use the share of respondents who report 'the same' as an indication of country-level inequality).

In this thesis I use the latter inequality measure employed by Langer et al. (2017).⁷⁵ This Afrobarometer survey question asks respondents:

“In general, how do you rate your living conditions compared to those of other South Africans/ Batswana/ Kenyans (e.g.)?”

This variable makes no reference to what 'living conditions' refers to (see section 5 for further discussion). Throughout this thesis I use the terms 'living conditions' (as it is in the question text)

⁷³ A limitation of all statistical models in this thesis is that (MLM) estimation techniques were originally developed to test data which have a high number of cases at the second level and a low number of cases at the first level. As Anderson and Singer (2008) have pointed out, multi-level modelling is nevertheless widely used in comparative research using a large number of level 1 cases and a small number of level 2 cases. I do not discuss this limitation in each chapter but acknowledge it here.

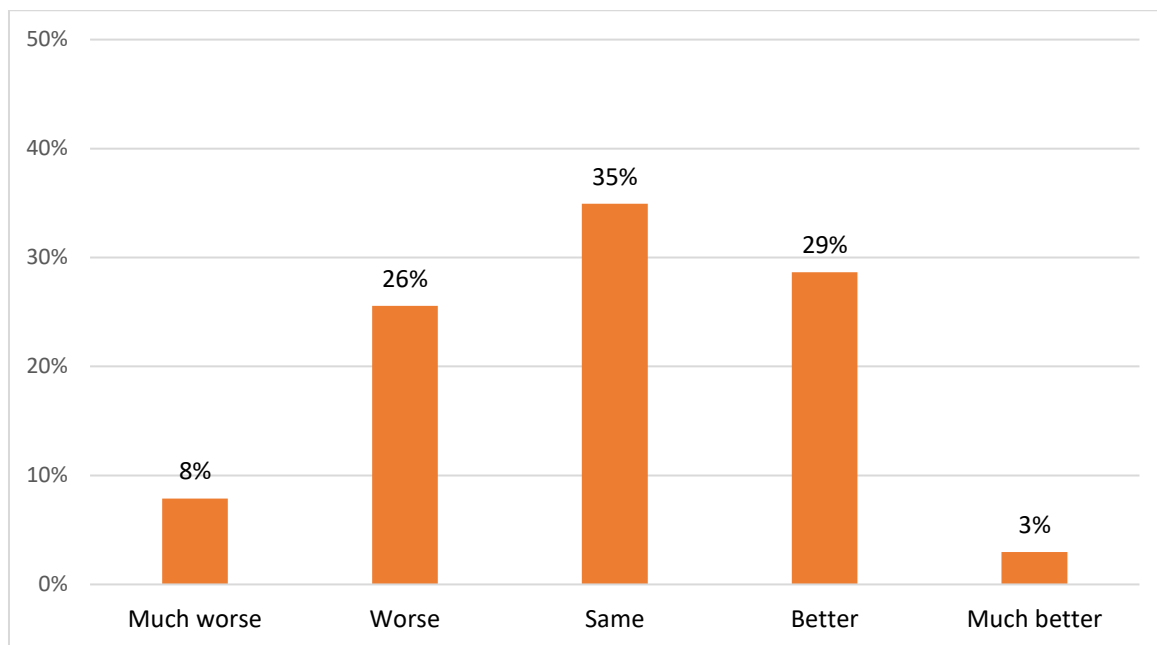
⁷⁴ Chang, 2007: 12.

⁷⁵ A summary of all Afrobarometer variables used in this chapter can be found in appendix 2 of Chapter 2.

and 'living situation' interchangeably. Throughout this thesis I also use the terms *subjective* relative living situation and *perceived* relative living situation interchangeably. Both terms are used to describe this variable. Substantive responses to this question were: 'much worse (coded as '1'), worse (2), same (3), better (4), much better' (5). Responses were read out to respondents. Respondents who said they 'did not know' were coded as '9' and those who refused to answer as '8'.

Across all cases (N=44287), around one in three respondents report that they feel equal (35%), with similar proportions feeling either worse off/ much worse off (34%) or better/much better off (32%) (see figure 2.4, below).

Figure 2.4: Perceived relative living situation. N=44287. Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)⁷⁶



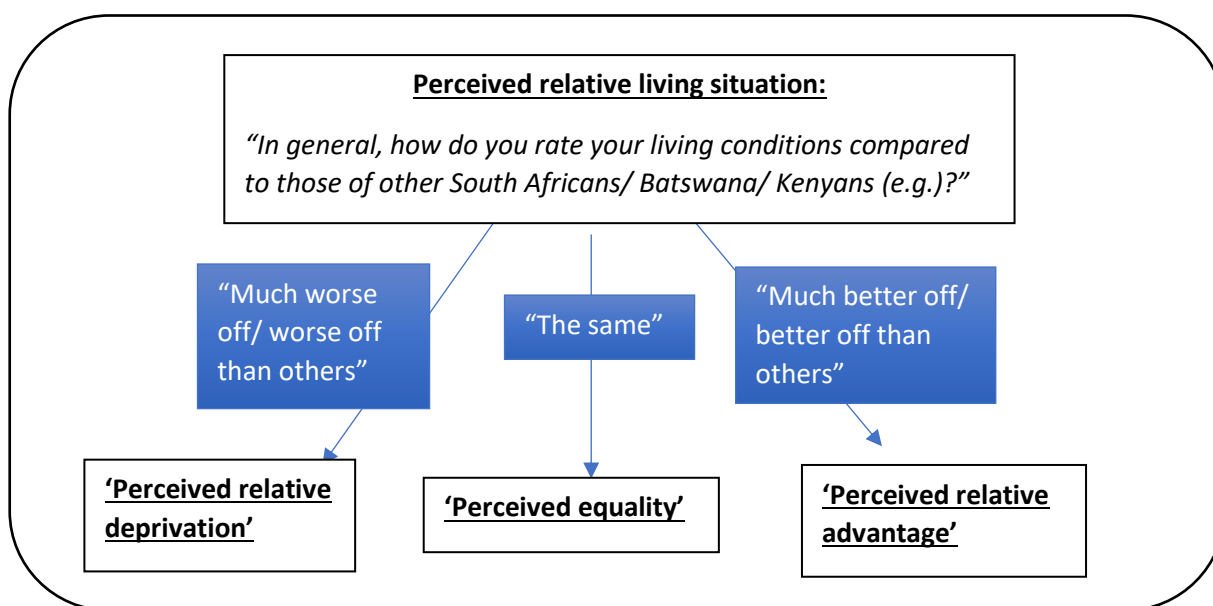
From this variable, I compute four dummy variables which are coded as '1' if someone reports 'perceived relative deprivation'⁷⁷ (respondents who say they are 'much worse off' or 'worse

⁷⁶ The percentages displayed here are the share of people who gave a valid response (N=44287). Of the total sample (N=45811), 65 people refused to answer the question and 1459 (3,2%) said 'don't know'.

⁷⁷ The concept of 'relative deprivation' [RD] is widely used in social science, psychological and economic research. The idea that comparative and ranking judgements have an influence on behaviour and attitudes had notably been described by Karl Mark (see his 'emiseration thesis') and Alexis de Tocqueville (see his argument on 'rising expectations') in the 19th century. In most research, seminal work conducted during World War II (see Stouffer et al. (1949) and Merton & Kitt (1950)) is typically referenced as the origin of the concept. The concept has since been integrated into a number of theories and models - often to study social movements, violent behaviour, social identity and comparison or voting. The concept has subsequently been further developed in important ways by Davis (1959), Runciman (1966), Davies (1969) and Gurr (1970), and Crosby (1976) to contrast – for example – between individual and group-based grievances. In different fields of study, relative deprivation is often employed in different ways. For example, Smith et al. (2011: 2) note that "social psychological RD research has focused on intergroup and interpersonal (upward and contrasting) social comparisons, political science RD research has

off' than others, respectively) or 'perceived relative advantage' (respondents who say that they are 'much better off' or 'better off' than others, respectively) and '0' for all other responses.⁷⁸ Coding the dummy variables in this way, I am using respondents who say they feel 'the same' compared to others are seen as the reference category (see figure 2.5, below, for an overview).⁷⁹ Throughout this thesis I refer to people who feel much worse or much better as 'severely' deprived or advantaged compared to others, and people who feel worse or better off than others as feeling 'moderately' deprived or advantaged.

Figure 2.5: Conceptualizing perceived relative deprivation and advantage



This 34-country average blurs much variation between individual countries (see figure 2.6 below). For example, while one in three respondents in the 34-country sample report feeling 'much worse' or 'worse' than others, this number is over 50% in Malawi (59%) and Tanzania (53%), and around 50% in Uganda (49%), Mali (49%) and Togo (47%). Conversely, in Tunisia (20%), Gambia (17%), and Mauritius (17%) one in five or fewer feel relatively deprived. Moreover, while 'feeling the same' is the most frequent response when the data are viewed in

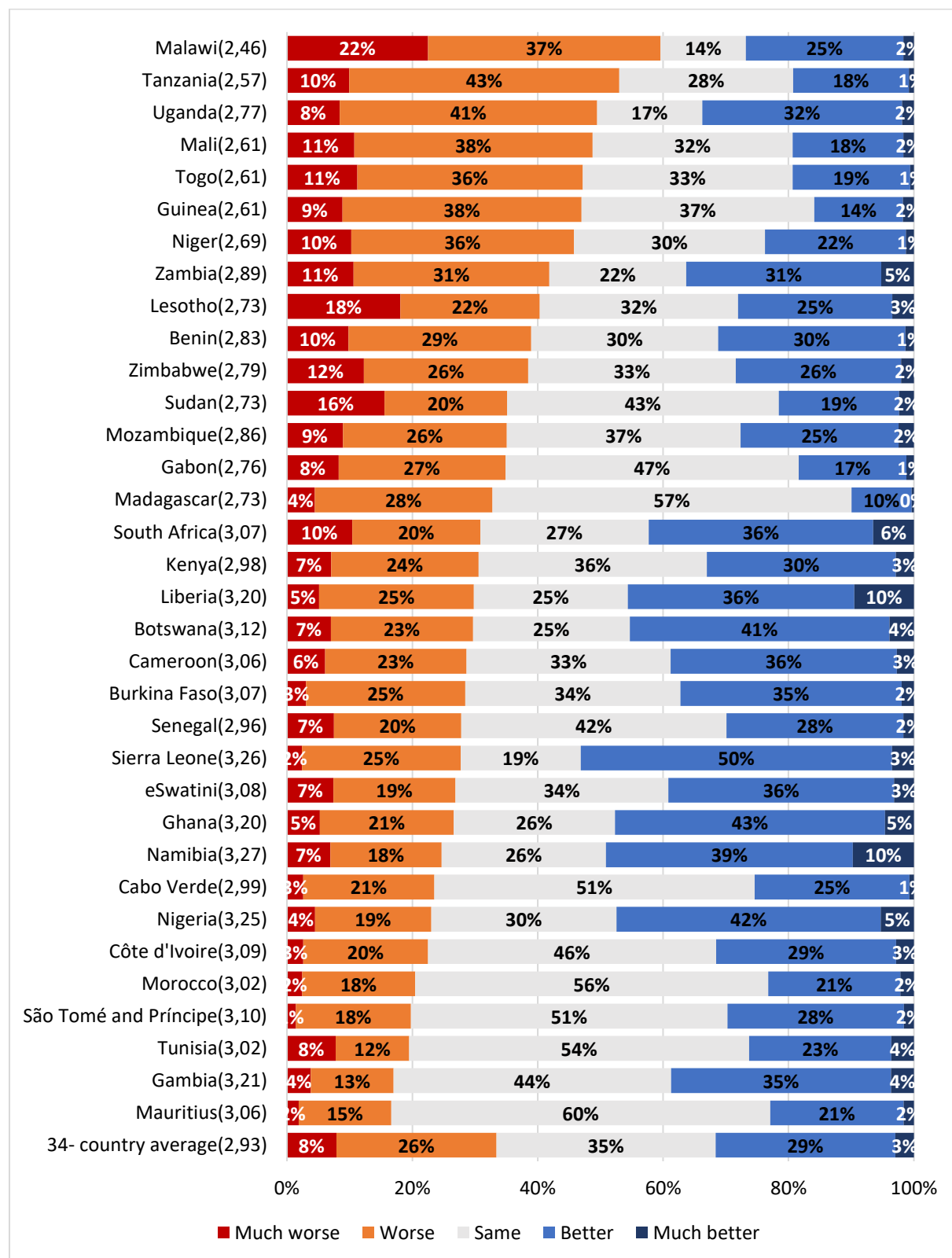
focused on people's comparisons of their present situation with either their past, future, desired, or deserved selves". The value of relative deprivation as an argument or approach to studying individual or group behaviour or attitudes is not without criticism. In particular, the high degree of definitional variance and even ambiguity have been raised as problematic in evaluating the value of RD in models or theory (Smith et al., 2011). Due to the ambiguity of what the variable actually refers to I do not claim to be measuring any particular dimension or version of RD.

⁷⁸ In the past, the social psychology literature has referred to this as 'relative gratification'. See for example: Dambrun et al. (2006) or LeBlanc et al. (2015).

⁷⁹ A limitation to this thesis is the reliance on a single indicator of perceptions of relative advantage, equality and deprivation, respectively. This is problematic as I am possibly introducing non-random error into the estimation models. Here the use of several items (either in robustness checks or as an index) could reduce error and provide further confirmation of the findings suggested in this chapter. I do not discuss this limitation in each chapter but acknowledge it here.

total (35% say this), 'feeling the same' is only the most frequent response in 13 of the 34 countries, once the data are viewed at country-level.

Figure 2.6: Perceived relative living situation. By country. 34 countries (N=44821). Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)



3.3 Benefits and limitations of using Afrobarometer data

Most previous comparative research on the consequences of economic inequality employs country-level measures of economic inequality which are computed from national accounts data or household survey data. In section 2 I discussed how such research on consequences in Africa is impeded by data quality and availability concerns (Devarajan, 2013; Jerven, 2013; Carletto et al., 2015; Hoogeveen & Nguyen, 2019). In this thesis, I rather use representative value-survey data collected by the Afrobarometer project. But in what ways is this data an improvement over other available data?

The use of Afrobarometer survey data has a number of advantages over previously employed sources of data. Paramount among these advantages is the direct comparability of surveys across countries. All surveys are conducted using the same sampling strategy and employ the same questionnaire (bar a few country-specific questions). All questions are standardized and asked in the exact same way in all countries and translated into the respondent's language of preference. Many survey items are moreover repeatedly included in consecutive survey rounds, making cross-time comparison possible. In many cases – although not utilized in this thesis – survey items correspond to commonly used survey-questions in value surveys conducted in other regions of the world. This allows for an even broader comparison at the regional and global level. Afrobarometer data are moreover highly comparable because each round is conducted within a two-to-three-year time window. As such no large time differences exist between country surveys.

Afrobarometer data also have limitations, some of which it shares with commonly used sources of data in this field of research.

Afrobarometer relies on (possibly flawed) census data. In order to conduct its survey, Afrobarometer relies on national census data to formulate an appropriate sampling framework. As discussed above, censuses are often conducted in irregular intervals and may be of poor quality. While Afrobarometer can detach itself from national limitations of statistics bureaus and statistical inefficacy in government, it nonetheless relies on governments to produce this data in order to conduct its interviews.

Afrobarometer likely under-samples the very rich and the very poor. The Afrobarometer data are collected based on a clustered, stratified, multi-stage, area probability sample design and sampling is probability proportionate to population size at each stage (Afrobarometer, 2020b). This means that the sample is designed to ensure that each (adult) citizen has the same chance of being selected within a given area. The survey is not designed to sample according to income or wealth distribution. A random selection proportionate to population size sampling design will under-sample those at the top of income or wealth distributions in more unequal countries or areas, as there are simply much, much fewer of them. Moreover, even if high-

income or high-worth individuals are (randomly) selected it is very difficult to actually interview them as they probably live in security complexes and gated communities, and will be less willing to engage in a survey due to time and security concerns. Likewise, surveys tend to under-survey the extremely poor – often because the extremely poor are not registered at a specific address or they might live in areas that are difficult to conduct interviews in (Alvaredo, 2011; Atkinson et al., 2011). As such, the quantitative analyses in this thesis likely do not sufficiently test the models for those at the extreme ends of the poverty-wealth distribution (but so does most other research that uses quantitative data).

People likely overstate their relative situation. It is widely understood that people tend to overstate their positive traits – a phenomenon known as ‘self-enhancement’ (Alicke, 1985; Brown, 1986; Epley & Dunning, 2000) and compare themselves favorably to others – known as the ‘better-than-average effect’ (Alicke & Govorun, 2005; Guenther & Alicke, 2010; Alicke & Sedikides, 2011; Brown, 2012). This probably biased my data. In fact, research (albeit non-representative) by Loughnan et al. (2011) suggests that self enhancement is more pronounced in countries with higher income inequality. Using data for 15 countries (but only South Africa as an African case)⁸⁰ the authors found a strong, significant and positive correlation between income inequality (as per the Gini coefficient) and people's self enhancement.⁸¹

Conversely, we might be failing to fully capture poverty dispersions. Most noticeably, consumption surveys are often biased downwards because they fail to include goods that are almost exclusively consumed by the rich (luxury accommodation, vacations abroad, high value assets, etc.). This results in consumption dispersions being underestimated. This factor is further exacerbated due to surveys rarely capturing the extremely rich and the extremely poor (Alvaredo, 2011; Atkinson et al., 2011). This results in consumption-based inequality being typically lower than both income and wealth inequality (Blundell et al., 2008; Piketty, 2014; Beegle et al., 2016; De Magalhães & Santaaulàlia-Llopis, 2018). Of course, the Afrobarometer is not a consumption survey as such, but it does include questions pertaining to people's (lack of) consumption as for example the Lived Poverty Index (discussed below).

⁸⁰ It is widely debated whether self-enhancement is culturally relative or is universal. Commonly these cultural differences are conceptualized as ‘western’ and ‘eastern’ cultures based on how the cultures emphasise individualism or collectivism, respectively, as well as independence and interdependence (Heine & Hamamura, 2007; Sedikides et al., 2007; Boucher, 2010; Chiu et al., 2011). To the best of my knowledge, no comparative study exists focusing on African cases in the context of cultural factors.

⁸¹ The authors collected non-representative data in 15 countries (N=1625), primarily from university students. Respondents’ self enhancement was measured on two dimensions (question text taken from Loughnan et al. (2011: 1255)). First: “How much do you possess this characteristic compared to the average student”. Responses were rated on “7-point scale ranging from 1, much less than the average student/person, to 7, much more than the average student/person”. And second: “This characteristic is desirable, it is a characteristic that people generally want,” was rated on a 7-point scale ranging from 1, not at all, to 7, very much so. The traits that were being queried were randomly selected from the Big Five personality factors.

4. What does perceived relative living situation actually tell us?

In this thesis I am specifically interested in economic or material inequality of outcome, rather than for example political inequality. Unfortunately, the survey question does not provide any additional context as to what people are specifically judging when comparing their living situation. I had planned a qualitative study in Cape Town to explore how ordinary people perceived and understood the question regarding their relative living conditions and what specific aspects of their living conditions they considered when responding to the question. While this would not have increased the number of variables at my disposal, it would have provided a more nuanced understanding of the variable. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 lockdown restrictions in South Africa and the ongoing health risks associated with fieldwork in 2020 (and 2021), I had to abandon the plan.

To better understand what respondents may be referring to, I next run a series of multilevel models in which I use perceived relative living situation as the dependent variable. I start by modelling perceived comparative situation using variables which reflect both material and immaterial absolute poverty and equality. I explore several sets of explanatory variables. In all models I control for location, level of education, age, and gender of the respondent (results for control variables alone are presented in model 1 in table 2.1). First, I test whether people's reported experience of deprivation can be predicted using their experience of various forms of material and immaterial deprivation. Specifically, I include people's reported experience of deprivation in the past 12 months in regard to food, water, medical care, cooking fuel and cash income (see model 2, table 2.1).⁸² Responses range from 'never' having gone without, to 'always'. Afrobarometer collapses these 5 items into a single index which it calls the 'Lived Poverty Index' (LPI), which is made up of the five dimensions of deprivation. The LPI was developed by Afrobarometer as a measure of poverty which would allow the interviewer to capture the 'experiential core of poverty' (Mattes, 2008: 1). Importantly, the questions underpinning the LPI could be captured as part of the broader attitudinal interview, without having to spend too much time and effort on capturing economic conditions, behaviors and habits, as studies on poverty do in economic research.⁸³ The LPI was computed as an additive index capturing the frequency that people experienced deprivation in regard to food, water, cooking fuel, medical care and cash income in the past 12 months. Lower scores reflect less frequent experience of deprivation, and higher scores represent more frequent experiences of

⁸² The questions reads: *Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough food to eat? Gone without enough clean water for home use? Gone without medicines or medical treatment? Gone without enough fuel to cook your food? Gone without a cash income?*

⁸³ On the validity and reliability of the LPI as a measure of core poverty, see: Bratton & Mattes (2003), Bratton et al. (2005) and Mattes (2008).

deprivation.⁸⁴ I include the LPI in model 3 alone and in later models (6-12) with other explanatory variables.

It is likely that the reported deprivation variables are not only a measure of absolute poverty, but that people's recollection of their experience of deprivation over the past 12 months is also informed by relative assessments vis-à-vis their expectations, immediate community and wider reference group. Arguably a more reliable measure of *absolute* material deprivation is recording whether people own certain goods or non-material products. The Asset Index reflects how many non-elemental goods a respondent has access to or owns personally. The index reflects whether respondents say they have access to, or personally own: a radio, television, mobile phone, computer, motor vehicle and bank account.⁸⁵ The scores for the six items were added without any weighting and the resulting scale was not recoded. The scale runs from 0 (no access to or personal ownership of any item) to 12 (personal ownership of all six items).⁸⁶ I first enter the constituent components of the Asset Index (see model 4) before testing the combined effect by including the Asset Index in model 5. Beyond experiences of poverty and ownership of assets, I also test for more general notions of material deprivation. Here, I include people's employment status (which runs from unemployed and not seeking work currently, to full time work)⁸⁷ as well as their dependency on receiving remittances from abroad.⁸⁸ I include both variables in model 7.

Besides experiencing deprivation, people might also be basing their assessment of their relative living situation on perceived political or societal inequalities. Specifically, I test whether 'feeling respected' and 'treated equally to others by public officials', 'perceived equal treatment under law' and 'perceived fair treatment of one's ethnic group by government' shape how

⁸⁴ A factor analysis (extraction method: maximum likelihood) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.816). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.611 (5 items) and accounted for 52.22% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha of 0.768.

⁸⁵ Respondents were asked six questions: *Which of these things do you or anyone in your household own? Radio, television, mobile phone, computer, motor vehicle and bank account?* A factor analysis (extraction method: maximum likelihood) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.803). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.659 (6 items) and accounted for 44.32% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha of 0.744.

⁸⁶ This index has been used in the past by Langer and Mikami (2013). In a study of perceived horizontal inequalities in Ghana, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Nigeria and Kenya, the authors use the same set of variables and a similar approach to recoding and call the variable an 'Asset Index'. Langer and Mikami dichotomize the six items and compute a Asset Index ranging from 0 to 6.

⁸⁷ Respondents were asked: *Do you have a job that pays a cash income? [If yes, ask:] Is it full-time or part-time? [If no, ask:] Are you presently looking for a job?* Response options were : *no, not looking* (coded '0'), *no, but looking* (1), *yes, part-time* (2), *yes, full time* (3).

⁸⁸ Respondents are asked: *Considering ALL the activities you engage in to secure a livelihood, how much, if at all, do you depend on receiving remittances from relatives or friends living in other countries?* (capitalization as in original). Response options are: *Not at all / Does not receive remittances* (coded '0'), *a little bit* (1), *somewhat* (2), *a lot* (3). Those who said they *did not know* or *refused to answer* were excluded from the analysis.

people perceive their relative living situation (see model 8).⁸⁹ Further, people may say they are worse off than others because they feel like political losers. To gauge this, I include a measure of whether people feel close to a ruling party, an opposition party or no political party (see model 9).⁹⁰

People may also feel they are relatively deprived if they have experienced a lack of personal safety and physical wellbeing. To test this, I include measures of whether people felt safe in their neighborhood, and whether they had something stolen from their homes.⁹¹

Lastly, I included a question on people's absolute present living situation. No further detail is given to respondents as to what is meant by 'living conditions' or what time frame 'present' is referring to.⁹²

Given the country-clustered structure of the data, I run a series of Multi Level Models accounting for variation within and between countries. The models focus on specific dimensions of poverty, deprivation, equality and fairness, and aim to better understand what people are likely to be basing their response on. I first focus on material forms of poverty and deprivation. The results (models 1 to 6) are displayed in table 2.1, below. All models are a good fit to the data. The results here suggest that people appear to draw from a variety of experiences of poverty and deprivation rather than the specific experiences of deprivation (model 2). People's perceived relative living situation is more strongly predicted by the Lived Poverty Index (LPI) (model 3; $\beta = -0.3$, $p < 0.001$) as an index of multiple poverty experiences, compared to the individual effects of the constituent items of the index. This suggests that no

⁸⁹ Perceived ethnic discrimination is measured using a question which asks respondents: *How often, if ever, are [respondent's Ethnic Group] treated unfairly by the government?* Response options were: *never* (coded as '0'), *sometimes* (1), *often* (2), *always* (3). Perceived political fairness is measured using a question which asks respondents: *In general, when dealing with public officials, do you think that they treat you better, the same, or worse than other people?* Response ran from *much worse* (coded '0') to *much better* (4). People's perception of being treated with respect by public officials is measured using a question which asks people: *In general, when dealing with public officials, how much do you feel that they treat you with respect?* Responses were *not at all* (coded '0'), *a little bit* (1), *somewhat* (2) and *a lot* (3). Perceived legal equality is measured using a question which asks respondents: *In your opinion, how often, in this country: Are people treated unequally under the law?* Response options were: *always* (3), *often* (2), *rarely* (1), *never* (0).

⁹⁰ Following Mattes and Bratton (2007), I control for whether someone said that they feel close to a ruling party (coded 2), a different party (1) or no party (0). Respondents were asked: *Do you feel close to any particular political party? if "Yes": Which party is that?* Respondents who didn't feel close to a party were coded as 0, while those who felt close to any party except a party in power (either alone or in coalition) were coded as 1. Respondents who said they were close to a ruling party were coded as 2.

⁹¹ Respondents were asked: a) *Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Felt unsafe walking in your neighbourhood?* Response options were: *never* (coded as '0'), *just once or twice* (1), *several times* (2), *many times* (3), *always* (4). b) *During the past year, have you or anyone in your family: Had something stolen from your house? Did this happen once, twice, or three or more times?* Response options were: *no* (0), *yes, once* (1), *yes, twice* (2), *yes, three or more times* (3). Respondents who said they *don't know* or who *refused* to answer were excluded from the analysis.

⁹² Respondents were asked: *In general, how would you describe: Your own present living conditions?* Response options were: *very bad* (coded as '1'), *fairly bad* (2), *neither good nor bad* (3), *fairly good* (4), *very good* (5).

single experience stands out, but rather that an overall experience of poverty matters in how people feel their living situation compares to the situation of other people. As would be expected, the coefficient is negative, meaning that people who experience deprivation more frequently are more likely to say that they feel their living situation is relatively worse or much worse than others. The results in regard to material assets are also plausible in that I find a significant positive effect for the Asset Index (model 5; $\beta = 0.06$, $p < 0.001$). This suggests that people who own or have access to fewer assets are significantly more likely to feel relatively deprived.

Table 2.1: Predicting people's perceived relative living situation. 34 countries (N=45811). Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)⁹³

	Model 1: Controls	Model 2: Deprivation	Model 3: Lived Poverty Index (LPI)	Model 4: Assets	Model 5: Asset Index	Model 6: LPI+ Asset Index
Deprived of food		-0.1(0)***				
Deprived of water		0(0)				
Deprived of medical care		-0.0(0)***				
Deprived of cooking fuel		0(0)				
Deprived of cash income		-0.1(0)***				
Lived Poverty Index			-0.3(0.01)***			-0.2(0.01)***
Own radio				0.02(0.01)***		
Own television				0.07(0.01)***		
Own vehicle				0.07(0.01)***		
Own computer				0.06(0.01)***		
Own bank account				0.09(0.01)***		
Own mobile phone				0.05(0.01)***		
Asset Index					0.06(0)***	0.04(0)***
Urban or rural	-0.0(0.01)***	-0.0(0.01)	-0.0(0.01)	0.02(0.01)*	0.01(0.01)	0.04(0.01)***
Education	0.07(0)***	0.04(0)***	0.05(0)***	0.03(0)***	0.03(0)***	0.02(0)***
Age	-0.0(0)***	0(0)**	0(0)**	0(0)***	0(0)***	0(0)***
Gender	0.04(0.01)***	0.03(0.01)***	0.03(0.01)***	0.07(0.01)***	0.08(0.01)***	0.06(0.01)***
<i>Within country</i>						
<i>R</i> ²	0.028	0.108	0.090	0.052	0.050	0.104
<i>Between country</i>						
<i>R</i> ²	0.183	0.303	0.350	0.283	0.283	0.333

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Unlike for experiences of deprivation, I find the effect for the Asset Index is not stronger compared to individual index components. This suggests that the item components (at least some) have a stronger effect alone than as an index, or a comparable effect. When directly compared to the effects of the LPI (see model 6), the Asset Index has a considerably weaker, albeit independent and significant, effect. This suggests that the response regarding one's

⁹³ Note: Cell entries are linear mixed model coefficients and standard errors in parentheses. Some effect-sizes are displayed as zero in the table as they have been rounded off.

relative living situation is more strongly shaped by how people experience deprivation of necessities compared to material, arguably non-essential, assets.

I next focus on broader notions of poverty, equality, and fairness. These models (7 to 11) are displayed in table 2.2, below. Indeed, I find that people's perceived relative living situation is significantly predicted by such broader notions. The effect here is strongest for equal treatment by public officials (model 8; $\beta = 0.12$, $p < 0.001$), dependence on remittances from abroad (model 7; $\beta = 0.05$, $p < 0.001$) and being a supporter of a ruling party (model 9; $\beta = 0.03$, $p < 0.001$). These results suggest that people who feel that they are treated worse than others by public officials, who are more dependent on receiving regular remittances from abroad and who are supporters of the opposition or have no party affiliation are more likely to say that they are relatively deprived compared to others. Conversely, people who feel they are treated better than others by public officials, do not rely on remittances, and who feel close to the ruling party are more likely to say that they are better off than others. I find no significant results for employment status, treatment of the ethnic group and only very small⁹⁴ (albeit significant) effects for equal treatment of people under law or physical safety. These results underline that people indeed draw from a variety of sources when assessing their living situation compared to other's. In all cases however, the effect is considerably weaker than the effect found for LPI.

Lastly, I include a variable which measures people's reported (absolute) current living conditions (model 11). The results suggest that people's perceived relative living situation is by far most strongly predicted by this variable measuring perceived absolute relative living situation ($\beta = 0.25$, $p < 0.001$). People who feel that their living conditions are positive are also significantly more likely to say that their living conditions are better than those of other people in their country. This positive effect remains significant even when controlling for experiences of deprivation and material well-being (as per the Asset Index). This means that if people are happy with their living conditions, they are more likely to feel better off than others, regardless of their experiences of deprivation and absolute poverty (see model 12). It should be noted that the questions on the absolute present living conditions and relative living conditions are asked back-to-back (questions 4 and 5 in the questionnaire). As such it is likely that people's responses in regard to relative living conditions are strongly influenced by the answer to the previous question. The questions regarding lived poverty experiences (Q8a-f) are also asked in the early phase of the interview but not directly adjacent to the two questions of absolute conditions and relative situation. In addition, the wording of the questions on lived poverty do not include the term 'living condition' which people may therefore see as not directly related. Although significant, the effect for Lived Poverty Index ($\beta = -0.1$, $p < 0.001$) is weaker than

⁹⁴ The effect-sizes are displayed as zero in the table as they have been rounded off.

absolute living situation (although there is probably some multicollinearity between these variables).

Table 2.2: Predicting people's perceived relative living situation. 34 countries (N=45811). Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)⁹⁵

	Model 7: General means of income	Model 8: Political treatment	Model 9: Incumbent supporter	Model 10: Physical well- being	Model 11: Living situation	Model 12: Full model
Lived Poverty Index	-0.2(0.01)***	-0.2(0.01)***	-0.2(0.01)***	-0.2(0.01)***	-0.1(0.01)***	-0.1(0.01)***
Asset Index	0.04(0)***	0.04(0)***	0.04(0)***	0.04(0)***	0.03(0)***	0.03(0)***
Employment status	0.01(0)					0.01(0)
Dep. on remittances	0.05(0.01)***					0.03(0.01)***
Respected by public officials		0.01(0.01)				0(0.01)
Equal treatment by public officials		0.12(0.01)***				0.1(0.01)***
Ethnic group treated unfairly		-0.0(0.01)				0(0.01)
Legal equality		-0.0(0)***				-0.0(0)*
Incumbent partisan			0.03(0.01)***			0.02(0.01)**
Unsafe walking in neighbourhood				-0.0(0)**		0(0)
Had something stolen from house				-0.0(0)**		0(0.01)
Your present living conditions					0.25(0)***	0.24(0)***
Urban or rural	0.04(0.01)***	0.03(0.01)*	0.03(0.01)**	0.03(0.01)**	0.02(0.01)	0.01(0.01)
Education	0.02(0)***	0.02(0)***	0.02(0)***	0.02(0)***	0.02(0)***	0.02(0)***
Age	0(0)***	0(0)***	0(0)***	0(0)***	0(0)	0(0)***
Gender	0.06(0.01)***	0.05(0.01)***	0.06(0.01)***	0.06(0.01)***	0.05(0.01)***	0.03(0.01)**
<i>Within country R²</i>	0.105	0.108	0.108	0.104	0.192	0.193
<i>Between country R²</i>	0.328	0.385	0.341	0.325	0.556	0.568

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

In regard to using this variable in the further analysis of this thesis, these results suggest several important findings. Perceived relative living situation is associated with both material and immaterial forms of deprivation. Perceived relative living situation was most strongly predicted by perceived absolute living situation. Interestingly, perceived absolute living situation is a significant predictor of perceived relative living situation, even when controlling for absolute experiences of deprivation, political and legal treatment and fairness and physical deprivation. Partially, as I have pointed out above, the strong effect may be due to the priming effect of how people assess their relative living situation after having been asked about the absolute living situation in the previous question. However, the moderate effect size of absolute living situation on perceived relative living situation may suggest that other explanations (besides the one included in the models here) shape people's perceived relative living situation. This finding is further underlined by the explained variance in the dependent variable. Even the most comprehensive model accounted for only 19% of variance in the dependent variable within

⁹⁵ Note: Cell entries are linear mixed model coefficients and standard errors in parentheses. Some effect-sizes are displayed as zero in the table as they have been rounded off.

countries. This underlines that other factors – besides perceptions of various forms of deprivation – shape how people feel their living situation compares to others.

4.1 Do people who are objectively worse off (economically), also feel worse off?

So far, I have asked to what extent different experiences of deprivation inform how people feel their living situation compares to other people. Although the models produced a number of significant results, the overall model performance suggested that other – unobserved – explanations may be important too. Most obviously (at least theoretically), people's perceived relative living situation should be shaped by their objective relative living situation. It is, however, unclear how closely people's perceived relative situation match their actual (objective) relative situation. To assess this, I compute variables which measure the relative position of a respondent within different distributions of the Lived Poverty Index. The variables are computed in a way that higher scores mean someone has experienced more frequent lived poverty than the respective mean, and lower scores mean that someone has experienced poverty less frequently than the mean. I compute such variables for both geographic units (country, region, town, enumeration area (EA)) and likely reference groups with whom people might compare themselves (ethnic group, age group, education group). As the different variables measuring relative positions are highly correlated, I enter them individually to the 'full model' (from table 2. 1, above) in a series of models – displayed in table 2.3, below.⁹⁶

The regression results suggest that, in the context of absolute deprivation experiences and perceptions, objective relative poverty generally does not predict perceived relative living situation. People's objective relative position compared to the LPI mean scores at country, region and EA level are not significantly associated with reported perceived relative living situation. I do find a significant result for relative objective poverty compared to the town mean, but the result is unintuitive as it suggests that people who experience more poverty than the town are more likely to say that they are better off than others ($\beta = 0.03$, $p < 0.05$).⁹⁷ Further, I find no significant results for objective relative situation vis-à-vis the objective poverty mean score of a respondent's ethnic group, age group or education groups. These results are largely in line with past research (outside of Africa) which also finds that people's objective relative

⁹⁶ Note: Cell entries are linear mixed model coefficients and standard errors in parentheses. Some effect-sizes are displayed as zero in the table as they have been rounded off.

⁹⁷ Given the large number of cases and the very small effect size, this may represent a spurious relationship resulting from the sample size.

situation is not significantly correlated with their perceived relative situation (Cruces et al., 2013).

Table 2.3: Predicting people's perceived relative living situation using their objective relative situation. 34 countries (N=45811). Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)

	<u>Objective relative deprivation compared to mean of:</u>						
	County	Region	Town	EA	Ethnic group	Age group	Education group
Lived Poverty Index	-0.1(0.06)	-0.1(0.02)***	-0.1(0.01)***	-0.1(0.01)***	-0.1(0.01)***	-0.1(0.02)***	-0.1(0.01)***
Asset Index	0.03(0)***	0.03(0)***	0.03(0)***	0.03(0)***	0.03(0)***	0.03(0)***	0.03(0)***
Employment status	0.01(0)	0.01(0)	0.01(0)	0.01(0)	0.01(0)	0.01(0)	0.01(0)
Dep. on remittances	0.03(0.01)***	0.03(0.01)***	0.03(0.01)***	0.03(0.01)***	0.03(0.01)***	0.03(0.01)***	0.03(0.01)***
Respected by public officials	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)
Equal treatment by public officials	0.1(0.01)***	0.1(0.01)***	0.1(0.01)***	0.1(0.01)***	0.1(0.01)***	0.1(0.01)***	0.1(0.01)***
Ethnic group treated unfairly	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)
Legal equality	-0.0(0)*	-0.0(0)*	-0.0(0)*	-0.0(0)*	-0.0(0)*	-0.0(0)*	-0.0(0)*
Incumbent partisan	0.02(0.01)**	0.02(0.01)**	0.02(0.01)**	0.02(0.01)**	0.02(0.01)**	0.02(0.01)**	0.02(0.01)**
Unsafe walking in neighbourhood	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
Had something stolen from house	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)
Your present living conditions	0.24(0)***	0.24(0)***	0.24(0)***	0.24(0)***	0.24(0)***	0.24(0)***	0.24(0)***
Relative to country mean	-0.0(0.06)						
Relative to regional mean		0.01(0.02)					
Relative to town mean			0.03(0.01)*				
Relative to EA mean				0.02(0.01)			
Relative to ethnic mean					0(0.01)		
Relative to age group mean						-0.0(0.02)	
Relative to education group mean							-0.0(0.01)
Urban or rural	0.01(0.01)	0.01(0.01)	0.02(0.01)	0.01(0.01)	0.01(0.01)	0.01(0.01)	0.01(0.01)
Education	0.02(0)***	0.02(0)***	0.02(0)***	0.02(0)***	0.02(0)***	0.02(0)***	0.02(0)***
Age	0(0)***	0(0)***	0(0)***	0(0)***	0(0)***	0(0)***	0(0)***
Gender	0.03(0.01)**	0.03(0.01)**	0.03(0.01)**	0.03(0.01)**	0.03(0.01)**	0.03(0.01)**	0.03(0.01)**
Within country R^2	0.193	0.193	0.193	0.193	0.193	0.193	0.193
Between country R^2	0.563	0.561	0.557	0.560	0.566	0.565	0.573

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

4.2 What about conflicting relative positions?

But how do people balance conflicting relative positions? Do people who are rich in a poor area, but poor compared to the national mean feel relatively deprived or advantaged? Testing this is not easy as relative positions in respect to different groups are highly correlated and thus do not allow for multivariate analysis.

To assess how people with conflicting relative positions see themselves compared to others, I first compute whether people are better or worse off than the national mean (in terms of their experience of poverty) and second compute whether people fall below or above three sub-national poverty means: the (most local) enumeration area (EA), the town and the region. From these two relative positions I organize respondents into one of four groups: (1) people who are better off than both national and sub-national mean, (2) people who are better off than the national but worse off than the sub-national mean; (3) people who are worse off than the national but better off than the sub-national mean; and (4) people who are worse off than both the national and sub-national mean. Table 2.4, below, displays the mean score on perceived relative living situation for each group across the three comparisons, the number of cases within each group and the standard error associated with the mean score.

The results suggest that people who are (objectively) better off than both national and various sub-national mean scores are most positive about their perceived relative living situation, and that people who are worse off than both the national and various sub-national poverty means are most negative about their relative living situation. These results are plausible. A smaller number of people have conflicting relative positions. For the comparison between national, town-level, and enumeration area poverty, respectively, the results suggest that people who are objectively better off than the national poverty mean, but worse off than local poverty levels are more positive in their perceived relative living situation, compared to those who are better off than local poverty levels, but worse off than the national poverty mean.⁹⁸ For the comparison of objective national and regional relative poverty experience, the means of the two conflicting groups was only marginally different and an ANOVA confirmed that the means difference was not significant.

⁹⁸ I moreover used ANOVA to test whether the difference in mean scores is statistically significant. For the comparison between the objective national poverty mean and town-level and enumeration area-level poverty mean scores, all four groups reported significantly different means scores.

Table 2.4: Mean perceived relative living situation across relative objective deprivation at national and sub-national level. 34 countries. Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)

<i>National vs enumeration area means</i>	N	Mean relative living situation	Std. Error
Worse off than national and EA mean	16980	2.66	1.012
Worse off than national mean but better off than EA mean	3241	2.76	0.988
Better off than national mean but worse off than EA mean	4089	3.01	0.917
Better off than national and EA mean	19347	3.18	0.907
<i>National vs town means</i>			
Worse off than national and town mean	16980	2.66	1.012
Worse off than national mean but better off than town mean	3240	2.76	0.987
Better off than national mean but worse off than town mean	4088	2.98	0.950
Better off than national and town mean	19346	3.19	0.898
<i>National vs regional means</i>			
Worse off than national and region mean	16846	2.66	1.010
Worse off than national mean but better off than region mean	3403	2.84	0.976
Better off than national mean but worse off than region mean	3574	2.87	0.948
Better off than national and region mean	19881	3.17	0.906

4.3 Reliability across countries and time

In this thesis I employ cross country data for 34 African countries. Of course, how people understand the question and what people are specifically responding to may vary across countries. To test the reliability of the measure across countries, I run correlations for each country between perceived relative living situation on the one hand, and experiences of absolute deprivation and assets, respectively, on the other hand. Besides testing the different dimensions of experienced deprivation, I also use the Lived Poverty index.

The correlation results – displayed in table 2.5, below – show that across countries, people's perceived relative living situation is most strongly correlated with actual experiences of deprivation of food and cash income. Conversely, correlations are weakest between perceived relative deprivation and deprivation of water and cooking fuel. Importantly, these results are consistent across countries, suggesting the measure is reliable. I have used different shades of blue to indicate the strength of significance with darker shades representing stronger correlations. The two measures are most strongly correlated in Morocco (Pearson's $r = -0.445$; $p < 0.05$) and least strongly correlated in Guinea ($r = -0.189$; $p < 0.05$).

Table 2.5: Correlates of perceived relative living situation and measures of poverty.⁹⁹ 34 countries (N=45811). Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)

	Lived Poverty Index	Asset Index	Food	Water	Medical Care	Cooking Fuel	Cash Income
Morocco	-0.445	0.255	-0.24	-0.239	-0.387	-0.321	-0.421
Zimbabwe	-0.355	0.261	-0.351	-0.092	-0.288	-0.119	-0.424
Mauritius	-0.353	0.149	-0.248	-0.132	-0.176	-0.193	-0.381
Botswana	-0.347	0.263	-0.341	-0.183	-0.121	-0.2	-0.355
Senegal	-0.345	0.203	-0.334	-0.124	-0.336	-0.205	-0.322
Sudan	-0.339	0.265	-0.331	-0.241	-0.307	-0.26	-0.339
Tunisia	-0.327	0.244	-0.26	-0.155	-0.314	-0.231	-0.285
Lesotho	-0.324	0.275	-0.377	-0.063	-0.149	-0.19	-0.334
Togo	-0.321	0.174	-0.288	-0.128	-0.271	-0.19	-0.27
Cabo Verde	-0.311	0.326	-0.28	-0.227	-0.273	-0.228	-0.3
Niger	-0.311	0.209	-0.336	-0.109	-0.255	-0.112	-0.302
Benin	-0.309	0.219	-0.28	-0.203	-0.281	-0.166	-0.234
Kenya	-0.309	0.271	-0.329	-0.21	-0.221	-0.134	-0.288
Cameroon	-0.308	0.208	-0.277	-0.163	-0.311	-0.169	-0.24
Uganda	-0.299	0.284	-0.315	-0.175	-0.19	-0.206	-0.267
Tanzania	-0.286	0.206	-0.294	-0.126	-0.23	-0.146	-0.252
Gambia	-0.284	0.228	-0.225	-0.176	-0.236	-0.146	-0.256
Madagascar	-0.278	0.185	-0.263	-0.125	-0.197	-0.153	-0.267
Zambia	-0.277	0.257	-0.275	-0.156	-0.162	-0.166	-0.272
Namibia	-0.274	0.226	-0.276	-0.163	-0.158	-0.152	-0.293
Gabon	-0.267	0.195	-0.227	-0.163	-0.195	-0.168	-0.242
Mali	-0.256	0.249	-0.234	-0.114	-0.174	NS	-0.305
eSwatini	-0.234	0.204	-0.326	-0.069	-0.11	-0.072	-0.23
Malawi	-0.223	0.105	-0.226	-0.095	-0.086	-0.139	-0.3
South Africa	-0.215	0.197	-0.214	-0.114	-0.143	-0.145	-0.208
São Tomé and Príncipe	-0.212	0.131	-0.215	-0.138	-0.199	-0.142	-0.152
Sierra Leone	-0.209	0.263	-0.224	-0.071	-0.226	NS	-0.222
Ghana	-0.206	0.262	-0.166	-0.112	-0.191	-0.112	-0.22
Côte d'Ivoire	-0.195	0.151	-0.224	-0.064	-0.159	NS	-0.226
Nigeria	-0.194	NS	-0.23	-0.138	-0.161	-0.175	-0.125
Guinea	-0.189	NS	-0.268	-0.081	-0.095	-0.08	-0.137
Burkina Faso	-0.184	0.14	-0.174	-0.132	-0.112	NS	-0.182
Liberia	-0.178	0.147	-0.224	-0.095	-0.141	NS	-0.184
Mozambique	-0.177	0.147	-0.183	-0.073	-0.143	-0.074	-0.235

This is further underlined when looking at reliability across time. As displayed in table 2.6, below, the correlation of perceived relative living situation and the Lived Poverty Index is comparable across time. Importantly, the different coefficients are based on data including additional

⁹⁹ All correlation coefficients displayed in table 2.5 are significant at $p < 0.05$. Non-significant correlations are reflected using 'NS'.

countries (as the survey expanded with each round). The fact that the correlation coefficient nonetheless remains very similar further underlines that the measure is reliable across both countries and time.

Table 2.6: Correlates of perceived relative living situation and Lived Poverty Index in Afrobarometer Rounds 2-6 (2003-2015)

	Pearson Correlation coefficient	N
Round 2 (2003- 2003; 16 countries)	-0.242**	18334
Round 3 (2005- 2006; 18 countries)	-0.337**	24046
Round 4 (2008- 2009; 20 countries)	-0.262**	26371
Round 5 (2011- 2013; 35 countries)	-0.250**	49338
Round 6 (2014- 2015; 36 countries)	-0.288**	52128

4.4 Perceptions of inequality based on contextual evaluations

Instead of making individual comparisons, people may also be making assessments based on their surroundings or various salient groups that they feel part of.¹⁰⁰ For example, people may be using assessments of their area, neighborhood, or their ethnic group to assess their relative living situation versus others'. In other words, might people be saying that they are worse off because they live in a poor area or belong to an objectively deprived ethnic group?

To test this, I compute the mean Lived Poverty Index score at different levels. First, I explore group-means based on proximity (enumeration area, town/ village, subnational region, country level). I then correlate these group-mean scores with the individual perceived relative living situation to gauge whether the two covary.¹⁰¹ The bivariate correlations (see table 2.7, below) suggest that people in objectively poorer areas and groups are more likely to feel relatively worse off and people in objectively better off areas or groups are more likely to feel better off, relatively. In all four cases, the correlation coefficient is not as strong as for the individual assessments (see LPI and present living conditions- see tables 2.2 and 2.3, above), suggesting that people's response to the perceived relative living situation question is indeed more likely to be based on individual assessments, than fraternalistic ones. Moreover, the group scores suggest that perceived relative living situation more strongly correlates at the local level

¹⁰⁰ Group based relative comparisons are commonly referred to as fraternalistic deprivation (Runciman, 1966; Pettigrew, 1967; Vanneman & Pettigrew, 1972) by which a group's comparative situation is compared to other groups' comparative situation.

¹⁰¹ Of course, it would be beneficial to run a regression model here in order to identify the unique effect of each comparison. However, all comparison variables suffer from high multicollinearity (Pearson r of 0.85 and over) which makes it impossible to include these as independent variables in a simultaneous estimation model.

– such as the town level ($r(44273) = -0.210$, $p < 0.001$) than at the more ‘distant’ levels – such as the region level ($r(44287) = -0.150$, $p < 0.001$) or the country level ($r(44287) = -0.124$, $p < 0.001$).

The results do, however, show that people's immediate surroundings (as captured by the enumeration area) is only weakly associated with people's perceptions of relative deprivation and advantage. This makes sense, given that enumeration areas are purely administrative units for the purpose of sampling and people are probably unaware of what constitutes the enumeration area. The boundaries of town or village are probably much more understood by ordinary people. This finding is in line with research by Cruces et al. (2013) in Buenos Aires, who find that people's assessment of where they fall within the national income distribution was shaped by the absolute poverty levels of their neighborhood.

Table 2.7: Correlates of perceived relative living situation and area- or group-based deprivation. 34 countries. Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)

	<i>Perceived relative living situation</i>	
	Pearson correlation coefficient	N
Enumeration Area (mean LPI score)	-0.057**	44287
Town/ Village (mean LPI score)	-0.210**	44273
Region (mean LPI score)	-0.150**	44287
National (mean LPI score)	-0.124**	44287
Urban/ rural (mean LPI score)	-0.105**	44287
Level of education (mean LPI score)	-0.175**	44287
Age group (mean LPI score)	-0.056**	44287
Gender (mean LPI score)	0.000	44287
Ethnic group (mean LPI score)	-0.146**	44287
Race group (mean LPI score)	-0.042**	44287

Moreover, people who belong to objectively poorer demographic groups are also more likely to report that they feel worse off than others. Among these significant correlations, the coefficients are largest in regard to level of education ($r(44287) = -0.175$, $p < 0.001$) and ethnic group ($r(44287) = -0.146$, $p < 0.001$) and smaller for age group ($r(44287) = -0.056$, $p < 0.001$) or race group ($r(44287) = -0.042$, $p < 0.001$). To test whether these contextual circumstances significantly predict people's perceived relative situation above and beyond individual experiences of material and immaterial deprivation, I run a set of multilevel models (on the basis of the ‘full model’ from table 2.2) and enter the respective contextual mean scores for the Lived Poverty Index. As these different mean-scores are highly correlated, I include them individually as to avoid issues of multicollinearity. The results – displayed in table 2.8, below¹⁰² – show that although contextual poverty levels are correlated with perceived relative situation at bivariate level, only contextual poverty at town level and in regard to the ethnic group are significant –

¹⁰² Note: Cell entries are linear mixed model coefficients and standard errors in parentheses. Some effect-sizes are displayed as zero in the table as they have been rounded off.

Table 2.8: Modeling perceived relative living situation from individual and contextual deprivation. 34 countries (N=45811). Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)

	Country	Region	Town	Enumeration Area	Urban/ Rural	Education group	Ethnic group	Age group
Lived Poverty Index	-0.1(0.01)***	-0.1(0.01)***	-0.1(0.01)***	-0.1(0.01)***	-0.1(0.01)***	-0.1(0.01)***	-0.1(0.01)***	-0.1(0.01)***
Asset Index	0.03(0)***	0.03(0)***	0.03(0)***	0.03(0)***	0.03(0)***	0.03(0)***	0.03(0)***	0.03(0)***
Employment status	0.01(0)	0.01(0)	0.01(0)	0.01(0)	0.01(0)	0.01(0)	0.01(0)	0.01(0)
Dep. on remittances	0.03(0.01)***	0.03(0.01)***	0.03(0.01)***	0.03(0.01)***	0.03(0.01)***	0.03(0.01)***	0.03(0.01)***	0.03(0.01)***
Respected by public officials	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)
Equal treatment by public officials	0.1(0.01)***	0.1(0.01)***	0.1(0.01)***	0.1(0.01)***	0.1(0.01)***	0.1(0.01)***	0.1(0.01)***	0.1(0.01)***
Ethnic group treated unfairly	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)
Legal equality	-0.0(0)*	-0.0(0)*	-0.0(0)*	-0.0(0)*	-0.0(0)*	-0.0(0)*	-0.0(0)**	-0.0(0)*
Incumbent partisan	0.02(0.01)**	0.02(0.01)**	0.02(0.01)**	0.02(0.01)**	0.02(0.01)**	0.02(0.01)**	0.02(0.01)	0.02(0.01)**
Unsafe walking in neighbourhood	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)
Had something stolen from house	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	0(0.01)	-0.0(0.01)	0(0.01)
Your present living conditions	0.24(0)***	0.24(0)***	0.24(0)***	0.24(0)***	0.24(0)***	0.24(0)***	0.24(0)***	0.24(0)***
Country poverty mean	0.05(0.06)							
Regional poverty mean		-0.0(0.02)						
Town poverty mean			-0.0(0.01)*					
EA poverty mean				-0.02(0.01)				
Urban/rural poverty mean					0.06(0.05)			
Education group poverty mean						-0.01(0.04)		
Ethnic group poverty mean							-0.06(0.02)**	
Age group poverty mean								-0.01(0.04)
Urban or rural	0.01(0.01)	0.01(0.01)	0.02(0.01)	0.01(0.01)	0(0.02)	0.01(0.01)	0.01(0.01)	0.01(0.01)
Education	0.02(0)***	0.02(0)***	0.02(0)***	0.02(0)***	0.02(0)***	0.02(0)***	0.02(0)***	0.02(0)***
Age	-0.001(0)***	-0.001(0)***	-0.001(0)***	-0.001(0)***	-0.001(0)***	-0.001(0)***	-0.001(0)***	-0.001(0)***
Gender	0.03(0.01)**	0.03(0.01)**	0.03(0.01)**	0.03(0.01)**	0.03(0.01)**	0.03(0.01)**	0.03(0.01)**	0.03(0.01)**
Within country R ²	0.193	0.193	0.193	0.193	0.193	0.193	0.193	0.193
Between country R ²	0.563	0.561	0.557	0.560	0.575	0.557	0.532	0.556

*p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

albeit weak – predictors of perceived relative situation. Both significant effects are negative, suggesting that people who live in towns which suffer from higher levels of lived poverty or belong to an objectively poorer ethnic group are slightly more common to say that their situation is worse off than others'. All other contextual poverty levels did not significantly predict feeling worse or better off than others.

4.5 Section conclusion

In this section I have explored the main explanatory variables employed in this thesis - perceived relative living situation. Respondents are asked how their living situation compares to other people in their country. No further information or context is provided what is meant by living situation (or living condition as the question text reads). To better understand the explanatory variables, I unpacked the variable by asking what people are probably referring to when reporting on their living situation, where they are influenced by their surroundings and whether the variable is reliable across countries and time.

The results in this section suggest that people's subjective perceptions of how their living situation compares to others is predicted by actual experiences of both material and immaterial deprivation. Materially, feeling relatively deprived is most strongly predicted by people's perceived absolute living situation, their experience of food and income deprivation, as well as lack of assets. However, the results moreover show that feeling unfairly treated by public officials is significantly associated with feeling relatively worse off than others. The effect for perceived absolute living situation is moderate in size, but the effects are small for the other mentioned variables. These results are reassuring as they suggest that while absolute experiences of deprivation are associated with subjective relative assessment, the relationship is not strong (which would raise questions as to whether the measure of perceived relative situation is actually a measure thereof or not). In addition, while the models fit the data well, the results also suggested that other – unaccounted – explanations of subjective relative conditions are needed. Most obviously, one might expect that people's perceived relative situation may be influenced by their actual, objective, relative situation. Contrary to this expectation – but in line with past research – I found that how people feel they fare compared to others is largely unrelated to how they compare objectively. This underlines that using people's objective relative situation as a predictor of behaviour or attitudes would have been difficult to motivate as people appear not to consider such information in the context of other factors. However, the results also demonstrate that no strong evidence can be presented as to what exactly people are referring to.

In my thesis I use a multi-country dataset. This can be problematic if causes of people's perceived relative situation are different or convergent across countries. In this section I was

able to confirm that people's perceived relative living situations is associated with experiences of material deprivation in a consistent way across the country-cases in the data. This increases confidence that the explanatory variable is valid and reliable across cases.

As pointed out in the section, I had planned but was unable to conduct a qualitative and localized study to provide contextual information as to what people are drawing from or referring to when responding to the question at hand. As such, some uncertainty remains.

5. Empirical illustration: What explains self-placement in South Africa?

What informs how people feel they rank compared to others? The discussion above has suggested a number of reasons why people's subjective (perceived) relative situation commonly has only a weak association with their objective relative situation. To further unpack what factors inform people's perceived relative situation, I next turn to a single case-study of South Africa.

In South Africa, patterns of inequality and poverty are strongly shaped by the former Apartheid regime.¹⁰³ Almost three decades since South Africa's democratic transition in 1994, questions of inequality and privilege remain highly politicized (commonly intersecting with race) and visible in public and political discourse. The legacy of racial segregation and ordering under the Apartheid Regime is still felt in social and cultural terms today, and the saliency of inequality is perpetuated further in the public consciousness through state-market dynamics aimed at redressing historical inequalities such as the recurring debate of land ownership, affirmative action in business and education, and redistribution of wealth and opportunity (MacDonald, 2006; Seekings, 2008; Durrheim, Mtose et al., 2011; Durrheim, Tredoux et al., 2011). Economically, since democratic transition in 1994, high levels of income inequality have not decreased, but rather remained stable for much of the 1990s and 2000s and even increased after 2012 (Wittenberg 2017; Finn & Leibbrandt, 2018), although the cleavage of race in the context of economic inequality has decreased over time.

To broaden our understanding of what informs how people feel they compare to other people in their country, I employ 2017 South African data from the International Social Survey Project (ISSP) (N=3098) in this section. Using this source of data allows me to access different

¹⁰³ Under the Apartheid regime, the white minority upheld a system of political, economic, social, and geographic exclusion and control of the black and coloured majority which entrenched systemic inequalities in the lived reality, wealth and opportunity between race groups.

measures of perceived relative situation. Specifically, the ISSP includes a survey question asking respondents where they feel they fall within society.¹⁰⁴ The survey asks:

“In our society, there are groups which tend to be towards the top and groups which tend to be towards the bottom. Below is a scale that runs from the top to the bottom. Where would you put yourself on this scale?”
(International Social Survey Programme [ISSP] Research Group, 2017: 45)

Response options range from 1 (bottom) to 10 (top). I refer to this question as ‘top-bottom self-placement’. To test what factors shape South Africans’ self-placement, I run a linear regression analysis with self-placement as the dependent variable. The ISSP includes a number of variables of interest. First, I include a variable which measures the participant’s (reported) struggle of making ends meet every month. Respondents were asked: “Thinking of your household’s total income, including all the sources of income of all the members who contribute to it, how difficult or easy is it currently for your household to make ends meet?” (ISSP Research Group, 2017: 49). Substantive response options range from ‘very difficult’ (coded as ‘1’) to ‘very easy’ (5). Second— from the results of the cross-country analyses performed in section 4 – we would expect that people’s individual and household income influences whether people see themselves towards the top or bottom of society. Both incomes are queried in the ISSP and are included in the regression models as predictor variables.¹⁰⁵ As the dependent variable does not make explicit reference to material conditions, people may assess their relative position in society within a political context. To test this, I include an independent variable which asks people how much influence they feel they have on government decisions— arguably a measure of external efficacy.¹⁰⁶ Further I include a variable which more generally asks people about how satisfied they are with life in general.¹⁰⁷ I also control for gender, age, and education. The model was found to be a good fit to the data ($F(8) = 40.47$, $p < 0.001$) and results are displayed in table 2.9, below.

The results show that the strongest predictor of whether people feel they fit in closer to the top or the bottom in society, is not their absolute income but rather the extent to which they

¹⁰⁴ The International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) runs yearly rounds of face-to-face surveys in 42 countries, on a number of cyclically recurring topics (the ISSP refers to the different topics as modules) as well as background information in each round. The question on top-bottom placement is one of the background questions which appear in each round.

¹⁰⁵ Respondents were asked: “Please give me the letter that best describes the TOTAL MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME of all the people in your household before tax and other deductions. Please indicate all sources of income, i.e., salaries, pensions, income from investments, etc.” (ISSP Research Group, 2017: 51) (capitalization as in source). People who ‘refused’ or ‘didn’t know’ are excluded from the analysis.

¹⁰⁶ Respondents were asked: “To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? People like me don’t have any say about what the government does.” (ISSP Research Group, 2017: 9). Responses range from ‘strongly agree’ (1) to ‘strongly disagree’ (5). People who say they ‘can’t choose’ are excluded from the analysis.

¹⁰⁷ Respondents were asked: “All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole nowadays?” (ISSP Research Group, 2017: 16). Responses range from ‘completely satisfied’ (1) to ‘completely dissatisfied’ (7). People who say they ‘can’t choose’ are excluded from the analysis.

struggled to make ends meet from the total household income. The experience of struggling to make ends meet makes respondents feel closer to the bottom, while finding it easy to make ends meet is associated with feeling closer to the top in society. In the models, absolute individual and household income have no significant effect on relative self-placement. This means that being objectively better or worse off is not significantly associated with subjective relative self-placement, when controlling for reported experiences of managing finances and general life satisfaction.

Table 2.9: Regression model of top-bottom self-placement. ISSP 2017 data for South Africa (N=1983)

	Standardized Beta coefficient	P-value
Difficult to make ends meet from total HH income	0.194	0.000
Personal income	-0.022	0.483
Household income	0.008	0.812
No influence on government decisions	-0.079	0.000
Satisfied with life in general	-0.194	0.000
Gender	-0.008	0.703
Age	0.045	0.061
Education (years of schooling)	0.137	0.000
R Square	0.141	
Adjusted R Square	0.137	
Std. Error of the Estimate	1.188	
F-statistic	40.47	
F-significance	.000	

6. Conclusion

How we think about and consequently measure economic inequality will fundamentally shape how unequal we believe the world to be. Moreover, how we think about and measure economic inequality will have an impact on what we believe the consequences of economic inequality to be. In the past, empirical research has predominantly focused on measuring economic inequality at the country level. Moreover, past research has widely assumed that objective measures of inequality are similar to how people see inequality. As a consequence, past research has relied on objective measures of country-level inequality to explain people's values, attitudes and behaviors. However, more recent research suggests that in fact people's subjective perceptions of levels of economic inequality do not correlate with objective levels of inequality. Explaining such values, attitudes, and behaviors at an individual level by looking at variations in objective measures of economic inequality is thus unsatisfactory. In this chapter I have pointed to a number of reasons why people's perceptions of inequality do not correlate with objective measures of inequality found in the recent literature.

Consequently, I employ a measure of subjective perceptions of individual inequality in this thesis. The variables are computed from a value-survey item in the Afrobarometer which asks people how they feel their living situation compares to other people in their country (response options being: much worse, worse, same, better, much better). From this item, I compute dummy variables which measures whether someone feels relatively deprived (either severely or moderately) or feels relatively advantaged (both severely and moderately). In this chapter I have tested the variable in terms of validity and reliability. Indeed, the results support that the variable is based on individual, economic comparisons and that these comparisons are similar across countries and time.

In the next chapter, I begin my empirical analysis of whether perceptions of individual economic inequality are linked to democratic legitimacy in Africa. Specifically, I test whether people's perceived relative living situation is associated with how much they support democracy as a regime type. Much has been said about the negative consequences of economic inequality on support for democracy but most of this research uses country-level economic inequality to explain individual-level attitudes and limited research exists on Africa. Chapter 3 of my thesis addresses this gap using representative survey data.

References - Chapter 2

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Chapter 3

Only game in town?

Inequality and support for democracy in Africa – a micro perspective

Abstract - Chapter 3

In this chapter I explore how perceived inequality shapes support for democracy among ordinary Africans. Past research has argued that macro-level inequality should both increase and decrease support for democracy. However, the empirical evidence is far from conclusive, and little is known for cases in Africa. Recent advancements in the study of inequality has shown that objective levels and measures of inequality are weakly understood by ordinary people. Rather, I use a micro-level perceptual measure of inequality. While previous work has examined group-level perceived inequalities, I believe this study is the first to estimate effects of individual perceived inequality. I employ Afrobarometer survey data from Round 7 (2016-2018) using multi-level modeling to account for clustering of data within country-units. My models show that perceived equality significantly increases support for democracy as a regime type, while feelings both relatively deprive and relatively advantaged significantly reduces support for democracy. These effects are largely significant above and beyond the effect of absolute poverty and known predictors of support for democracy, such as free and fair elections, and level of education. Similar results are obtained when running the models to predict demand for democracy. For both dependent variables, I find no significant effect of macro-level inequality using the Gini coefficient.

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1. Introduction

In democratic regimes, a large proportion of people must support the basic 'rules of the game' for the system to be maintained over time (Linz & Stepan, 1996; Mishler & Rose, 1999). This is because if a large ('enough') number of people do not support democracy as a regime type, they could, in theory, elect non-democrats who could weaken or abolish the system. However, voting in someone who aims to change the principle rules of the game is clearly different from voting in someone who is using the rules of the game, because one does not agree with the views or approve of the performance of the incumbent. While the former action would be deemed a threat to democracy, the latter would be seen as sign of a 'healthy' democratic system. Here, Easton's (1965, 1975) differentiation of the concept of 'political support' is useful to consider. Political support can either be 'specific', meaning tied to those that hold office, or 'diffuse' – tied to the political community and basic norms and principles that organize the political community.¹⁰⁸ As Klingemann (1999) notes, democracy is able to exist without 'specific' support but cannot be sustained without 'diffuse' support (Linz & Stepan, 1996; Diamond, 1999).

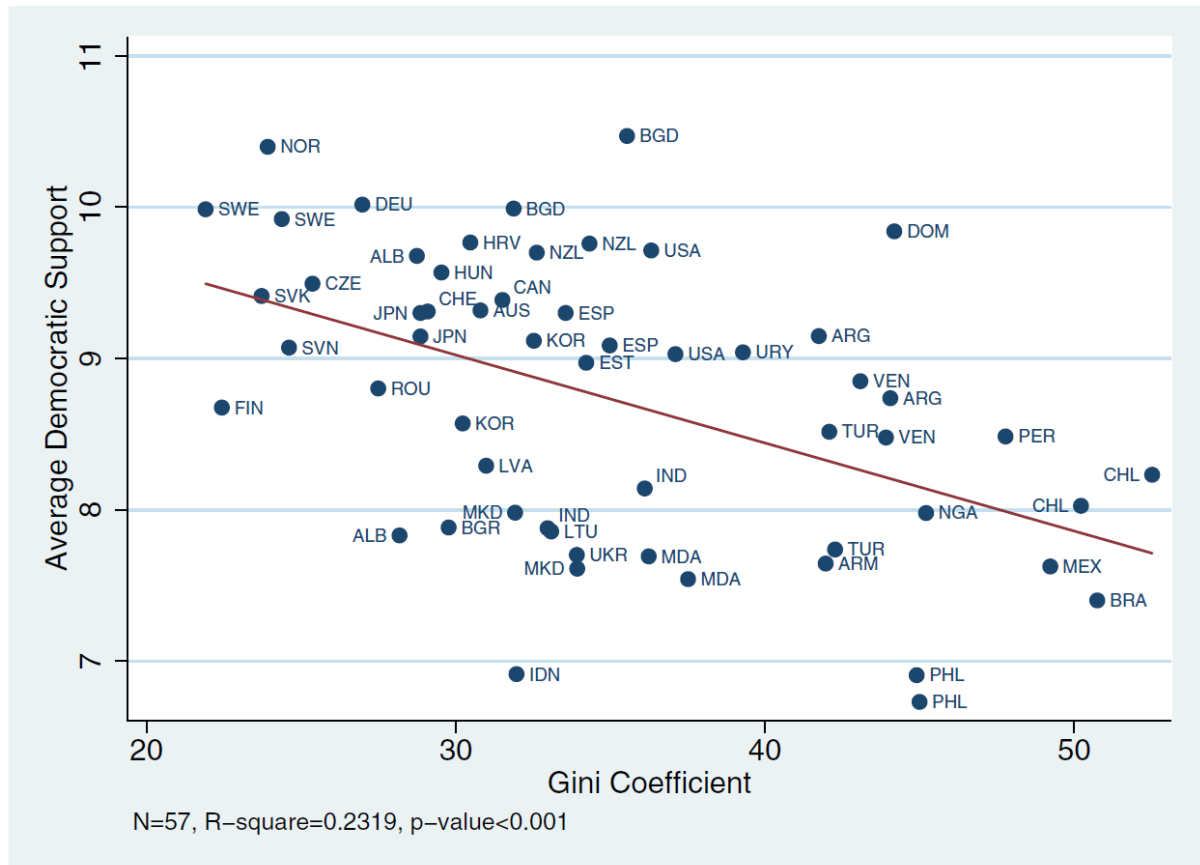
1.1 What role does economic inequality play?

Political economists argue that higher inequality should increase support for democracy, as it is seen by the masses as a means of redistribution between the 'haves' and the 'have nots'. This is because, by definition, rising inequality should leave more people with less of the overall distribution and (assuming self-interest) more supportive of redistributive measure which, given equal votes and interest representation, they could demand in a democratic regime. Conversely, area studies suggest that high levels of inequality reduce support as people become disillusioned with the system. Both arguments are examined in detail in section 2 of this chapter.

¹⁰⁸ Easton's model can be described on five levels of support which range from the very diffuse ('national identities' and 'core regime principles and values') to the most specific ('approval of incumbent office holders') (Norris, 2011: 23-31). The initial concept of democratic support included three factors: (1) support for the political community, (2) Support for democracy as a form of government, and (3) Evaluation of the current performance of the regime.

In a study from 2014, Kriekhaus et al. use World Value Survey data and the Gini coefficient to test the relation between inequality and support for democracy. At macro-level, their study finds a significant negative correlation, showing that people, on average, report less support for democracy, in more unequal countries (see figure 3.1, below).

Figure 3.1: Correlation between the country Gini coefficient and country-mean of support for democracy. 57 country-periods¹⁰⁹



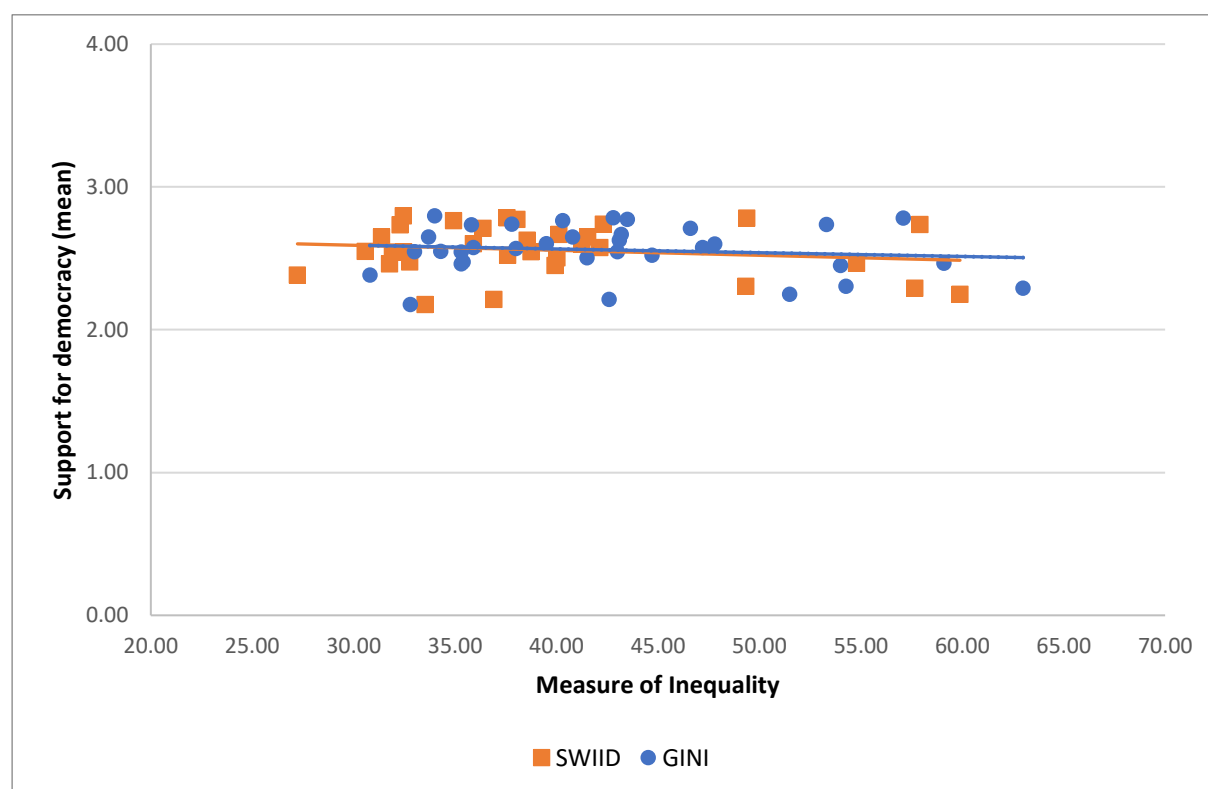
However, little research exists for Africa.¹¹⁰ Using aggregate country-scores for 34 African countries from the Afrobarometer round 7 survey (Afrobarometer, 2018, 2019), I find no correlation between national inequality (Gini ($r(32) = -0.125$, $p > 0.05$; and Standardized World Income Inequality Database (SWIID) ($r(30) = -0.176$, $p > 0.05$)) and mean support for democracy per country.¹¹¹ As figure 3.2 displays, support for democracy appears unrelated to levels of inequality.

¹⁰⁹ Taken from Kriekhaus et al. (2014: 146).

¹¹⁰ Often, large n studies will include South Africa and Nigeria as African cases. However, the 'African-ness' of these cases versus other cases, i.e. the question of whether specific circumstances and causal mechanisms can be found in these cases that are different to non-African cases, is not explored. One of the few cross-country studies exploring variations of inequality in Africa is Beegle et al. (2016: 118f).

¹¹¹ Some debate exists as to the value and reliability of aggregating individual level data to meso or macro levels. This is referred to as the micro –macro problem. See Alexander & Giesen (1987), Ritzer (1990) and Layder (2006).

Figure 3.2: Correlation between economic inequality and country-mean of support for democracy in 34 countries¹¹²



This lack of correlation for African cases, may be because, unlike other regions of the world, attitudes towards democracy are not tied to levels of inequality in Africa. However, previous rounds of Afrobarometer surveys asked respondents what the most essential characteristic of a democracy was to them. The results clearly showed that notions of equality and egalitarianism were connected to the term democracy in the minds of ordinary Africans.¹¹³

In this chapter I explore the role of perceived inequality on regime support. Previous research has shown that ordinary people are often unaware of the level of inequality in their country or misjudge how they personally fit within national income or wealth distributions (Kuhn, 2011, 2019; Norton & Ariely, 2011; Chambers et al., 2014; Niehues, 2014; Gimpelson & Treisman, 2018). Their subjective perception of inequality may not correspond with the country's Gini coefficient, which may explain the null-result described above (figure 3.2). As such there may not be a significant correlation because subjective perceived inequality is different from objective measured inequality. My research question is therefore whether people's perception of lived inequality shapes popular support and demand for democracy.

¹¹² I use the Afrobarometer Round 7 data here, collected between 2016- 2018. I then use the Gini coefficient and SWIID Gini coefficient closest to the date of the Afrobarometer fieldwork in each respective country.

¹¹³ See appendix 1 of chapter 3.

1.2 Hypotheses

Drawing from the existing literature there is little to go by as to what effect one might expect that perceived inequality has on support and demand for democracy. As noted above, the extensive literature on objective levels of inequality and support for democracy would suggest that high levels of inequality should produce either more support for democracy as a means to achieve redistribution, or, conversely, produce disillusionment and thus less support. The former approach reflects the political economy literature and would expect that:

H1: Feelings of relative deprivation increases support for democracy

And:

H2: Feelings of relative deprivation increase demand for democracy

This approach is prospective in that citizens want (more) democracy as a means to redistribute and transfer wealth and income, which they, as the majority, would be able to achieve in democratic rule. Conversely, the area and survey studies assume people are retrospective in their assessment of democracy. This approach would expect that high inequality causes disillusionment with citizens who thus support democracy less. This literature would thus expect:

H3: Feelings of relative deprivation reduce support for democracy

And:

H4: Feelings of relative deprivation reduce demand for democracy

It is difficult to argue which approach is likely to hold true in the context of Africa. Past research on support for democracy has found that ordinary citizens evaluate democracy for what it does – suggesting they are retrospective. Conversely, many democratic regimes in Africa are non-consolidated. High levels of inequality may therefore not be seen as a product of democracy, but of the current 'in-between' regime and subsequently increase support for democracy.

1.3 Chapter structure

This chapter progresses as follows. In the next section I present and discuss the existing literature on political support and the effects of economic inequality on attitudes towards democracy. I

provide an overview of the new and fairly small literature on the role of perceptions of inequality in this context. Against this background, I then turn to introducing my predictor and dependent variables as well as presenting some descriptive statistics on these variables. In section 4 I test the explanatory model, which is a multi-level model analysis. I find a significant positive effect of perceived lived inequality on support for democracy and demand for democracy, respectively. This means that feeling equal to others increases support and demand for democracy, while feeling more unequal reduces support and demand. This effect is significant above and beyond the effect of trust in the rulers, economic performance, political freedoms and sociodemographic traits. My results confirm that the effect of perceived equality is linear, meaning that both superior and inferior relative perceptions reduce support and demand for democracy. I find no significant effect of national inequality measured per Gini coefficient, but find that higher national inequality measured as the national poverty dispersion is a significant predictor of less support and demand for democracy. The results thus suggest that Africans are retrospective in their regime support, rather than prospective.

2. Literature review

In this section I overview the concept of political support (section 2.1), discuss causes of support for democracy (2.2) and review the literature linking objective (2.3) and subjective economic inequality with support for democracy (2.4).

2.1 Conceptualizing political support

As discussed in the introduction chapter of this thesis, the concept of political support or systems support offers a framework by which we are able to disaggregate our analysis of the linkage between economic inequality and democracy. As Mishler and Rose state, "stable or increasing levels of support facilitate stable democracy, whereas declining levels of support undermine democracy and threaten its collapse" (Mishler & Rose, 1999: 78). The question therefore arises whether perceptions of economic inequality shape political support.

The concept of political support describes the dimensions by which we can understand how people support various political actors or entities. Following Easton (1965, 1975) and Norris (1999, 2011) we can think of political support as ranging (on a continuum) from diffuse to specific support (see table 3.1 below). As Easton proposes, diffuse support relates to the basic aspects of the system, such as the political community and fundamental regime values and principles, while more specific support refers to valuations and attitudes towards specific institutions or incumbents.

Table 3.1: Conceptualization of political support

 Diffuse Support ↑ ↓ Specific Support	<i>Level of Analysis</i>	<i>Affective Orientations</i>	<i>Evaluations</i>
	Political Community	National Pride Sense of national identity	Best nation to live in
	Regime: Principles	Democratic values	Democracy best for of government
	Regime: Performance	Participatory norms Political rights	Evaluation of rights Satisfaction with democratic process
	Regime: Institutions	Institutional expectations Support party government Output expectations	Performance judgements Trust in institutions Trust in party system Trust bureaucracy
	Authorities	Identify with party	Candidate evaluations Party support

Adapted from Norris (1999, 2011)

In this chapter, I focus on regime principles, which is a diffuse form of support.¹¹⁴ As Norris (1999: 16) notes, support for the fundamental regime values and principles reflects the “perceived moral legitimacy of the government – i.e. whether it is seen as authorized to exercise power”. These regime values and principles represent beliefs about the constitutional arrangements as well as both formal and informal rules of the regime (Norris, 2011, 26). Beyond the support for fundamental democratic values, support for regime principles can also be assessed by focussing on people's evaluations (Easton, 1965; Dalton, 1999; Norris, 2011). In regard to democratic regimes, past (survey) research has used people's evaluations about the primacy of democracy over alternative regimes as the best form of government (Norris, 2011).

In the past it has been argued that diffuse system support is fundamentally more important for the stability and longevity of a regime than specific forms of support. As Easton and others suggest, regimes rely on a ‘reservoir’ of diffuse support to function and survive long-term but can tolerate periods of lack of specific support (Easton, 1965; 1975; Dalton, 1999). For example, a president may fall out of favour with the electorate, but that likely doesn't mean that people question the political system even the country as a whole. This reservoir of diffuse support is moreover important to allow for the smooth functioning of the regime, beyond the incumbent government. Diffuse support can thus be understood as ‘upfront’ approval, which allows regimes to function without seeking constant approval from ordinary people.

¹¹⁴ I discuss the operationalization of support for regime principles in section 3 of this chapter.

2.2 What explains political support for democracy?

A number of approaches found in the literature help explain people to be more or less supportive of democracy as a regime type (Norris, 1999:217ff). Performance approaches argue that people do not hold stable and consistent approval of government, but rather base their support on performance evaluations, especially economic performance. Beliefs and experiences, such as satisfaction with effectiveness of government and the representation of individuals' interests as well as economic evaluations at both the individual and national level, have been shown to influence how supportive people are of democracy (Norris, 1999: 217ff; see also: Kitschelt, 1992; Evans & Whitefield, 1995; Diamond, 1999). But cultural approaches argue that people will support a system if it mirrors the dominant cognitive and cultural orientations within society (Verba & Almond, 1963; Inglehart, 1977, 1997, 1999). Later studies emphasized the functioning of political institutions in shaping support for democracy (Anderson & Guillory, 1997), such as by addressing corruption or ensuring accountability (Anderson & Tverdova, 2003). Lastly, institutional theories argue that the institutional design, as defined in the constitution, influences how people experience a system over time. In particular, strong traditions of civil liberties, inclusive party systems and electoral systems which do not consistently produce sentiments of 'winning' and 'losing' among the same groups, increase support for democracy (Evans & Whitefield, 1995; Rose et al., 1998).

Studies undertaken in the African context suggest evidence of both the institutional and performance explanation, or as Bratton and Mattes (2001) describe it, support 'for what [...] [democracy] is', such as civil rights and political procedures and 'what it does', such as economic performance and service delivery (Finkel, 2002; Bratton & Houessou, 2014; Mattes & Bratton, 2016).

2.3 Inequality and support for democracy

Previous work on how inequality affects attitudes towards democracy uses national-level or group-level objective inequality measures. By objective inequality measures, I mean the quantifiable difference or ratios between individuals or groups, such as the Gini coefficient or the Palma ratio. To understand the current state of knowledge, it is important to first briefly reflect on this literature before introducing the notion of a perceptual measure of inequality.

Broadly, two schools of thought exist on the linkage between objective levels of inequality and democratic support: first, the political economy theories; and second, the survey and area studies theories. The political economy approach argues that because inequality is fundamentally an issue of distribution, popular support for democracy should increase under greater inequality. Political economic approaches assume that humans are rational and

motivated to maximize their economic situation (Krieckhaus et al., 2014: 141). Moreover, political economy approaches assume that respondents are prospective in their support for democracy, rather than retrospective. The political economy approach stems from the democratization literature; hence people have to be prospective as they have no democratic experience with which to compare or report on (which would be necessary for a retrospective perspective).

The political economy approaches are largely grounded in democratic transition research. This literature suggests distributive conflict models explain why some regimes transition from authoritarian rule to democratic rule (and back), and others don't. In essence, the distributive conflict literature argues that different levels of inequality produce different costs and benefits for either cooperation and repression for both the (numerically small) elites and the (numerically large) non-elites (Haggard & Kaufman, 2012). Based on the seminal Meltzer-Richard model (1981), higher income inequality increases the potential gains from redistribution and transfer programs for the non-elites and increases the net costs of conceding to popular demands for the elites. Because of this incongruence of costs and benefits among those in power and those who are not, distributive conflict models predict that democratic transitions fail under conditions of high inequality. Conversely, redistributive demands are more easily met in conditions of low or moderate inequality as cost and gains for both 'sides' are less divergent (Haggard & Kaufman, 2012). Boix (2003), for example suggests that an individual's attitudinal response to inequality depends on the individuals' personal absolute situation. Boix argues that assuming all citizens to be equal and widely poor (and thus sociotropic) is wrong. Rather, he emphasizes individual level factors such as class and generally 'different types of individuals' (Boix, 2003: 19). People are expected to not behave uniformly but to consider their own personal situation and behave in an egocentric way. Rich individuals are expected to support democracy less, while poor individuals are expected to support democracy more. This is because the rich expect democracy to enable the poor majority to push for redistribution or favor policy which mitigates the differences between the 'rich' and the 'poor'. Conversely, the 'poor' are expected to support democracy more, for the exact same reasons (Rueschemeyer et al., 1992). This approach therefore views:

"authoritarian rule as an institutional means through which unequal class or group relations are sustained by limiting the franchise and the ability of social groups to organize. The rise and fall of democratic rule thus reflect deeper conflicts between elites and masses over the distribution of wealth and income" (Haggard & Kaufman, 2012: 495).

Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) concur with Boix (2003) that in highly unequal societies the poor majority "support democratization because in all future policy struggles it gives them a tool to advance their material interests vis-à-vis the wealthy" (Krieckhaus et al., 2014: 141). As

democracy gives the poor (de jure) relatively more power than non-democracy does, support for democracy is expected to rise as inequality increases. In more unequal conditions, the benefit of 'using democracy as a redistributive mechanism' (Krieckhaus et al., 2014: 142) increases, making people living in more unequal countries more supportive of democracy. However, as Krieckhaus et al. (2014) argue, this does not necessarily mean that they should be seen as egocentric. Krieckhaus et al. point to the fact the Acemoglu and Robinson treat 'all citizens' as poor (as the 'rich' are such a small group they are unlikely to be sampled). Krieckhaus et al. (2014: 141) argue that:

"[a]ssuming for the moment that all "citizens" are poor, this theoretical frame work is analogous to the sociotropic approach in economic voting. Since all "citizens" view high inequality as a bad outcome, they do not take into account their personal socioeconomic position when thinking about inequality but instead uniformly evaluate national inequality statistics."

However, unlike Boix (2003), Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) argue that low levels of inequality should also produce less demand for redistribution and thus for democratization. Despite being politically excluded (under authoritarian rule), the poor are included in the distribution of societal income. This results in the expectation that the relation between inequality and democratization would resemble an inverted U-shape pattern, making transitions most likely at intermediate levels of inequality.

While Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) and Boix (2003) view individuals as prospective, the survey and area study literature is based on the assumption of retrospective citizens. Survey and area studies' literature suggests that economic inequality causes disillusionment with democratic politics, causing decreasing democratic support (Karl, 2000). This approach emphasizes the role of past experiences and performance, making the approach inherently retrospective. The retrospective perspective predicts that all citizens will support democracy less, when faced with high inequality, as the negative outcome (inequality) is attributed to democracy or democracy is perceived to be unable to solve this issue. As Dahl (1973: 103) argues, "democracy's inability to address persistent economic inequalities leads to resentments and frustrations which weaken allegiance to the regime". Much of this literature assumes performance perceptions are unmoderated by personal situation and experiences, and evaluations are assumed to be the same across classes and cleavages. An example, which this approach often points to is Latin America. There, to many, democracy has become associated with the elites overstepping rules and laws, and with bribery and corruption, and thus reducing support for democracy among the poor (Karl, 2000: 155). Given that survey and area studies assume retrospective assessments, it is unclear how citizens in non-democratic countries would be able to support democracy. This retrospective approach moreover provides little in the way of accounting for why citizens in non-democratic regimes push for

democratic reforms and democratization. Especially in the political history of African states, this limitation proves a barrier to testing the hypotheses associated with the approach of survey and area studies.

Analogously to Boix's (2003) criticism regarding the political economy approach, some emphasize the role of egocentric retrospective concerns over sociotropic concerns outlined above. From this standpoint, it would be rational for the rich to support democracy more in highly unequal cases, as from their perspective democracy has performed well. Conversely, however, the poor are likely to support democracy less, as from their perspective democracy has not performed well and has produced an undesirable outcome. Again, such expectations work only for cases in which the 'given system' that has produced the levels of inequality, is democratic.

So far, we have reflected upon arguments that link inequality and support for democracy. However, research has also argued that there may be an effect of inequality on support for authoritarianism among the non-elites.

Solt (2012) argues that high levels of inequality produce support for authoritarianism because the experience of hierarchical relations in highly unequal societies leads to greater respect for authority. Solt derives this argument from the relative power theory which states that inequality of economic resources leads to inequality of power (Solt, 2008). Solt (2012) uses the example of the marketplace to reflect economic exchange and activity among different classes. He argues that in unequal societies (and thus marketplaces), the poor are highly exposed to subservient positions, more dependent upon employers, excluded from certain goods and products which are solely available to the rich, and generally experience market relations characterized by 'obedience and deference' (Solt 2012: 704). Solt argues that

"experiences with authority in the economic sphere should be expected to affect people's attitudes toward authority more generally. As economic inequality increases, people are more and more trained by the market to expect command and obedience, and these lessons are then applied in other settings as well."

Insecurity theory, on the other hand, argues that inequality should increase support for authoritarianism among the poor and reduce support for authoritarianism among the rich. As the poor experience (or fear the prospect of) more insecurity in more unequal societies, they turn to traditional authority to provide stability and safety. As Solt (2012: 704) summarizes:

"The psychologically damaging effects of feared or actual deprivation and social isolation are countered by clinging to the refuge of unquestioning obedience to authority: one cannot be faulted, much less stigmatized, if one 'plays by the rules' laid down by traditional authorities. "

By the same logic, the rich would have less demand for stability and safety provided by an authority, as they experience both absolutely and relatively less insecurity than the poor in more unequal societies.

2.4 Perceptions of inequality and support for democracy

The extensive literature linking inequality and regime type and regime transitions uses objective measures of inequality. Such measures, however, provide no account of whether the people or groups that are being compared are aware of said differences or ratios. Indeed, to the contrary, evidence suggests that people are generally inaccurate at assessing their relative position within a distribution, and have a weak grasp of numerical constructs and information such as national levels of inequality, income brackets and top incomes (Kaltenhaler et al., 2008; Norton & Ariely, 2011; Eriksson & Simpson, 2012; Tverdova, 2012; Cruces et al., 2013; Loveless, 2013, 2016; McCall, 2013; Chambers et al., 2014; Engelhardt & Wagener, 2014; Niehues, 2014; Bartels, 2016; Gimpelson & Treisman, 2018). Past research suggested that objective and subjective levels of inequality are only loosely associated, if that (Loveless & Whitefield, 2011; Loveless, 2013; Binelli & Loveless, 2016). The problems associated with using objective measures of inequality are summarized by Gimpelson and Treisman (2018: 28), who note:

“theories [...] assume key actors accurately perceive the degree of income inequality. Yet, given how hard it is to estimate distributions of income and property – for skilled professionals, let alone statistically unsophisticated citizens – this assumption is implausible. People may not respond to inequality as posited because, quite simply, they do not know its level. (Gimpelson & Treisman, 2018: 30).”

Recent research has suggested, for example, that US Americans underestimated wealth inequality (Norton & Ariely, 2011) but overestimated the increase in income inequality since 1960 (Chambers et al., 2014; Bartels, 2016). Gimpelson and Treisman (2018) use ISSP survey data from 40 countries to explore how accurate respondents are in assessing levels of inequality in their country.¹¹⁵ Respondents also widely misestimated the average earnings of different professions and grossly underestimated the income gap between low-paid occupations and corporate executives. Gimpelson and Treisman (2018) moreover found that the poor tend to overestimate their relative position, while the rich tend to underestimate their relative position. Individuals also appear to be unclear regarding their own position within the national income distribution. In a survey experiment in Argentina, perceived placement within the national

¹¹⁵ In the ISSP survey no reference is made as to what type of inequality is asked for. However, as Gimpelson & Treisman (2018) point out, the previous questions in the survey asked about pay and earnings, which likely primed respondents in their responses.

income distribution was correlated to respondents' position in the local income distribution (Cruces et al., 2013).

To the best of my knowledge, no study exists exploring the causal linkage between perceived inequality and political support in Africa. In Africa, economic inequality has been linked to populism, especially in regard to anti-elite rhetoric during election campaigns. As Resnick (2017) points out, such divisive rhetoric fuels grievances and emphasizes cleavages which feeds of underlying inequalities in particular where strong urban – rural inequalities already exist in a country. This study attempts to shed light on the effect of perceived inequality on support for democracy.

3. Data, methodology and variables

I use Afrobarometer survey data (Round 7) for my statistical analysis in this chapter.¹¹⁶ This data was collected between September 2016 and September 2018 in 34 African countries (N= 45811).¹¹⁷ The survey was conducted face-to-face, in the respondent's choice of language in a nationally representative sample. Country samples range from 1193 (Guinea) to 2400 (Tanzania, Ghana).

A problem with using cross-national data is that important country level factors may be lost. This is because the entered data likely suffers from autocorrelation and fails the assumption of independence of errors due to observations at the individual level being nested in country units (Albright & Marinova, 2015). Entering cross-country data may thus produce invalid significant results as the standard error is underestimated, or fail to capture significant country factors as variance between countries cancels factors out. Due to this clustering of data within country units, I use multilevel modeling (MLM) with level 1 analysis at the individual level and level 2 analysis at the national level (confirmed by testing the interclass correlation coefficient). Due to the structure of my data at both levels (large n at level 1 and small n at level 2) ¹¹⁸ , I use

¹¹⁶ To access data used in this chapter see: Afrobarometer (2019). For the survey codebook see Afrobarometer (2020a). For information on the sampling methodology, see: Afrobarometer (2020b).

¹¹⁷ My dataset includes the following countries: Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, eSwatini, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

¹¹⁸ In my data, the n at level 2 (country) is relatively small (N=33), compared to the n (N>45000) at level 1 (individual). Ideally, data used in an MLM analysis is structured with a large n at level 2 and a small n at level 1. A possible problem arising from my data could be the overestimation of effect size due to limited case number at level 2. Data with low case numbers at level 2 tend to yield overly small effect sizes when using the random slope model. As such, I test only random intercept models.

Restricted maximum likelihood (REML) estimation, which is advised to be used when the case number at level two is small. For both dependent variables the estimates of covariance parameters were significant at the 1% level.¹¹⁹

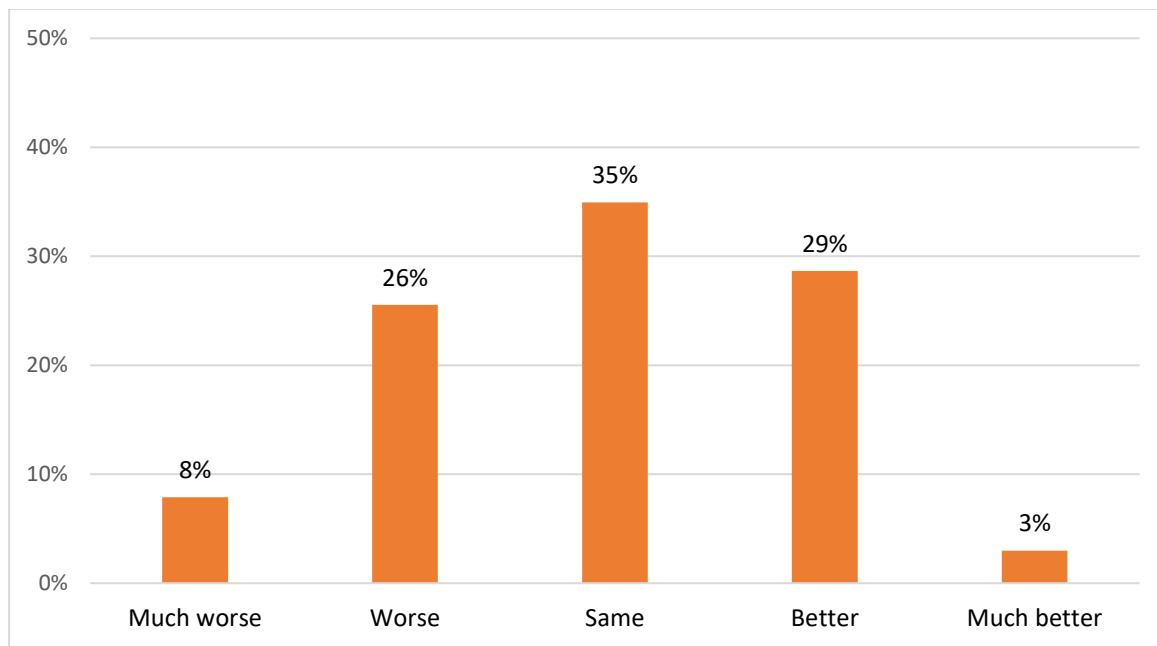
3.1 How do I measure perceptions of individual inequality?

I use an Afrobarometer survey question which asks respondents how they feel their living conditions compares to others. Throughout this thesis I use the terms 'living conditions' (as it reads in the question text) and 'living situation' interchangeably. In this thesis I refer to this question as *subjective* relative living situation or *perceived* relative living situation. Substantive responses are 'much worse' (1), 'worse, same, better, much better' (5). Responses were read out to respondents but no references as to who 'others' are or what exactly 'living situation' entails, are given in the questionnaire.¹²⁰ As discussed in the introduction, people most strongly associate individual material experiences of material deprivation with this question, suggesting that indeed the variable taps into notions of material inequality, and not immaterial inequality.

To test the effect of relative situation I compute four dummy variables by coding the variable described above into four dichotomous variables. For each variable I code 'much better', 'better', 'worse', 'much worse' as 1, respectively, and all other categories as 0. I do not include a dummy for the 'equal' category, in effect making it a reference category as all other categories are controlled for through the dummy variables.

¹¹⁹ To further confirm the necessity for an MLM approach, I calculated the interclass correlation coefficient for each dependent variable. For both dependent variables (and for both estimation methods) the intraclass correlation coefficient met the minimum threshold of 0.05. Support for democracy meets the threshold, just (0.053) and demand for democracy meets the threshold comfortably (0.105).

¹²⁰ I give a more detailed exploration and descriptive analysis of this variable in chapter 2 of this thesis. This variable has been used in the past to measure perceived equality, such as by Langer et al. (2015), who used the variables to construct a social cohesion index. A similar question was asked in Round 3 of the Afrobarometer, asking respondents to assess the economic situation of their ethnic group to other ethnic groups. This question was then used in a study by Langer and Mikami (2013) to explore why perceived economic group differences differed from objective group differences.

Figure 3.3: Perceived lived equality. N=44287. Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)¹²¹

My sample of 34 countries shows one in three feels equal to others in living situation (35%). Slightly more than half say their living situation is different (better or worse) compared to others (54%), and only 1 in ten feels very unequal compared to others (11%). However, large country differences underlie these numbers (see appendix 3 of chapter 3). While 60% of Mauritians and 57% of Malagasy feel 'the same', only 14% of Malawians and 17% of Ugandans do. At regional level, North Africans (51%) are most common to feel equal, followed by Central Africans (43%). Conversely, East Africans are on average least common to say they feel 'the same' (28%) (see appendix 4 of chapter 3).

3.2 Dependent variables

Following Norris' five-level conceptualization of political support, I treat support for democracy as a regime in principle on the one hand, and the functioning of said regime in practice on the other hand, as two distinct objects of supports. In this chapter I focus on support for democracy as a regime in principle, while I focus on satisfaction with the functioning of a regime in practice in the following chapter.

¹²¹ N=44287. The percentages displayed here are the share of people who gave a valid response. Of the total sample (N=45811), 65 people refused to answer the question and 1459 (3,2%) said 'don't know'. See chapter 2 for a discussion of this variable.

3.2.1 Support for democracy (as a regime type)

Support for democracy is captured using an Afrobarometer survey item that asks respondents whether democracy is preferable to any other kind of government, whether alternatives are sometimes preferable or whether the regime type does not matter. Respondents were asked:

Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion?

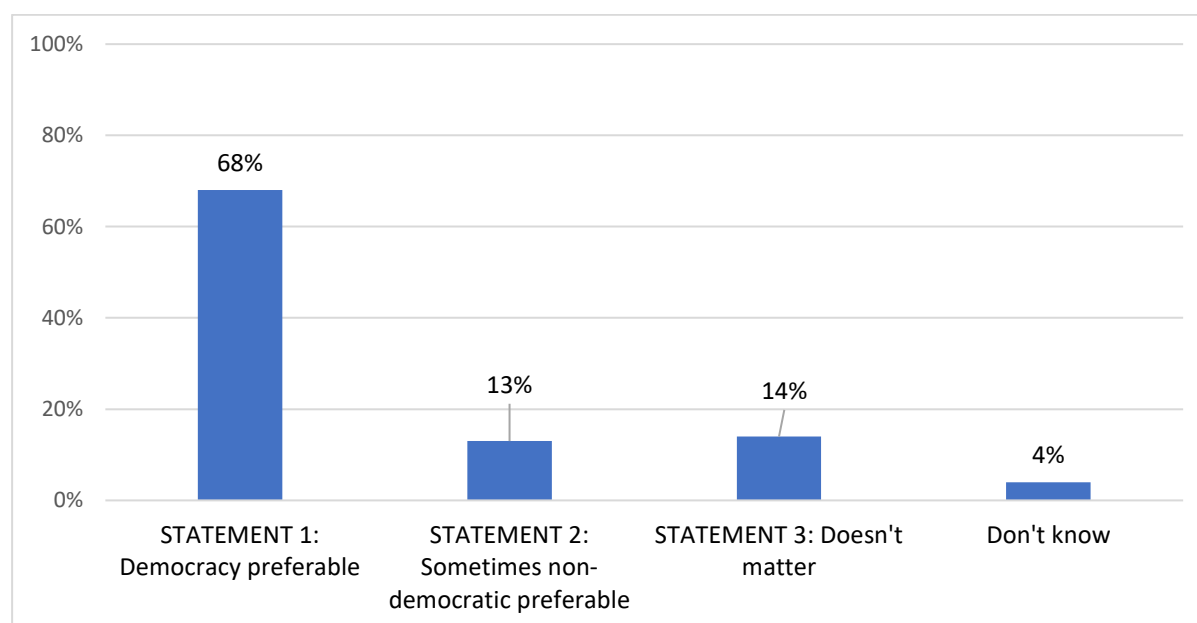
Statement 1: Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government.

Statement 2: In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable.

Statement 3: For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have.

Seven in ten respondents across the sample said that democracy was preferable to any other regime type (68%) (see figure 3.4 below). However, this figure hides variation between countries (see appendix 5 of chapter 3). While more than 8 in ten respondents in Sierra Leone (84%), Senegal (82%), Zambia (81%), Ghana (81%) and Uganda (81%) support democracy in this way, less than half do so in Madagascar (47%), Tunisia (46%) and eSwatini (43%). On average, 13% felt that 'sometimes' a non-democratic regime was preferable, and a similar number felt that it 'doesn't matter' (14%). However, again, these numbers disguise variation. For example, in countries such as Tunisia (29%), Madagascar (28%) and South Africa (25%) a considerable minority reported that the regime type doesn't matter. Grouped by region, support for democracy was highest in East Africa (75%) and West Africa (74%), and lowest in North Africa (62%) (see appendix 6 of chapter 3). In North Africa, respondents were most likely to feel that the regime type didn't matter (20%).

Figure 3.4: Frequency distribution of support for democracy. N=45810. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)



This question queries support for democracy as a regime type in general and does not make reference to the respondents' country. One of the challenges to cross-national studies on democratic support, is that 'democracy' can mean different things to different people. This is true both for the researchers who apply various definitions and thus measurements of democracy, but also for ordinary people who may harbor context-sensitive and diverse connotations with the term democracy. In comparative studies in particular, the ambiguity of the term may result in limited validity across a large number of people, especially across culturally diverse countries. In the Afrobarometer questionnaire in Round 7 the interviewer was unable to query whether support for 'democracy' means support for a specific aspect or definition of democracy, or what democracy means to the individual.¹²² Another weakness of the Afrobarometer data are that the term 'democracy' is read out in English, French or Portuguese and only translated into a local language if the respondent does not understand the original term. Unfortunately, no recordings are made of how often the interviewer is

¹²² In earlier survey rounds, Afrobarometer asked respondents what the most essential characteristic of democracy was to them. The survey included two questions using the same question text with four response categories, each. In the first question, respondents most commonly said that to them the most essential characteristic of democracy was that people chose government leaders in free and fair elections (33%), followed by government narrowing the gap between the rich and the poor (25%) and freedom of expression (22%). In the second question, respondents most commonly said that government ensuring job opportunities for all (36%) was the most essential characteristic of democracy, followed by government ensuring law and order (24%). Multiparty competition and media freedom was mentioned by 18% and 17%, respectively. Importantly, the percentage cannot be compared across questions. Also, it must be considered that respondents were presented a closed question format, making it impossible to ascertain what they would have said without the given response categories.

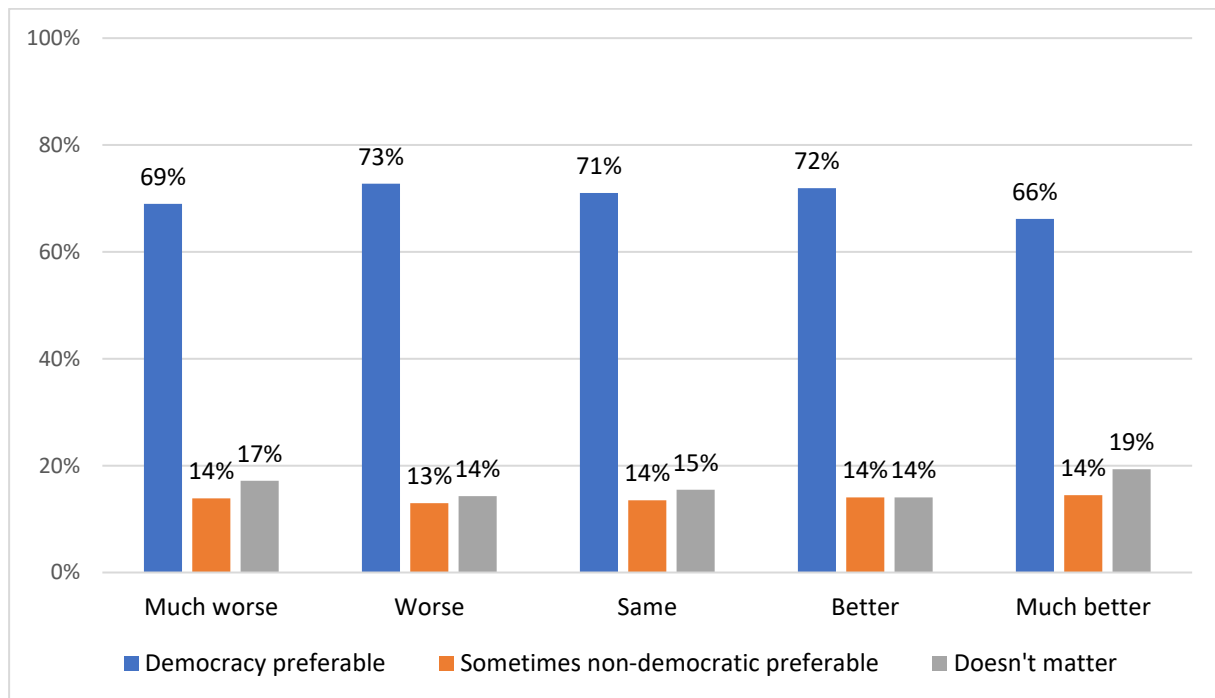
required to do so and whether the interviewer was able to use a single local-language term or had to describe democracy to the respondent. However, the Afrobarometer survey does allow interviewers to record questions which they feel the respondents 'had problems answering' (Q109 in Round 7). 59 interviewers noted that respondents had issues regarding 'questions about democracy', without making references to specific questions, while 167 specifically name question 28 (Support for democracy). Moreover, 99 respondents refused to answer the question.¹²³ Just over 4% of the sample said they 'don't know' (n=970), although no further details are available as to what exactly respondents may be referring to or whether the question was not understood. Respondents without any formal education (7%) or with primary schooling only (6%) are considerably more likely to say they 'don't know' than those with secondary (2%) or post-secondary (1%) education. This may suggest that the question is not understood by those lacking education or that the subject is not understood.

Bivariate results

Figure 3.5 , below, displays the frequencies of the support for democracy variable, grouped by people's perception of their relative living situation. The results suggest that people across all groups a majority say they prefer democracy to any other kind of government. Hereby, people who feel equal to others do not appear more or less supportive of democracy compared to other groups. In fact, people who say they are much better off than others are slightly less common to say that democracy than all other groups. However, from the frequencies it does not appear that people's perceived relative living situation is linked to people voicing support for non-democratic regime forms. In fact, the share of respondents who say that "in some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable" is comparable across the five groups. Rather, it appears that people who are least common to say that democracy is always preferable (those who say they feel much better off than others) are more likely to say that "for someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have".

¹²³ It should be noted that those who refused to answer are likely those who were later recorded to have had problems answering question 28, or generally questions about democracy.

Figure 3.5: Support for democracy by perceived relative living situation. N=45810. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)



3.2.2 Demand for democracy

In survey studies, some uncertainty surrounds what exactly ordinary people mean by 'democracy' when they voice support for it. Critics such as Schedler and Sarsfield (2007) have argued that the commonly used measure of 'support for democracy' lacks reference to concrete attributes of democracy. The authors also point to widely held "vacuous conceptions of democracy" (Schedler & Sarsfield, 2007: 639) which make the use of 'support for democracy' of questionable reliability as it is unclear what, if anything, 'democracy' means to the respondents. This is further compounded by the normative nature of democratic rule. Widely held support for democracy in survey studies around the world may lack reliability due to interviewer effects which make it unclear whether reported support for democracy reflects actual views and attitudes of the respondent, or simply reflects the "'almost universal' practice of [...] 'paying lip service to democracy'" (Inglehart, 2003:51). Lastly, it is also unclear from measuring only support for democracy whether respondents may support democracy and hold "conflicting values" (Schedler & Sarsfield, 2007: 639). Rather, as Bratton and Mattes (2001: 457) state, support for democracy is best queried in "concrete terms and in the form of comparisons with plausible alternatives".¹²⁴

¹²⁴ See also Norris (1999), Dalton (2004).

In survey studies, including 'plausible alternatives' is referred to as measuring 'authentic democratic support'.¹²⁵ The premise of this measure is that democratic and non-democratic norms and ideals are inherently incompatible. Thus, someone who prefers democracy but can still accept or see merit in non-democratic forms of governance, may display normative and practical support for democracy, but not authentic support. Only if a person supports democracy practically and rejects non-democratic alternatives does someone report authentic support.¹²⁶ Afrobarometer uses a constructed index called 'demand for democracy' to tap authentic support for democracy. Demand for democracy captures whether someone voices support for democracy as a regime type and rejects non-democratic alternatives, such as one-man, military or one-party rule. The item is made up of the 'support for democracy' variable, described previously, as well as three variables which probe support for alternative regimes forms. Specifically, respondents are asked:

There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives?

- Only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office?
- The army comes in to govern the country?
- Elections and Parliament are abolished so that the president can decide everything?

Respondents are then categorized by whether they 'strongly disapprove' or 'disapprove' such alternatives on the one hand, or 'approve', 'strongly approve' or 'neither approve nor disapprove' of alternatives on the other hand. The former category is awarded a score of '1' while the latter is awarded a score of '0'. Likewise, respondents who said that democracy as a regime type is preferable to them are scored as '1', while respondents who said that alternatives may be preferable, or the regime type doesn't matter are scored as '0'. Combining the two recoded variables produces a scale running from 0 to 4. Someone who is indifferent to or supportive of non-democratic alternatives would score low on this scale, while someone who supports a democratic regime and rejects other alternatives would score highly. Accordingly, '0' is coded as 'no demand for democracy', while '4' is coded as 'full demand'.¹²⁷

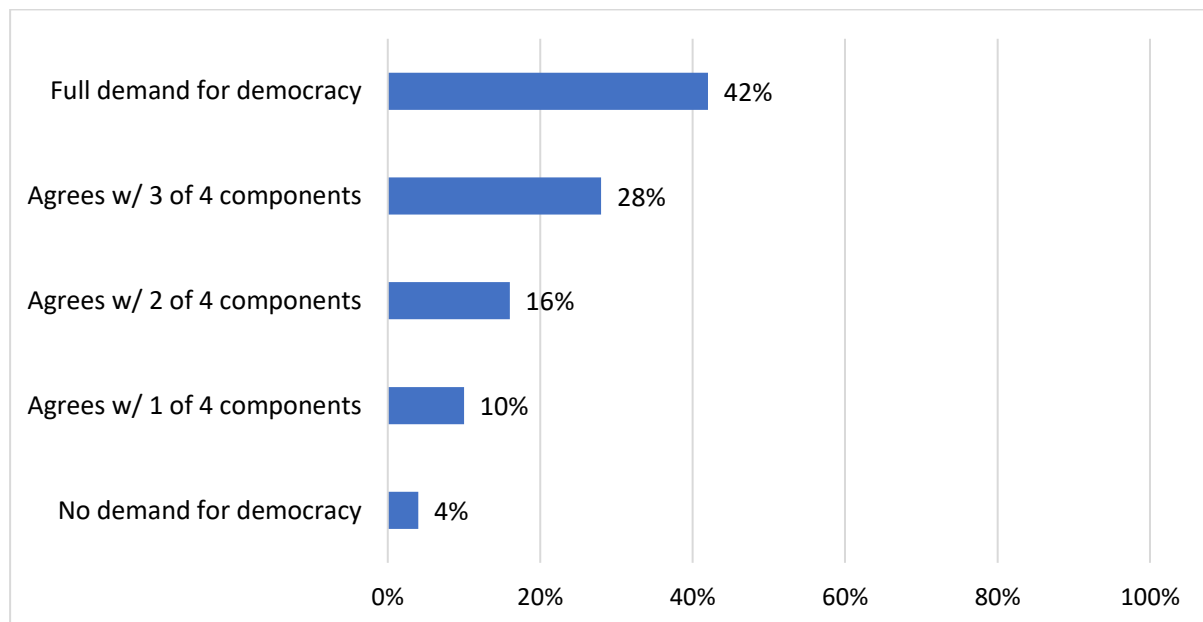
¹²⁵ Testing whether respondents prefer democracy as a regime type over other regime forms is typically referred to as the Churchill hypothesis in survey research (Rose et al., 1998).

¹²⁶ See also Bratton et al. (2005), Sin & Wells (2005).

¹²⁷ It can be argued that the variable used to measure support for democracy is an ordinal rather than interval level variable (as I use it). Rather than using a linear MLM model, this would require a generalized multilevel modelling approach (GMLM). A stronger case can be made that demand for democracy on a 5-point scale is continuous. Given that the two variables (support for democracy and demand for democracy) are both technically and conceptually related, the results for the later may be seen as more robust of a measure of people's attitudes towards democracy.

Across the sample of 33 countries, 42% of respondent scored full demand for democracy, while 28% scored 3 out of 4 components (see figure 3.6 below).¹²⁸ Across the sample, national mean demand for democracy varies significantly (see appendix 7 of chapter 3). While four in ten respondents in the sample report full demand for democracy (42%), this figure ranges from 67% among Mauritians and Zambians to only 17% among Tunisians and 19% among Basotho. On average, Africans are most rejecting of one-man rule, which 80% reject, followed by military rule (74%) and one-party rule (72%). But these numbers also hide large variation between countries. For example, only 39% of Liberians reject military rule and only 41% of Mozambicans reject one-man rule. These diverse results emphasize the need to treat the sample not as one, but to acknowledge the clustering by country that is apparent within the data.

Figure 3.6: Demand for democracy. N=44329. Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)



Grouped by geographical region, East Africans most widely report full demand for democracy (54%) and North Africans least often do (28%) (see appendix 8 of chapter 3). Comparing rejection for various alternatives within regions, West Africans most widely reject military rule – possibly a result of the experience of military rule post-independence in many of the region's countries – while East Africans most widely reject one-party rule (85%) and one-man rule (90%). Southern Africans are least opposed to military rule (67%) and most opposed to one-man rule, while North Africans are least opposed to one-party rule (58%) and equally opposed to military

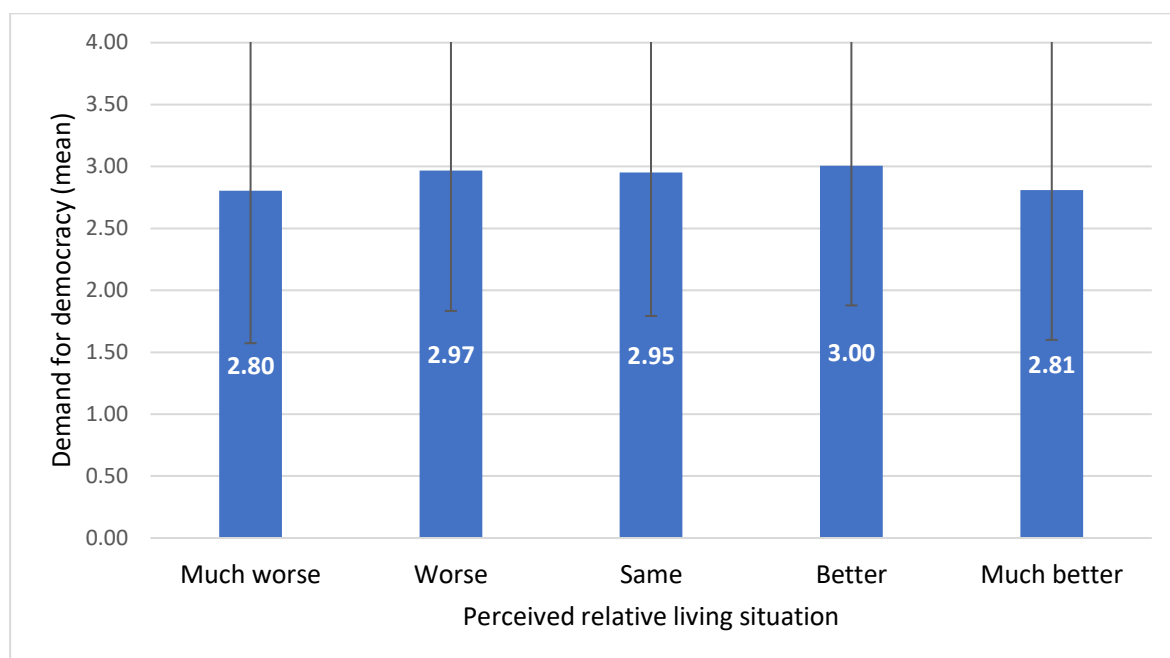
¹²⁸ Compared to support for democracy, demand for democracy cannot be computed for eSwatini, as the question of rejecting one-man rule was not asked in the country. The sample used to predict demand for democracy therefore comprises only 33 countries (N=44329).

(63%) and one-man rule (64%). In the central region, respondents least frequently opposed one-party rule (71%) and most strongly rejected one-man rule (83%).

Bivariate results

Looking at people's demand for democracy grouped by their perceived relative living situation (see figure 3.7, below) shows that people who feel better off than others, worse off than others and equal to others report higher demand from democracy on average while people feelings of severe relative deprivation or advantage report lower levels of demand for democracy.¹²⁹

Figure 3.7: Mean demand with democracy (and standard deviation) by perceived relative situation. N=44329. Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)

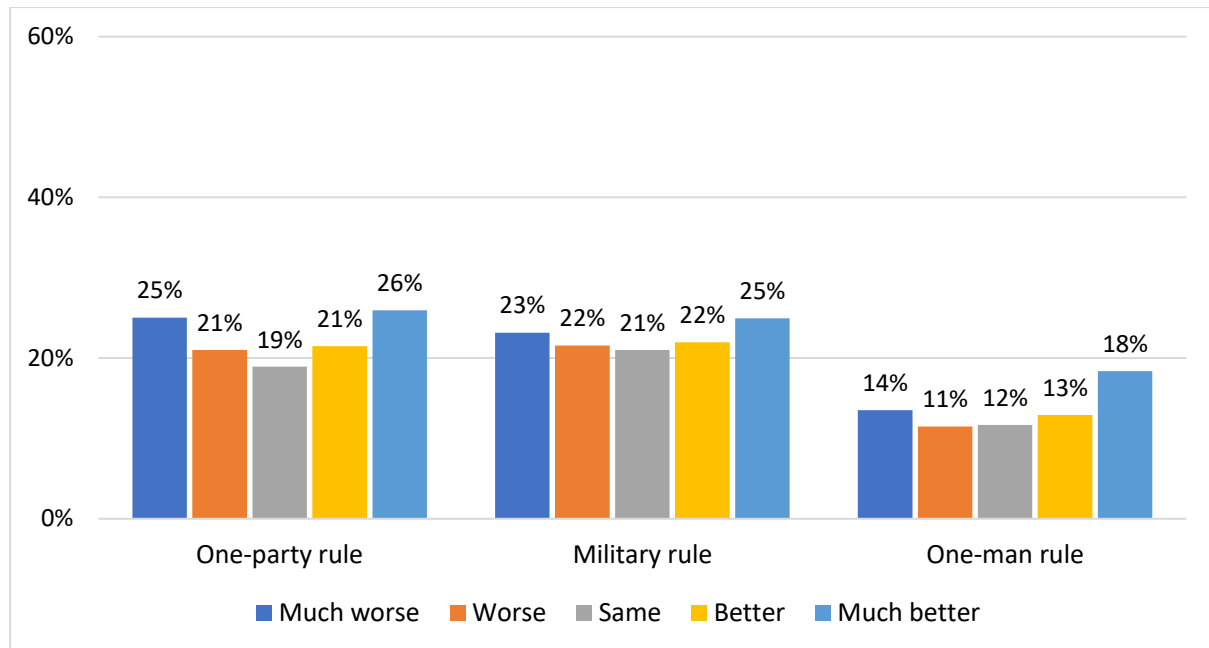


However, variance exists in how much people approve of different non-democratic regimes. As displayed in figure 3.8, below, differences in approval for non-democratic regime types vary more strongly across perceived relative living situation in regard to approval of one-party rule than for military rule. Respondents who feel much worse off than others (25%) or much better off than others (26%) are significantly more approving of one-party rule than respondents who feel equal (19%). By comparison, this difference is less pronounced in regard to approval of

¹²⁹ I discuss this variable in detail in Chapter 2 of this thesis. To recall, I use the terms 'living conditions' and 'living situation' interchangeably. I also refer to the variable as both 'perceived relative living situation' and 'subjective relative living situation' throughout this thesis.

military rule. The results for approval of one-man rule suggest yet a different pattern. Here, respondents who feel much better off than others are considerably more approving off one-man rule, than everyone else, who all report comparable levels of approval.

Figure 3.8: Approval of non-democratic regimes. By perceived relative living situation. 34/33 countries.¹³⁰ Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)



3.3 Control Variables

A number of factors are likely to influence how people perceive and relate to a political system. To capture the effect of peoples perceived relative living situation above and beyond the effect of such other variables, I include them as control variables. I include control variables at both the individual level (Level 1) and the country level (Level 2).

3.3.1 Absolute and relative poverty experiences

People may support democracy more or less, not because they think they are worse off than others, but because they actually are worse off than others. To control for the role of absolute poverty include two measures of absolute poverty. First, the Lived Poverty Index and, second, an Asset Index. The Lived Poverty Index is an additive index of five variables which query how often a respondent or anyone in their family has gone with basic commodities in the past

¹³⁰ The question on rejecting one-man rule was not asked in eSwatini.

year.¹³¹ The commodities are: enough food, enough water for personal consumption, medical services, enough cooking fuel and cash income. Responses range from 'never' having gone without to 'always'. The index is computed by adding a respondent's five responses. The scale of the additive index is recoded, and categories created running from 'no lived poverty' to 'high lived poverty'.¹³²

The Asset Index reflects how many non-elemental goods a respondent has access to or owns personally. The index reflects whether respondents say they have access to, or personally own: a radio, television, mobile phone, computer, motor vehicle and bank account.¹³³ The scores for the six items were added without any weighting and the resulting scale was not recoded. The scale runs from 0 (no access or personal ownership to any item) to 12 (personal ownership of all six items).¹³⁴ I also control for the respondent's objective relative situation. Arguably, people's reported absolute poverty level may also be drawn from comparative judgements by respondents. As such, people may be reporting how often they went without cash income (for example) based on their perception of how often a salient reference group or person went without income. I therefore calculate a score of objective relative poverty by computing the respondent's relative distance to the national LPI and Asset Index mean score (using the indices described above).

At country level, I control for both income inequality and country level development. To control for country level income inequality, I use the Gini coefficient which is arguably the most widely known and commonly used measure of inequality. To control for country-level development I

¹³¹ The questions ask: *Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough food to eat? Gone without enough clean water for home use? Gone without medicines or medical treatment? Gone without enough fuel to cook your food? Gone without a cash income?*

¹³² A factor analysis (extraction method: maximum likelihood) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.816). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.611 (5 items) and accounted for 52.22% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha of 0.768. I discuss the Lived Poverty Index in greater detail in Chapter 2 of this thesis. The Afrobarometer data are collected based on a clustered, stratified, multi-stage, area probability sample design and sampling is probability proportionate to population size at each stage (Afrobarometer, 2020). This means that the sample is designed to ensure that each (adult) citizen has the same chance of being selected within a given area. The survey is not designed to sample according to income or wealth distribution. By definition, a random selection proportionate to population size sampling design will under-sample those at the top of income or wealth distributions in more unequal countries or areas, as there are simply much, much fewer of them.

¹³³ The questions ask: *Which of these things do you or anyone in your household own? Radio, television, mobile phone, computer, motor vehicle and bank account?* A factor analysis (extraction method: maximum likelihood) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.803). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.659 (6 items) and accounted for 44.32% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha of 0.744.

¹³⁴ This index has been used in the past by Langer and Mikami (2013). In a study of perceived horizontal inequalities in Ghana, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Nigeria and Kenya, the authors use the same set of variables and a similar approach to recoding and call the variable an Asset Index. Langer and Mikami dichotomize the six items and compute an Asset Index ranging from 0 to 6.

use the Human Development index. The HDI is a multi-item index comprised of scores from dimension-indexes for life expectancy, education and per capita gross national income.

3.3.2 Democracy, for 'what it is': intrinsic explanations

From the literature on democratic support, we know that support is often tied to first, 'what a system stands for', meaning the benefits derived from its mere existence, and second, 'what it does', meaning the benefits and advantages a system can produce if it works well.¹³⁵ Previous research suggests that evaluations of democracy as a regime type are shaped by perceptions of civil freedoms and rights.¹³⁶ To account for such an effect, I include an index comprising variables which ask respondents to evaluate how often people in their country have to be careful what they say in public, which political organization they join and how they vote.¹³⁷ Moreover, I include a variable which queries how free and fair respondents felt the past national election was¹³⁸ and whether they feel (and if so how often) their ethnic group is discriminated against by government.¹³⁹ Political and personal freedoms are always to a large extent grounded in the laws of the country. At country level, I therefore include a control variable – the rule of law index – from the Varieties of Democracies Project which captures to what extent "laws transparently, independently, predictably, impartially, and equally enforced, and to what extent do the actions of government officials comply with the law?" (Coppedge et al., 2019: 266).¹⁴⁰

3.3.3 Democracy , for 'what it does': instrumental explanations

A different literature argues that support for democracy is mainly instrumental, and support is awarded by individuals for 'what democracy does' or does not do. I test this using two factor

¹³⁵ See Easton (1975), Evans and Whitefield (1995), Diamond (1999), Klingemann (1999), Norris (1999), Waldron-Moore (1999), Mattes (2016). For African cases, Mattes (2016) provides the most recent and compressive analysis of predictors of support for and satisfaction with democracy.

¹³⁶ See Evans and Whitefield (1995), Diamond (1999), Waldron-Moore (1999), and Mattes (2016).

¹³⁷ Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, how often, in this country: Do people have to be careful of what they say about politics?/ Do people have to be careful about what political organizations they join?/ Do people have to be careful about how they vote in an election?* I conducted both factor analysis and reliability analysis before computing an additive factor variable 'Freedoms Factor'. A factor analysis (extraction method: principal axis factoring) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.704). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.232 (3 items) and accounted for 74.39% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha of 0.828.

¹³⁸ Respondents were asked: *On the whole, how would you rate the freeness and fairness of the last national election, held in [20xx]?*

¹³⁹ Respondents were asked: *How often, if ever, are _____s [R's Ethnic Group] treated unfairly by the government?* Responses are: *never* (coded as '0'), *sometimes* (1), *often* (2), *always* (3). Respondents who refused to answer or said they *didn't know* were coded as missing and excluded from the analysis.

¹⁴⁰ For details on aggregation method and an exact list of variables use see: Coppedge et al., 2019: 269.

variables which correspond to respondents' evaluation of how the government is doing in terms of economic performance and service delivery. Economic management by the

Table 3.2: Descriptive statistics of variables in this chapter. 34 countries. Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)¹⁴¹

Descriptive Statistics				
Name	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Support for Democracy	1	3	2.56	0.74
Demand for Democracy	0	4	2.95	1.16
Lived Poverty Index	0	3	1.53	0.94
Asset Index	0	12	5.75	3.24
Freedoms index	0	9	5.90	2.87
Free elections	1	4	3.02	1.10
Ethnic group treated fairly	0	3	0.51	0.87
Economic performance index	4	16	7.81	2.97
Service delivery index	5	20	11.81	3.62
Government handling income gaps	1	4	1.81	0.86
Performance of the president	1	4	2.65	1.02
Country going in the right direction= 1	56.9 % 'country going in the wrong direction'; 43.1% 'right direction'			
Incumbent partisan	0	2	0.69	0.83
Trust President	0	3	1.70	1.17
Trust ruling party	0	99	4.14	16.00
Trust army	0	3	1.97	1.11
Rural= 1	44,5% urban; 55,5% rural			
Level of education	0	9	3.45	2.24
Age	18	106	37.11	14.90
Female= 1	49,9% Men; 50,1% Women			
Income inequality (Gini)	30.80	63.00	42.53	8.30
Rule of law index	0.07	0.91	0.56	0.22
Economic growth in % (mean: 2011-2017)	1.74	6.93	4.57	1.50
GDP (pc/PPP)	1200.00	21600.00	5432.35	5268.44
Human Development Index	0.35	0.79	0.55	0.10

¹⁴¹ The % displayed in the table represent valid responses. I exclude respondents who said 'don't know', 'refused', or for whom data are missing. Throughout this chapter (and thesis as a whole) I apply within country weight to ensure gender parity within countries. Importantly, I do not weight the data by population size. While countries with larger populations tend to have a larger sample size of N=2400, and countries with smaller populations tend to have national samples of N=1200, these sample size differences do not reflect the differences in actual populations. The incongruence in sample-to-population ratios may affect the reliability of comparisons of within country results.

government consists of questions regarding managing the economy, improving the living standards of the poor, creating jobs and keeping prices stable.¹⁴² The service delivery index reflects how well government is perceived to be reducing crime, improving basic health services, addressing educational needs, providing water and sanitation and maintaining roads and bridges.¹⁴³ Both indices are based on evaluations of the past 12 months. To account for longer term evaluations, I also include a variable which reflects whether people feel the country is generally going in the right or wrong direction.¹⁴⁴

In the African context, high levels of inequality were often inherited from times of colonial rule, when economic, administrative and societal systems were introduced and upheld to explicitly enrich a minority, both domestically with the colonized state and in the colonial metropolis, while having no concern for the economic conditions of the overwhelming majority (Nafziger & Nafziger, 1988; Van der Walle, 2009; Mkandawire, 2010; Heldring & Robinson, 2012; Atkinson, 2014; Alvaredo et al., 2017). In many cases, the post-colonial legal and administrative systems adopted by the newly independent states mimicked the former colonial power and thereby exacerbated the continuation of high inequality between the political and administrative elites and the wider population (Nafziger & Nafziger, 1988; Burton & Jennings, 2007; Lentz, 2015). It is therefore possible that rather than perceptions of inequality itself (which might be seen as a 'relic' of colonial rule), it is the way in which government is perceived to be handling the issue that shapes support for democracy among ordinary Africans. To control for this, I use a question asking respondents to evaluate how government is handling narrowing gaps between 'rich' and 'poor'.¹⁴⁵ Further, I control for the perceived performance of the president or chief

¹⁴² See appendix 2 of chapter 3, for full description of questions. A factor analysis (extraction method: maximum likelihood) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.793). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.620 (4 items) and accounted for 65.49% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha of 0.824.

¹⁴³ See appendix 2 of chapter 3, for full description of questions. I used factor analysis to test whether the variables reflected a connected concept. A factor analysis (extraction method: maximum likelihood) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.802). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.711 (5 items) and accounted for 54.22% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha of 0.785.

¹⁴⁴ Respondents were asked: *Let's start with your general view about the current direction of our country. Some people might think the country is going in the wrong direction. Others may feel it is going in the right direction. So let me ask YOU about the overall direction of the country: Would you say that the country is going in the wrong direction or going in the right direction?* Response options are: *going in the wrong direction* (coded as '1') and *going in the right direction* (coded as '2'). Respondents who refused to answer the question or who said they *don't know*, were excluded from the analyses.

¹⁴⁵ This is the only Afrobarometer question (in R6 and R7) which explicitly touches upon inequality. Respondents are asked: *How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say? Narrowing gaps between rich and poor?* I treat this variable as quasi-metric and the 4-point response scale runs from *very badly* (coded as '1') to *very well* (coded as '4'). I do not recode this variable. This variable speaks to a broad sense of inequality but does not allow any further reasoning as to what form of inequality (wealth, income, assets) the respondent may be referring to, whom the respondent may consider 'rich' or 'poor', whether the respondent considers himself or herself to belong to either group or, more widely, how

executive. Past research has pointed to a heightened importance of the chief executive in systems of political economy of African states. These systems – termed ‘neopatrimonialism’ (see e.g. Hyden, 1983; Bratton & van der Walle, 1993) – place strong emphasis on the reciprocal connection between patrons in the state (with a ‘big man’ at the top of the network) and clientelist networks attached to these patrons (see also discussion in chapter 4) as a means of distributing state resources on the one hand, and winning (particularized) public support on the other hand (Chabal & Daloz, 1999; Erdman & Engel, 2007; Beresford, 2014). As such, the role of the executive, embodied in the President or Prime Minister, may shape people attitudes towards democracy. At the country level, I control for economic development using the mean score of GDP (per capita) growth in the economy between 2011 and 2017.

3.3.4 Partisanship

It is likely that people’s evaluations of ‘what democracy is’ and ‘what democracy does’ is not independent of whether they support the ruling party. Following Mattes and Bratton (2007), I control for whether someone said that they feel close to a ruling party (coded 2), a different party (1) or no party (0).¹⁴⁶

3.3.5 Sociodemographic traits

In line with most survey-based empirical research, I also include a number of socio-demographic control variables. In a study of 20 African countries, Mattes (2016) finds strong predictive power for level of education on demand for democracy and satisfaction with democracy (albeit a negative relation). To discount these effects, I control for age, gender, location (urban/ rural) as well as for level of education.

much inequality a respondent perceives to exist or how much inequality a respondent deems acceptable or desirable.

¹⁴⁶ Respondents were asked: *Do you feel close to any particular political party? if “Yes”: Which party is that?* Respondents who didn’t feel close to a party were coded as 0, while those who felt close to a party not in power were coded as 1. Respondents who said they were close to a, or the ruling party were coded as 2.

4. Analysis

In this section I present and discuss the statistical tests performed. All tests are multi-level models using country as the level 2 unit and individual as the level 1 unit. I proceed in two steps.¹⁴⁷ First, I run a series of models focused in 'untangling' the main effect (perceived relative deprivation) from related phenomena such as subjective absolute poverty, objective absolute poverty or country level income inequality and development. If people are less supportive of democracy because they feel relatively deprived, it is important to establish whether this effect is independent of or works in conjuncture with how poor some is or thinks he is, for example. Second, I run a series of models which posit the main predictor variables against known explanations of support of and demand for democracy. People's values, attitudes and behaviour are informed by many different things. To study whether perceptions of relative deprivation affects whether people want democracy or not, it is not sufficient to simply determine an association between the two. One has to also assess whether this association is robust in the presence of what we know – i.e. does including perceptions of relative deprivation to our common wisdom of what explains support for democracy, improve our model and thereby our understanding of the dependent variable? In this chapter, I focus on three competing explanations as to why people support or demand democracy: because of what democracy is (intrinsic motivations), because of what democracy does (instrumental motivations) or because democracy allows a person to 'win' (egocentric motivations).

4.1 Support for democracy

A large psychological literature exists which speaks of the consequences of perceptions of relative deprivation on social and political behavior, especially among and between groups.¹⁴⁸ The relative deprivation argument essentially proposes that it is not the absolute situation or conditions of groups that especially drives behavior, but that comparison and assessments of relative situations and conditions between individuals and groups, drive behavior. The results – displayed in table 3.3 below – suggest two things. First, only the more extreme deviations from feeling equal – much better and much worse – are significant predictors of support for democracy. Feeling slightly different from equal – better and worse – is not a significant

¹⁴⁷ For space reasons, the tables in this section do not include the null model, which is used to calculate the explained variance for each model.

¹⁴⁸ See: Gurr (1970), Tajfel (1974, 1979, 1982), Crosby (1976), Tajfel et al. (1979), Walker & Pettigrew (1984), Brewer & Kramer (1985) and Turner et al. (1987). For select studies in Africa, see: Duckitt & Mphuthing (1998), Harris (2002) and Duckitt et al. (2005). Most widely, relative deprivation has been applied to Africa in the context of conflict studies: Barrows (1976), Østby (2008), Østby et al. (2009), Cederman et al. (2011) and Cederman et al. (2013).

predictor. And second, both positive and negative extreme deviations are significant negative predictors of support for democracy. This means that both respondents who feel 'much better' and respondents who feel 'much worse' off than others are less supportive of democracy. The negative sign in both cases supports my argument that perceived lived equality, rather than relative deprivation, drives attitudes towards democracy. In the context of sociodemographic and other individual and country-level economic explanations, the effect of feeling relatively much worse off than others becomes non-significant. This suggests that perceived relative deprivation is not significantly linked to how much people support democracy, once one considers socio-demographic characteristics, their absolute and relative poverty levels or the levels of inequality and poverty at country level. This is an important finding as it directly goes against the narrative of perceived relative deprivation undermining people's attitudes towards democracy. In the contrary, the models suggest that it is people who feel much better off than others who have significantly less support for democracy. In all models, feeling much better off than others is significantly and negatively associated with support for democracy. This suggests that regardless of people's poverty experience or their objective relative material situation within a country, people who feel much better off are less supportive of democracy than people who feel equal to others (see model 3a and 3b).

Besides the main explanatory variables, people's support for democracy is significantly associated with a number of other factors, albeit all small in effect size. The results suggest that respondent with higher lived poverty experience, younger, female, urban and less educated respondents are less supportive of democracy. The results at country level suggest no significant correlation between the country-level income-inequality and level of development and support for democracy.

Overall, the models account for little variable in the dependent variable (support for democracy) at both individual and country level suggesting that other – unobserved – variables are needed to explain peoples support for democracy. In other words, individual-level (both absolute and relative) material wellbeing alone is of limited value in explaining variance in support for democracy in Africa. This is important as it suggests that although the narrative of growing divides between 'haves' and 'have nots' being linked to how people see democracy has been highly topical in other parts of the world, the empirical data here do not suggest that perceptions of relative deprivation and support for democracy are significantly linked in the African context. Rather, the results suggest that people who feel relatively advantaged are the ones who are less supportive of democracy as a regime for.

Table 3.3: Economic determinants of support for democracy. 34 countries (N=45810). Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)

	M1a: relative living situation	M1b: controls	M1c: objective relative poverty (LPI)	M1c: objective relative poverty (Assets)	M1d: country inequality	M2a: poverty	M2b: country poverty	M3a: full economic model 1	M3b: full economic model 2
<i>Intercept</i>	2.569(0.03)	2.436(0.038)	2.435(0.038)	2.43(0.038)	2.564(0.164)	2.4(0.04)	2.629(0.167)	2.707(0.213)	2.659(0.214)
Much Worse= 1	-0.04**(0.014)	-0.025(0.014)	-0.02(0.014)	-0.015(0.014)	-0.025(0.014)	-0.011(0.014)	-0.025(0.014)	-0.011(0.014)	-0.011(0.014)
Worse= 1	-0.01(0.009)	-0.001(0.009)	0.003(0.009)	0.005(0.009)	-0.001(0.009)	0.007(0.009)	-0.001(0.009)	0.007(0.009)	0.007(0.009)
Better= 1	-0.004(0.009)	-0.01(0.009)	-0.012(0.009)	-0.012(0.009)	-0.01(0.009)	-0.014(0.009)	-0.01(0.009)	-0.014(0.009)	-0.014(0.009)
Much Better= 1	-0.099*** (0.021)	-0.107*** (0.021)	-0.108*** (0.021)	-0.115*** (0.021)	-0.107*** (0.021)	-0.115*** (0.021)	-0.107*** (0.021)	-0.115*** (0.021)	-0.115*** (0.021)
Relative to national LPI mean			-0.018*** (0.004)						-0.016*** (0.004)
Relative to national Asset Index mean				0.01*** (0.001)				0.01*** (0.002)	
Lived Poverty Index						-0.016*** (0.004)		-0.016*** (0.004)	
Asset Index						0.009*** (0.002)			0.009*** (0.002)
Age		0.003*** (0)	0.003*** (0)	0.003*** (0)	0.003*** (0)	0.003*** (0)	0.003*** (0)	0.003*** (0)	0.003*** (0)
Female= 1		-0.069*** (0.007)	-0.068*** (0.007)	-0.062*** (0.007)	-0.069*** (0.007)	-0.062*** (0.007)	-0.069*** (0.007)	-0.062*** (0.007)	-0.062*** (0.007)
Rural= 1		0.014(0.008)	0.017* (0.008)	0.028*** (0.008)	0.014(0.008)	0.029*** (0.008)	0.014(0.008)	0.029*** (0.008)	0.029*** (0.008)
Level of education		0.03*** (0.002)	0.029*** (0.002)	0.024*** (0.002)	0.03*** (0.002)	0.023*** (0.002)	0.03*** (0.002)	0.023*** (0.002)	0.023*** (0.002)
Income inequality (Gini)					-0.003(0.004)			-0.002(0.004)	-0.002(0.004)
Human Development Index							-0.353(0.297)	-0.284(0.304)	-0.349(0.306)
<i>Within country R²</i>	0.002	0.017	0.019	0.019	0.017	0.020	0.017	0.020	0.020
<i>Between country R²</i>	0.010	-0.066	-0.065	-0.044	-0.078	-0.083	-0.053	-0.063	-0.079

Note: Cell entries are linear mixed model coefficients and standard errors in parentheses. *p <= 0.05, **p <= 0.01, ***p <= 0.001.

To better understand these findings, I next run a series of models in which I place the main predictor variables – as well as the economic control variables run in model 3a – in the context of other explanatory variables which past research has found to be useful in explaining support for democracy.¹⁴⁹

Perceived relative deprivation and advantage in context

Table 3.4 below, displays the results of the analysis. As discussed in section 3, I test three models as well as a full model which includes all competing explanatory variables. The results show that people's perceived relative situation matters in the context of how well democracy is delivering on non-material outputs. As displayed in model 4, people who feel much worse off ($\beta = -0.034^*$), better off ($\beta = -0.022^*$) and much better off ($\beta = -0.118^{***}$) are all significantly less supportive of democracy than people who feel equal to others, regardless of how many political and civic freedoms they enjoy, how free and fair elections are perceived to have been and whether they feel their ethnic group was treated unfairly by government. These results suggest that the intrinsic performance of democracy – delivering on 'what it is' – does not mitigate the effect of peoples' perceived relative situation. This is important as it suggests on the one hand that the measure of perceptions of relative deprivation and advantage are likely based on material comparisons rather than non-material comparisons (in which case we would expect that the competing explanations of intrinsic performances of democracy would mitigate the effect). On the other hand, it suggests that people's personal perception of relative living conditions matters in their support for democracy above and beyond actual experiences of freedoms and rights. This suggests that focussing on people perceptions or experiences of freedoms and rights are not sufficient in understanding their support for democracy, but that individual-level relative material comparisons must be considered too.

Next, I ran a model including competing explanatory variables based on 'what democracy does' – i.e., performance evaluations. The results (model 5) suggest that in the context of such explanations, feelings of relative deprivation are not significantly associated with support for democracy but that feeling much better off than others is. This suggests that feelings of severe relative advantage is not mitigated by overall performance evaluations but feelings of relative deprivation (moderate and severe) are. Regardless of how well people feel the government is performing or which direction the country is headed, people who feel much better off than others are less supportive of democracy than people who feel equal to others. Similar results are obtained in model 6 which includes whether someone feels close to a ruling party. The

¹⁴⁹ Of course, I could also use the control variables in model 3b. However, past research on support for democracy in Africa that has used Afrobarometer data has consistently employed the LPI and not the Asset Index. For ease of comparability of results I thus chose the model which includes the LPI.

results again suggest that people who feel better off than others – regardless of whether they feel close to a ruling party – are less supportive of democracy, while people feeling relatively deprived is not significantly associated with support for democracy.

Table 3.4: Modelling support for democracy. 33 countries. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)¹⁵⁰

	M4: Democracy for what it is	M5: Democracy for what it does	M6: Partisanship performance	M7: Full model
<i>Intercept</i>	2.58(0.202)	1.952(0.231)	2.621(0.2)	2.026(0.248)
Much Worse= 1	-0.034*(0.016)	-0.006(0.016)	-0.019(0.015)	-0.035*(0.018)
Worse= 1	0.005(0.01)	0.006(0.011)	0.002(0.01)	-0.003(0.011)
Better= 1	-0.022*(0.01)	-0.002(0.01)	-0.022*(0.009)	-0.02(0.011)
Much Better= 1	-0.118*** (0.023)	-0.111*** (0.025)	-0.125*** (0.022)	-0.13*** (0.027)
Rel. to nat. Asset Index mean	0.009*** (0.002)	0.01*** (0.002)	0.009*** (0.002)	0.01*** (0.002)
Lived Poverty Index	-0.009(0.005)	-0.01(0.005)	-0.019*** (0.005)	-0.008(0.006)
Freedoms index	-0.002(0.001)			-0.001(0.002)
Free elections	0.031*** (0.004)			0.02*** (0.005)
Ethnic group treated fairly	-0.01* (0.005)			-0.011* (0.005)
Economic performance index		-0.005* (0.002)		-0.003(0.002)
Service delivery index		0.003(0.002)		0.002(0.002)
Government handling income gaps		0.005(0.006)		0.002(0.007)
Performance of the president		0.013** (0.005)		0(0.005)
Overall direction of the country		0.013(0.009)		0.012(0.01)
Incumbent partisan			0.063*** (0.005)	0.05*** (0.006)
Age	0.003*** (0)	0.003*** (0)	0.003*** (0)	0.002*** (0)
Female= 1	-0.049*** (0.008)	-0.052*** (0.008)	-0.054*** (0.007)	-0.038*** (0.009)
Rural= 1	0.021* (0.009)	0.019* (0.009)	0.02* (0.008)	0.006(0.01)
Level of education	0.02*** (0.002)	0.02*** (0.002)	0.023*** (0.002)	0.016*** (0.003)
Rule of law index	0.174(0.143)			0.167(0.124)
Economic growth (mean: 2011- 2017)		0.077*** (0.018)		0.062** (0.02)
Income inequality (Gini)	-0.006(0.004)	-0.002(0.003)	-0.001(0.004)	-0.005(0.003)
Human Development Index	0.005(0.303)	0.377(0.269)	-0.225(0.283)	0.42(0.283)
<i>Within country R²</i>	0.082	0.052	0.028	0.100
<i>Between country R²</i>	0.108	0.386	0.081	0.390

Note: Cell entries are linear mixed model coefficients and standard errors in parentheses. *p <= 0.05, **p <= 0.01, ***p <= 0.001.

Considering all competing explanations (model 7), the results suggest that feelings of both severe relative deprivation ($\beta = -0.035^*$) and severe relative advantage ($\beta = -0.13^{***}$) are significantly associated with less support for democracy, although the effect size is considerably larger for relative advantage than for relative deprivation. In general, feelings of severe relative

¹⁵⁰ Note: Cell entries are linear mixed model coefficients and standard errors in parentheses. Some effect-sizes may be displayed as zero in the table as they have been rounded off. eSwatini, an absolute monarchy is not included in the analyses as not all questions were asked in the country.

advantage have a larger effect on support for democracy than other commonly used variables in the literature (for example electoral freedom, incumbent partisanship or economic performance evaluations). The results also demonstrate that country-level inequality is not significantly associated with support for democracy. To my knowledge, this is the first research to test this linkage in the African context. Further, the non-finding goes against past research elsewhere, which has found strong and significant linkages between inequality and support for democracy (see Krieckhaus et al., 2014). This research rather demonstrates that perceptions of severe relative differences at individual level in terms of living situation are significantly associated with support for democracy. The results thereby underline the importance of querying the individual, perceptual nature of inequality and its relationship with support for democracy.

Besides the main effects, the results suggest that more support for democracy is associated with the perception of free and fair elections ($\beta = 0.02^{***}$, model 7), perceived fair treatment of one ethnic group ($\beta = -0.011^*$, model 7) and being a supporter of a ruling party ($\beta = 0.05^{***}$, model 7). Interestingly, at individual level, performance assessments of government and the overall direction of the country are not significantly associated with support for democracy in the context of competing explanatory variables related to what democracy is and partisanship (model 7). How well a country is doing economically over time objectively is however significantly associated with support for democracy. As displayed in model 5, individual performance evaluations of government, the president and perceived development of the country are only weakly associated with support with democracy, if at all. In comparison, at country level the recent economic growth of the country is significantly and positively associated with more support for democracy. The effect itself is not large but this is likely due to the numerically low growth rates that countries experience year on year (no country grows by 80% from one year to the next). The effect is however larger than any of the individual level effects. What this suggests is that people in countries that have grown economically (in the recent past) are more supportive of democracy, even if people in those countries don't actually perceive the government performance on economic matters to be positive. Model 5 also underlines the importance of recent economic growth in regard to explaining variance in levels of support for democracy across countries. Model 5 accounts for 38,6% of between-country variance in support for democracy. This suggests good model performance in and of itself, but it is especially remarkable when compared to the model performance of the model 4 (10,8%) and model 6 (8,1%). Overall, the models perform better at accounting for variance in support for democracy between countries than within countries.

4.2 Demand for democracy

Simply asking people whether they support democracy may not be conclusive. Democracy may mean different things to different people and thus voicing support for 'democracy' may actually mean support for different things. Others have argued that given the universal normative nature of democracy as a regime, voicing support for democracy is merely "a lip service" (Inglehart, 2003:51). A more rigorous measure whether people (truly) want democracy may be using 'demand for democracy'. 'Demand for democracy' indicates whether a respondent (firstly) supports democracy (as a regime type) and (secondly) rejects non-democratic regimes, or whether someone holds concurrent support for both democratic and non-democratic regime forms. In the Afrobarometer, support for three non-democratic regime forms is queried: one-man rule, one-party rule and military rule.¹⁵¹ To test whether perceived lived inequality shapes demand for democracy, I re-run the sequence of models used in the previous section. Analogous to the models for support for democracy, I first focus on the main predictors, before introducing competing economic determinants of demand for democracy and lastly testing other explanations.¹⁵²

The analysis suggests that how people perceive their relative situation compared to others is significantly associated with how much or little demand for democracy they have (Model 1a displayed in table 3.5, below). As was the case for support for democracy (discussed in the previous section) perceptions of severe relative deprivation and severe relative advantage are significantly and positively associated with demand for democracy. In both cases, the effect is significant and negative. This means that respondents who feel relatively much worse off or much better off (compared to those who feel equal to others) have significantly less demand for democracy than those who feel less equal, and vice versa. Unlike support for democracy (where no such effect was found to be significant), model 1a, suggests that those who feel moderately worse off than others have also significantly less demand for democracy, compared to those who feel equal. Interestingly, when sociodemographic and economic control variables are introduced in the models, the effect of feelings of relative advantage on demand for democracy remains significant and even increases in magnitude, while the effect for feelings of relative deprivation (both severe and moderate) turn non-significant or decrease in magnitude. For example, the significant, negative association of feeling much better off and demand for democracy increases if one considers a person's objective relative material wellbeing (see models 1c), while it is reduced in magnitude or becomes non-significant for feelings of relative deprivation. Elsewhere – see model 2a, the association between feeling

¹⁵¹ See section 3 of this chapter for details how 'demand for democracy' is computed.

¹⁵² As a reminder: Compared to support for democracy, demand for democracy cannot be computed for eSwatini, as the question of rejecting one-man rule was not asked in the country. The sample used to predict demand for democracy therefore comprises only 33 countries (N=44329).

Table 3.5: Economic determinants of demand for democracy. 33 countries. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)¹⁵³

	M1a: relative living situation	M1b: controls	M1c: objective relative poverty (LPI)	M1c: objective relative poverty (Assets)	M1d: country inequality	M2a: poverty	M2b: country poverty	M3a: full economic model 1	M3b: full economic model 2
Intercept	3(0.065)	2.821*** (0.076)	2.814(0.075)	2.809(0.074)	2.778(0.364)	2.657(0.079)	3.106(0.368)	3.009(0.473)	2.87(0.479)
Much Worse= 1	-0.143*** (0.021)	-0.064*** (0.021)	-0.041* (0.021)	-0.037(0.021)	-0.064** (0.021)	-0.02(0.021)	-0.064** (0.021)	-0.02(0.021)	-0.02(0.021)
Worse= 1	-0.049*** (0.014)	0.004(0.014)	0.019(0.014)	0.02(0.014)	0.004(0.014)	0.031* (0.014)	0.004(0.014)	0.031* (0.014)	0.031* (0.014)
Better= 1	-0.007(0.013)	-0.031* (0.013)	-0.04** (0.013)	-0.047*** (0.013)	-0.031* (0.013)	-0.053*** (0.013)	-0.031* (0.013)	-0.053*** (0.013)	-0.053*** (0.013)
Much Better= 1	-0.174*** (0.032)	-0.214*** (0.031)	-0.223*** (0.031)	-0.244*** (0.031)	-0.214*** (0.031)	-0.25*** (0.031)	-0.214*** (0.031)	-0.25*** (0.031)	-0.25*** (0.031)
Relative to national LPI mean			-0.054*** (0.006)						-0.042*** (0.007)
Relative to national Asset Index mean				0.038*** (0.002)				0.036*** (0.002)	
Lived Poverty Index						-0.041*** (0.007)		-0.041*** (0.007)	
Asset Index						0.036*** (0.002)			0.036*** (0.002)
Age		0.003*** (0)	0.003*** (0)	0.002*** (0)	0.003*** (0)	0.003*** (0)	0.003*** (0)	0.003*** (0)	0.003*** (0)
Female= 1		-0.178*** (0.01)	-0.177*** (0.01)	-0.152*** (0.01)	-0.178*** (0.01)	-0.152*** (0.011)	-0.178*** (0.01)	-0.152(0.011)	-0.152*** (0.011)
Rural= 1		-0.029*** (0.011)	-0.02(0.011)	0.019(0.012)	-0.029** (0.011)	0.024*** (0.012)	-0.029*** (0.011)	0.024* (0.012)	0.024* (0.012)
Level of education		0.109*** (0.003)	0.105*** (0.003)	0.086*** (0.003)	0.109*** (0.003)	0.084*** (0.003)	0.109*** (0.003)	0.084*** (0.003)	0.085*** (0.003)
Income inequality (Gini)					0.001(0.008)			0.002(0.008)	0.003(0.009)
Human Development Index							-0.52(0.657)	-0.439(0.671)	-0.741(0.679)
Within country R ²	0.008	0.060	0.064	0.074	0.060	0.076	0.060	0.076	0.076
Between country R ²	0.006	-0.078	-0.073	-0.038	-0.113	-0.117	-0.091	-0.100	-0.128

*p <= 0.05, **p <= 0.01, ***p <= 0.001.

¹⁵³ Note: Cell entries are linear mixed model coefficients and standard errors in parentheses. Some effect-sizes may be displayed as zero in the table as they have been rounded off.

relatively deprived and demand for democracy switches from negative to positive for feelings of moderate deprivation while the effect of perceived severe relative deprivation is non-significant.

What does this mean? The results tell us that people who feel relatively advantaged, in particular people who feel severely advantaged, have less demand of democracy than people who feel equal to others, regardless of their subjective experience of poverty or their objective relative poverty. Comparing the effect size to the results obtained for support for democracy, this suggests that those who feel relatively (much) better off than others not only have less support for democracy but are also 'shopping around' by being open to non-democratic regime forms. Conversely, people who feel relatively deprived also have less demand for democracy than people who feel equal to others, but the linkage is far weaker and likely explained in parts or in total by how much poverty someone has experienced both subjectively and objectively. The results here demonstrate that popular demand for democracy is less threatened' by feelings of relative deprivation alone, but equally (or even more) by absolute poverty experiences and perceptions. In fact, the threat to democracy from these findings appears to emerge in the form of people who feel severely advantage. This 'self-perceived elite' – regardless of their actual or perceived poverty – are the ones who seem most supportive of alternative regime forms.

Compared to support for democracy, demand for democracy also appears more strongly associated with sociodemographic traits. Here, men and less educated respondents are significantly more supportive of non-democratic regime forms, than women and those with higher levels of education. Again, as with support for democracy, I find no significant country-level effects. This suggests that people in countries that are more unequal (as per Gini coefficient of income inequality) or less developed (as pr HDI) have no more or less demand for democracy than people in more equal or more developed countries.

Further, comparing the model performance of both models discussed so far suggests that economic considerations are more important in regard to understanding demand for democracy than support for democracy. Model 3 accounts for around 7,6% of variance in demand for democracy, compared to only 2% in variance in support for democracy. However, model's performance in both cases suggests that other variables are important to understanding support and demand for democracy.

Perceived relative deprivation and advantage in context

As with support for democracy, I next turn to testing the linkage between relative deprivation and advantage with demand for democracy, in the context of known explanations of

demand for democracy (see table 3.6, below). The structure follows the structure used in the previous section. Unlike support for democracy, demand for democracy includes reference categories from which democratic support is distinguished. It may be the case, however, that in their assessment of democracy, people evaluate 'democracy' as a vehicle to allow people or groups they support to rule. As a consequence, more positive personal feelings towards such incumbents may influence how the system is perceived and evaluated.¹⁵⁴ To discount such influence, I include three control variables which capture how much people trust the president and the ruling party and the army.¹⁵⁵

The results suggest that analogous to the previous findings for support for democracy, people who feel relatively better off than others have less demand for democracy (compared to people who feel equal). These effects are significant above and beyond the effect of intrinsic, instrumental and partisan explanations (see models 4- 7). The effect is stronger for those who feel much better off ($\beta = -0.25^{***}$, model 7) than for people who feel only better off ($\beta = -0.072^{***}$, model 7), but both are consistently significant across all models. In models 4, 5 and 7, feeling much worse off is also significantly and negatively associated with demand for democracy, although the effect is weaker than the effect for feeling much better off. This suggests that regardless of how people evaluate democracy based on intrinsic or instrumental explanations, feeling much worse off than others reduces how much demand for democracy people have. Only when the partisan orientations of the respondent are considered (in model 6) are feelings of severe relative deprivation not significantly associated with demand for democracy. In all models, feeling only moderately deprived ('worse off') is not significantly associated with demand for democracy.

Looking at the full model, people have less demand for democracy who feel severe and moderate relative advantage, feel severe relative deprivation, have greater lived poverty experiences and who perceive their ethnic group to be discriminated against by government more often. Moreover, people have less demand for democracy the more they trust the ruling party and the army. This is likely because those who have more trust in the ruling party and army are more supportive of one party and military rule (which form part of the demand for democracy index). Likewise, people who feel close to the ruling party have more demand for democracy. Analogous to the previous models for support for democracy, the models for demand for democracy account for more variance in the dependent variable between countries, than within countries. Overall, model 7 accounts for approximately 17,6% of variance in demand for democracy within countries and 27,8% between countries. Among level 2

¹⁵⁴ See for example Schäfer (2013).

¹⁵⁵ Respondents were asked: *How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: The President? The Ruling Party?* (see appendix 2 of chapter 3 for full description).

variables, only recent economic growth was significantly correlated with demand for democracy ($\beta = 0.132^*$, model 5).

How helpful are my models in explaining variation in support for democracy? The models perform comparably to the study by Kriekhaus et al. (2014) in explaining both within-country and between-country variance. This is noteworthy as Kriekhaus et al.'s sample included only democracies (using a strict dichotomous measure of democracy), and no countries in Africa. It is therefore unexpected that the support for democracy model performed equally well, given the different make up of sample countries.

Table 3.6: Modelling demand for democracy.33 countries. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)

	M4: Democracy for what it is	M5: Democracy for what it does	M6: Partisanship performance	M7: Full model
Intercept	3.097(0.4)	2.096(0.613)	3.074(0.464)	2.38(0.58)
Much Worse= 1	-0.059*(0.023)	-0.054*(0.023)	-0.028(0.022)	-0.079**(0.026)
Worse= 1	0.009(0.015)	0.006(0.015)	0.022(0.014)	0.002(0.017)
Better= 1	-0.068*** (0.014)	-0.052*** (0.015)	-0.055*** (0.014)	-0.072*** (0.016)
Much Better= 1	-0.26*** (0.034)	-0.231*** (0.036)	-0.238*** (0.032)	-0.25*** (0.039)
Rel. to nat. Asset Index mean	0.031*** (0.002)	0.031*** (0.002)	0.032*** (0.002)	0.028*** (0.003)
Lived Poverty Index	-0.04*** (0.007)	-0.049*** (0.007)	-0.052*** (0.007)	-0.051*** (0.008)
Freedoms index	0(0.002)			0.001(0.002)
Free elections	-0.023*** (0.006)			0.001(0.007)
Ethnic group treated fairly	-0.028*** (0.007)			-0.027*** (0.008)
Economic performance index		-0.018*** (0.003)		-0.016*** (0.003)
Service delivery index		0(0.002)		0.003(0.002)
Government handling income gaps		-0.036*** (0.009)		-0.034** (0.01)
Overall direction of the country		-0.015* (0.007)		0.003(0.008)
Performance of the president		-0.001(0.013)		0.022(0.015)
Incumbent partisan			0.035*** (0.007)	0.034*** (0.008)
Trust President			0.001(0.007)	0.003(0.008)
Trust ruling party			-0.052*** (0.007)	-0.038*** (0.008)
Trust army			-0.02** (0.006)	-0.015* (0.007)
Age	0.003*** (0)	0.003*** (0)	0.003*** (0)	0.003*** (0)
Female= 1	-0.115*** (0.011)	-0.123*** (0.012)	-0.13*** (0.011)	-0.097*** (0.013)
Rural= 1	0.021(0.013)	0.03*(0.013)	0.028*(0.012)	0.032*(0.015)
Level of education	0.072*** (0.003)	0.071*** (0.003)	0.076*** (0.003)	0.065*** (0.004)
Rule of law index	0.429(0.286)			0.425(0.29)
Economic growth (mean: 2011- 2017)		0.132* (0.05)		0.09(0.047)
Income inequality (Gini)	-0.01(0.008)	0.003(0.008)	0.002(0.008)	-0.008(0.008)
Human Development Index	0.21(0.603)	0.619(0.716)	-0.375(0.658)	0.804(0.664)
Within country R ²	0.151	0.127	0.113	0.176
Between country R ²	0.247	0.059	-0.057	0.278

Note: Cell entries are linear mixed model coefficients and standard errors in parentheses. Some effect-sizes may be displayed as zero in the table as they have been rounded off.. *p <= 0.05, **p <= 0.01, ***p <= 0.001.

Are people who feel 'left out' or 'left behind' disillusioned with democracy? Do the self-perceived 'have-nots' lose faith in democracy and turn to alternatives? The results in this chapter suggest that feeling severely relatively deprived is significantly associated with less

support for democracy and less demand for democracy, even in the context of commonly used explanatory variables for support and demand for democracy. In this sense, yes, people who feel severely deprived might lose interest in democracy, although the effect size is small. However, feeling only moderately deprived compared to others is not associated with less support for democracy and although feeling moderately deprived compared to others is significantly correlated with less demand for democracy, the effect turns non-significant once alternative explanations are tested concurrently.

However, for both dependent variables the effect of feeling relatively advantaged was substantially larger than the effect for feeling relatively deprived. Feelings of severe relative advantage are consistently associated with less support for democracy and less demand for democracy above and beyond the tested alternative explanations and control variables. In the case of demand for democracy, even people who feel only moderately better advantaged were significantly more open to non-democratic regimes than people who feel equal to others. This makes perceived relative living situation an important explanation of regime support in Africa and one that requires to be included in predictive models in the future.

Section conclusion

In this section I explored whether perceptions of relative living situation are significantly linked to how much people support and have demand for democracy. The results show a significant association between severe relative deprivation and both less support and demand for democracy, even when controlling for commonly used explanations in the literature of why people want democracy. The models consistently suggest no significant association between feelings of moderate relative deprivation support for democracy and while a significant correlation exists with demand for democracy, the correlation turns non-significant once other explanations are tested concurrently. In some models – such as the models looking at intrinsic evaluations of democracy and partisanship, both moderate and severe feelings of relative deprivation are unrelated to support for democracy. This means that even if people feel relatively deprived, other factors mitigate the direct effect of relative deprivation on how much people support democracy. Instead, the results demonstrate that it is feeling relatively better off than others, especially feeling much better off than others that should be seen as the threat to democracy in terms of being 'the only game in town'. The results demonstrate that people who feel much better off are significantly less supportive of democracy and are more open to non-democratic alternatives. What is more, the effect remains significant even when controlling for alternative explanations, such as quality of democracy, government performance and partisanship. Previous research has relied on using objective measures of inequality, usually at the group or country level. I included arguably the most widely used

measure of national inequality – the Gini coefficient for income inequality. However, I find no significant effect of the Gini coefficient. This is not unlike the recent literature which finds inconclusive results in regard to national inequality.

5. Conclusion

Much has been said about the growing threat to democracy by those who feel the system is not working for 'them' or of the risk of a growing number of 'have-nots' losing faith in democracy. Little research in this regard has however been done for cases in Africa.

Several theories in the literature explore the effects of economic inequality on democratic support. On the one hand, the literature suggests that high levels of inequality would increase support for democracy among most people as democracy would allow the majority to push redistribution to alleviate inequality. Conversely, another literature argues the opposite outcome, that high inequality would weaken support for democracy as ordinary citizens would become disillusioned with democracy.¹⁵⁶ I test both hypotheses using representative value-survey data for 33 African countries collected between 2016 and 2018.

Until fairly recently, researchers in both camps have measured economic inequality using objective, country-level measures such as the Gini coefficient or the Palma ratio. In the past decade, however, a number of studies have found that objective scores of economic inequality are weakly understood by ordinary people. Ordinary people are unaware of exact levels of inequality, misperceive mean income or misplace themselves within income or wealth distributions. This research has begun to use perceptual measures of inequality, instead. Perceptual measures of economic inequality have been found to be correlated to support for redistributive policies which is encouraging in regard to the validity of the measure. To measure perceived inequality at the individual level I employ a survey item from the Afrobarometer survey, which asks ordinary citizens how their living situation compares to others. While work by Langer and Mikami, as well as Stewart, has used perceptual data in the study of group-based horizontal inequality in Africa, the work reported in this chapter is, to the best of my knowledge, the first study that uses a perceptual measure of inequality at the individual level.

Accounting for country-level clustering of the data, I find that that people who feel equal to others are more supportive of democracy and have more demand for democracy than people who do not feel equal to others. Conversely, feeling both severely relatively deprived

¹⁵⁶ As Kriekhaus et al. (2014) points out, the two literatures centrally diverge from their inherent motivation and thereby basic assumption about how citizens assess democracy. The political economy approach tries to explain regime transition and reversion – from authoritarian to democratic. The survey or area studies on the other hand have focused predominately on democratic stability, often using a political culture approach.

and severely relatively advantaged tends to be associated with less support for democracy and less demand for democracy. These patterns are consistent across models, meaning they remain significant even when controlling for other explanations that have been used in the literature such as absolute poverty, quality of democracy (free and fair elections and freedoms), as well as personal traits (education and age). As such, the results in this chapter lend support for the survey and area studies' literature that those who feel 'left-behind' become disillusioned by democracy and thereby less supportive of democracy. The findings also relate to work by Solt (2008) who argues that inequality may foster support for non-democratic regime forms. Unlike Solt (2008), I find no significant relation between country-level income inequality and less support for democracy or demand for democracy. However, at individual level, I find that people who feel relatively deprived do in fact show less support and demand for democracy.

What the results in this chapter have also shown is that feeling equal to others is not simply the opposite of feeling unequal. The results indicate that the overt effect of feeling relatively deprived on support and demand for democracy is considerably weaker than the effect of feeling relatively advantaged, especially feeling severely advantage. What is more, in many cases feeling moderately derived compared to others was not significant associated with either support or demand for democracy. This suggests that people who feel only moderately worse off than others are no more or less supportive or have no more or less demand for democracy than people who feel equal. In most cases, it is only people who feel much worse off (severe relative deprivation) who are significantly less supportive of democracy or have significantly less demand for democracy than those who feel equal.

Are perceptions of inequality a risk to how much people want democracy in Africa? Based on the findings presented in this chapter, the risk to popular support does not primarily appear to be losing the 'hearts and minds' of those who feel deprived, but rather those who maybe consider themselves as 'the elite'. While feeling relatively deprived is significantly associated with less support and demand for democracy, in many cases this association turns non-significant if broader issues such as the perceived performance of government are considered. Conversely, feeling relatively advantaged – in particular much better off than other – remains significant, regardless of such other explanations.

Of course, the data suggest that people with severe assessments of their relative living situation form only a small minority (3% of respondents said they feel 'much better off' than others and 8% said they felt 'much worse'). Moreover – despite the significant results – the models suggest that feelings of relative deprivation and advantage alone (even severe feelings) account for only a limited share of the variance in support and demand for democracy both within and between countries. The results show that despite significant correlations, feeling relatively deprived or advantaged alone is likely not going to turn people off democracy as a

regime form. Of course, it is possible (and warrants cross-time analysis in the future) that sustained, generational experiences or perceptions of relative deprivation might be linked more strongly to diminishing support for democracy as a regime type.

The work in in this chapter presents an extension to both how economic inequality and its effects can be best measured, as well as to the study of economic inequality as a determinant of political regime support. Africa, in both regards, has received little prior attention (if any) and this study provides a promising starting point to future research and expansion of this work. Given the high levels of inequality in many Africans countries and the limited success of democratic consolidation in the past decade or two (Lindberg, 2001; Gyimah-Boadi, 2004; Beresford et al., 2018; Cheeseman, 2018), this research represents an important addition to the literature and may provide valuable insights for academics and policymakers alike.

References - Chapter 3

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Chapter 4

Keeping up with the Dlamini¹⁵⁷: Perceived inequality and satisfaction with democracy

¹⁵⁷ According to Stats SA, Dlamini is the most common South African surname in 2018 (most recent year for which data were released) (Nxumalo, 2019)

Abstract - Chapter 4

Does perceived inequality shape how satisfied ordinary Africans are with how democracy is functioning in their countries? In this chapter I use the most recent round of Afrobarometer data (collected 2016 to 2018 in 34 countries, N=45811) to test whether satisfaction with democracy (SWD) is higher among people who (1) feel that their living conditions are equal to others' or (2) feel that they are better off than other people. Controlling for both individual and country-level effects I show that feeling better off than other people increases satisfaction and feeling worse off than other people decreases satisfaction with how democracy is functioning in the respondent's country. These results suggest that egocentric expectations of the functioning of democracy among ordinary Africans. I contribute to the literature by demonstrating that these relative assessments are significant and comparable in effect size to widely used predictors of satisfaction with democracy found in the literature, such as economic country-level evaluations, partisanship and political interest. These results therefore should encourage future research to include individual-level comparative assessments as predictors of SWD. This chapter moreover represents the most recent cross-national re-examination of predictors of SWD in Africa. My regression results are widely in line with past empirical research – both in and outside of Africa – and suggest that SWD is primarily shaped by political and economic performance evaluations. This points to the explanatory model of SWD in Africa being relatively stable across time.

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1. Introduction

In the past decade, much attention has been given in media and political debate to the possible negative effects of high income and wealth inequality on democracy. At least since Piketty's (2014) tome 'Capital in the 21st century' became somewhat of a surprise commercial success and popular-culture phenomenon (Pinkser, 2014; Tracy, 2014; Wade, 2014; Sheil, 2016), a great deal has been said and debated about the consequences of high inequality on democratic systems. For example, reflecting on his much noted (and cited) 2012 book – *The Price of Inequality: How Today's Divided Society Endangers our Future* – Stiglitz (2014: 1) argues that:

“[g]rowing inequality within most countries around the world is one of the critical issues facing the world today. People everywhere sense that it is morally wrong. We sense that it cannot be justified. We sense that it is dividing our societies and undermining our democracies. And we are right in sensing this harm.”

While Stiglitz assumes that the connection between economic inequality and democracy is somehow widely 'sensed' by people, closer empirical scrutiny of the linkage at the individual level is limited in the literature.¹⁵⁸ While there exists an ample literature on the linkages between equality and democracy from a theoretical (see Dahl 1961; 1973; 2006; Rueschemeyer, 2004) and historical perspective in the democratic transition literature (see Robinson & Acemoglu, 1999; Boix, 2003; Houle, 2009) far less evidence is available at the individual level.

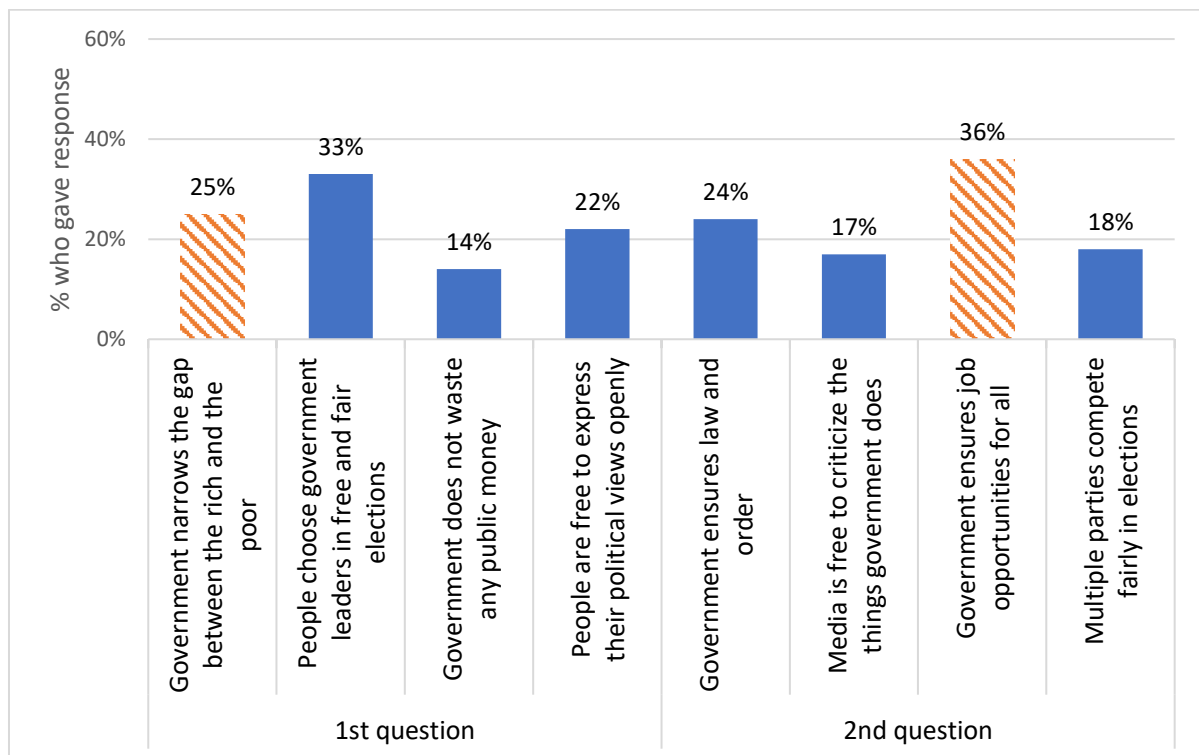
Many of the most unequal societies are in Africa, particularly southern and central Africa (Beegle et al. 2016). Even less empirical evidence is available regarding the possible connection with democracy in these cases. And indeed, looking at nationally representative Afrobarometer survey data from Round 5 (2011- 2013) for 34 African countries , people do appear to associate equality with democracy.¹⁵⁹ In round 5, respondents were asked what the

¹⁵⁸ Stiglitz (2011) argues that inequality allows greater concentration of political influence and power of a smaller and smaller monetary (and political) elite. This influence and power further accelerate economic inequality which leads to even greater political influence and power. Rather than catering to the people as a whole, Stiglitz argues that inequality leads to a smaller and smaller set of clients that the government and state cater for (epitomized in his description of the new democracy as 'Of the 1%, by the 1%, for the 1%', Stiglitz (2011)).

¹⁵⁹ This question was not asked in survey rounds since round 5. Round 5 data were collected in 34 countries between 2011 and 2013. Round 5 was conducted in Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ghana, Kenya,

most essential characteristic of democracy is to them.¹⁶⁰ Respondents were asked four times to identify which of four options was the most essential characteristic of democracy. It is important to compare the response frequencies only to other responses within the response-option group, not across questions. In figure 4.1, below, I display the response frequencies for the first two response sets; the other two made no reference to equality or equity. One in four respondents said that the most essential characteristic of democracy is that government narrows the gap between the rich and the poor.

Figure 4.1: Most essential characteristic of democracy. 34 countries (N=40801). Afrobarometer Round 5 data (2011-2013)



Narrowing income gaps was identified by more respondents than government efficiency and by about the same proportion as freedom of expression. Looking at the second set of response options, equal job opportunities was the most frequently mentioned characteristic of democracy (36%), more common than law and order (24%), multi-party completion (18%) and

Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mauritius, Sierra Leone, Niger, Togo, Burundi, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Swaziland, Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia. For the Round 5 data and codebook see Afrobarometer (2015a, 2015b).

¹⁶⁰ Respondents were asked: *Many things may be desirable, but not all of them are essential characteristics of democracy. If you have to choose only one of the things that I am going to read, which one would you choose as the most essential characteristic of democracy?*

media freedom (17%). The responses suggest that notions of equality and equity are indeed tied to the term democracy in the minds of ordinary Africans.

1.1 Research question, measurement, and hypotheses

Despite the attention awarded to the linkage between economic inequality and democracy in past research, there is little research at the linkage at individual-level,¹⁶¹ especially in Africa.

In this chapter I use a perceptual measure of economic inequality, as past research suggests that subjective perceptions of inequality often do not match up with objective measures of inequality (Loveless & Whitefield, 2011; Kuhn, 2011, 2019; Norton & Ariely, 2011; Chambers et al., 2014; Niehues, 2014; Gimpelson & Treisman, 2018). If people are to link levels inequality to the functioning of democracy, it must be because they first perceive inequality in a certain way, and then evaluate this perception and decide that it is linked to the functioning of the political system. To capture subjective perceptions of inequality, I use an Afrobarometer question which ask respondents about their perceived relative living conditions compared to other people in their country.

To measure how people feel democracy is working in their country, I use 'satisfaction with democracy' (SWD), which is widely used in survey research and the literature in this way. The item asks respondents how satisfied they are with the way democracy works in their country.¹⁶² As such, this chapter asks:

Does the perceived relative living situation shape how satisfied Africans are with the functioning of democracy in their country?

¹⁶¹ Studies have examined the relation between levels of inequality and social trust (Rothstein & Uslaner, 2005; Uslaner 2008), participation and engagement (Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995; Uslaner & Brown, 2005) and political representation (Bartels, 2008) and have linked these to the 'health' of democracy. Similarly, Rothstein (2011) has linked inequality (and corruption and social trust) to the quality of governance, which is linked to democracies (as they are typically of better quality of governance) however not synonymous with democracy. Moreover, these studies use aggregated data at sub national levels, or national level indicators, rather than an individual perspective.

¹⁶² I use a question from the Afrobarometer survey which asks respondents: *Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in [respondents' country]?* See section 3 for further discussion.

To address the research question, I test two hypotheses while accounting for country differences using multi-level models. I employ the most recent round of survey data from the Afrobarometer (2016- 2018, 34 African countries, N=39092).¹⁶³

Given the descriptive evidence presented above, it is reasonable to assume that respondents evaluate how democracy is working by whether democracy is able to deliver what people appear to see as a core characteristic of democracy – equality. This argument is based on rational institutional theory which posits that satisfaction is rationally based and informed by how people evaluate institutional performance (Mishler & Rose, 2001). From a rational institutional perspective, it would therefore be reasonable to expect that people who feel equal to others (in terms of their living situation) are also more satisfied with the way democracy is working than people who don't feel equal. As such the first hypothesis follows the rational institutional theory, and I expect that:

H1: Perceived lived equality increases satisfaction with democracy.

By perceived lived equality I mean the individual's perception that their living conditions are equal to others in the country. I have also included a short summary table (see table 4.1, below) to aid understanding of my core variables. However, from past research on the determinants of SWD – both for cases in and outside of Africa – it is known that egocentric considerations play an important role too. Studies found that being a voter for or partisan of the ruling party increases SWD (see sections 1.2 and 1.3 below). It is argued that the sense of being a 'winner' or beneficiary of the system (or more precisely the election), increases SWD, while feeling as a 'loser' reduces SWD. These findings suggest that people's satisfaction with the functioning of democracy is shaped, at least partially, by egocentric considerations. Rather than feeling equal, it might therefore be that feeling better off (relatively advantaged) than others increases SWD. In line with an egocentric expectation, a competing hypothesis posits:

H2: Perceived relative advantage increases satisfaction with democracy.

By perceived relative economic advantage, I mean the individual's perception that their living condition is 'better' or 'much better' than the living conditions of other people in their country. For both H1 and H2 the respective null-hypothesis assumes that perceived lived equality or relative advantage are unrelated to SWD. As I am interested in how people perceive the

¹⁶³ My dataset includes the following countries: Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, eSwatini, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe. eSwatini – an absolute monarchy – is not included in the analyses of this chapter.

functioning of democracy in their country, I exclude respondents who say that their country is not a democracy, or who say that they don't understand the term 'democracy'.¹⁶⁴

Specifically, I use an Afrobarometer survey question which asks respondents how they feel their living situation compares to others in their country. I use this variable to compute a measure of both 'perceived relative equality' – tested in hypothesis 1 – and of 'perceived relative advantage' – tested in hypothesis 2. I provide a brief overview of the dependent and main predictor variables of this chapter in table 4.1, below, and further discuss the variables in section 2.1.

Table 4.1: Dependent and main predictor variables of this chapter

Variable name:	Question:	Response options and codes in original dataset:	Recoded as:	Explanation
Satisfaction with democracy (SWD)	Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in [respondents' country]?	4-point scale: Not at all satisfied (coded as '1'), not very satisfied, fairly satisfied, very satisfied (4)	Not recoded	The objective is to capture how satisfied respondents are with the functioning of democracy in their country.
Perceived relative situation	In general, how do you rate your living conditions compared to those of other [nationals]?	5-point scale: 'much worse (coded as '1'), worse, same, better, much better' (5)	4 dummy variables are coded ('same' category as reference category)	The objective is to capture how respondents perceive their living situation compared to others (in their country)

By addressing this question, I touch upon several gaps in the literature: First, I provide an update to the SWD literature in Africa using the most recent round of available Afrobarometer data. In the literature, cross-national studies of predictors of SWD in Africa are few and far between, and to the best of my knowledge haven't used data collected in the most recent rounds of the Afrobarometer (2016- 2018).¹⁶⁵ Second, I explore whether perceived relative situation is a predictor of SWD. While inequality has been touted to be a problem for democracy, little empirical scrutiny exists of this linkage from an individual perspective. Third, in a methodological contribution, I explore the value of using perception-based, relational individual-level measures in the context of understanding the implications of inequality.

¹⁶⁴ See discussion also in section 3.

¹⁶⁵ Memoli and Quaranta (2019) represent the most recent cross-national research on SWD in Africa. The authors use several rounds of Afrobarometer data collected between 2002 and 2013. Likewise, Guldbrandtson and Skaaning (2012) use Round 3 data, collected in 2005, while Gold (2010) uses the first 4 rounds of Afrobarometer survey data (1999- 2009).

1.2 Chapter structure

This chapter is structured as follows. I begin by overviewing the existing literature on determinants of satisfaction with democracy and discuss central tenets of the literature on democracy and objective and perceived equality before introducing my measures of perceived lived equality and perceived relative economic advantage. In section 3 I construct a series of regression model to test whether perceptions of relative living conditions predict satisfaction with democracy.

My analysis suggests that feelings of both relative advantage and relative deprivation, rather than feeling equal to others, shape SWD. I find that even among respondents who say that equality is a core characteristic of democracy, feeling better off than others (rather than equal to them) is significantly associated with higher satisfaction with the way democracy is working. The effects for feeling relatively better off and relatively deprived are significant above and beyond (and comparable in size to) widely used predictors of SWD in the literature, such as political interest and political freedoms. This suggests that individual comparative assessments of living situation should be included in future research. The results moreover suggest that cross-time considerations strongly shape SWD. The findings in this chapter provide an update to the literature on SWD in Africa. The results confirm previous research that suggest that both political and economic performance evaluations matter. This chapter improves upon past research, showing that subjective comparisons play a significant role.

2. Theoretical background

In this section I first discuss the most common perspectives on what SWD captures as well as the critiques levelled against the SWD item, before overviewing the literature on the causes of SWD.

2.1 The concept of political support

As discussed in the introduction chapter of this thesis, the concept of political support is commonly thought of as framework by which we can differentiate people's support for various political actors and entities, or as Easton (1965, 1975) suggests, political 'objects'. Seminal work by Easton (1965, 1975) and later Norris (2011) suggests that political support can be thought of as ranging from diffuse to specific, depending on the 'object' of support. Diffuse support describes support or acceptance of the basic political community and the regime principles. Specific support on the other hand describes support for institutions and incumbents and their

performance.¹⁶⁶ Table 4.2, below, displays the continuum from diffuse to specific support, along with the respective level of analysis, affective orientations and evaluations.

In this chapter I focus on the “middle level of support” (Norris, 2011: 28) of Norris’ five-fold conceptualization – regime performance. Regime performance concerns what Norris (2011: refers to as the “generalized support for the state” and regards the satisfaction with the functioning of democracy (or the regime more generally), specifically assessments regarding decision making practises. This assessment is *conceptually* distinct from ‘support for democracy’ which I tested in the previous chapter in that regime performance is specific to the functioning of the regime *in practice*, while support for democracy is specific to the agreement with core principles, values and beliefs of a given regime *in theory*.

Table 4.2: Classification of political support (adapted from Norris (1999, 2011))

	<i>Level of Analysis</i>	<i>Affective Orientations</i>	<i>Evaluations</i>
Diffuse Support 	Political Community	National pride Sense of national identity	Best nation to live in
	Regime: Principles	Democratic values	Democracy best form of government
	Regime: Performance	Participatory norms Political rights	Evaluations of rights Satisfaction with democratic process
	Regime: Institutions	Institutional expectations Support party government Output expectations	Performance judgments Trust in institutions Trust party system Trust bureaucracy
	Authorities	Identify with party	Candidate evaluations Party support
Specific Support			

¹⁶⁶ Norris (1999) refined Easton’s threefold distinction into a five-fold scale. Norris (1999) includes Easton’s two most diffuse levels – political community and regime – but divides incumbent support into three categories: regime performance, regime institutions and authorities.

2.2 What does SWD measure?

Despite its wide use in survey research, much criticism regarding the validity and reliability has been laid upon the SWD measure as used in most survey research. This question asks respondents:

“[o]n the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in [country]?”

While only slight variations exist of the SWD question across different surveys, ambiguity surrounds the conceptual meaning of SWD. Specifically, a debate exists regarding what dimension(s) of political support are measured by SWD. This question item has been criticized for lacking clear reference as to what *exactly* the respondent is asked to assess or refer to, as well as lacking any reference to time. Moreover, as Canache et al. (2001: 511) point out, the respondents are “implicitly required to contrast the actual nature of democracy with some standard of performance”. Much of the literature on democracy acknowledges that democracy likely means different things to different people and in different contexts. As such, asking respondents to compare the ‘democratic reality’ with their personal idea and ideal of what democracy ought to entail, may limit the comparability of results (Kuechler, 1991). As Thomassen (1995: 383) notes, SWD reflects the respondents “felt discrepancy between democratic norms and the actual democratic process”. However, it is unclear from the question alone what said norms may be and they are likely sensitive to time and place. SWD may also be limited due to different meanings across time for the same country. Salient issues at a given time may ‘bubble up’ to the forefront of respondents’ minds and likely shape what they base their response on (Adcock & Collier, 2001; Canache et al., 2001; Linde & Ekman 2003). Lastly, Canache et al. (2001) suggest that because the SWD question lacks any specific reference, responses are likely influenced by survey context. This may compromise the comparability and thus reliability of evidence produced across different surveys and survey rounds. Most basically, however, the question leaves unclear what dimension of political support is taps into. In the following I will briefly touch upon 3 different perspectives on this issue.

As the question itself does not specify which dimension respondents are being queried about, the literature contains various views and arguments as to what respondents are likely basing their responses on, and consequently, what the variable should be seen to be measuring. In the literature three arguments as to what SWD captures can be distinguished.¹⁶⁷

First, some argue that SWD captures incumbent, or specific support and that SWD is understood as an indicator of support for incumbent authorities. The argument is largely based on the

¹⁶⁷ The structure of this discussion section is based on the useful literature summary by Canache et al. (2001).

question wording, noting that “the phrase “how democracy works” cues survey respondents to contemplate the outputs of incumbent authorities” (Canache et al. 2001: 507).

A second perspective is that SWD captures system support, meaning the functioning of political institutions and the “constitutional reality” (Fuchs et al. 1995: 328) that respondents live in (Anderson & Guillory, 1997; Klingemann, 1999). From this perspective, SWD is neither a measure of diffuse nor specific support but an ‘in-between’ dimension of political support (Fuchs 1993). Fuchs (1993) argued that the functioning of democracy refers to “the informal structure of the regime; in the generalization hierarchy it is between attitudes in respect to the formal structure and those in respect to the authorities” (Fuchs, 1993: 240). The perspective emphasizes that SWD captures perception of the functioning of the system, linking SWD to outputs and actual performance, rather than abstract comparisons between regime types on chapter. As Kuechler (1991) argues, SWD represents the “emotionally-biased running tally that citizens keep on the performance of a system” (Kuechler 1991: 280).

The third perspective argues that SWD is best understood as a summary indicator of several dimensions of political support. As noted above, empirical studies often find that SWD is significantly correlated to both diffuse and specific support (1971; Kaase, 1988; Anderson & Guillory, 1997; Anderson, 2002).¹⁶⁸ While Fuchs (1993) has argued that this correlation suggests that SWD captures an ‘in-between’ dimension of political support, others have argued that the correlation with multiple dimensions suggest that SWD is best considered a summary measure (Clarke et al., 1993). Widely, empirical scrutiny has found SWD to be correlated to both regime support and incumbent support. However, Canache et al. (2001) argue, the correlation results obtained by Clarke et al. (1993) could also be interpreted in a different way: that people simply interpret the question in different ways: as pertaining to support for the community, as pertaining to the regime or the incumbent authorities. This ambiguity has led some to argue the SWD should not be used as the ambiguity is unacceptable and does not aid in understanding different dimensions of political support. Norris (1999) for example, argues that SWD means different things to different people and that the instrument is value laden. Rather,

¹⁶⁸ Diffuse support is typically measured as how much people support democracy as a regime type. Hereby, the question wording makes no reference to the country of the respondents, but rather queries support for democracy in principle. For example, Afrobarometer asks respondents: *Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion? Statement 1: Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government; Statement 2: In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable; Statement 3: For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have.* Conversely, specific support taps how much someone support the incumbent authorities, such as the president. While no one question is used to capture specific support, positive character evaluations of elected representatives (honesty, responsiveness), approval of politicians, trust in representatives are commonly found in the literature as measures of specific support. See Norris (2011: 19ff).

she proposes to use a scale combining confidence in political and civic institutions.¹⁶⁹ On the other hand, Anderson (2002) has argued that all dimension of political support suffer some level of collinearity, and the criticism thus does not only apply to SWD. As such, all measures of political support dimensions are ambiguous to some extent.¹⁷⁰

In the context of my cases, a clearer understanding of meaning of SWD can be gauged by testing for association between the SWD measure in the Afrobarometer survey and measures of other dimensions of political support (which are displayed in table 4.2, above). Table 4.3 below, displays the Pearson's correlation analysis between SWD and support for democracy (as a measure of diffuse support) as well as perceived performance of and trust in the president (as a measure of specific support).

Table 4.3: Correlation between support, demand, extent and satisfaction with democracy. 34 countries. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)

		Support for democracy	Satisfaction with democracy	Trust in institutions	Performance: President
Satisfaction with democracy	Pearson Corr.	0.124**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000			
	N	36981	37800		
Trust in institutions	Pearson Corr.	0.063**	0.319**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000		
	N	34368	34560	35294	
Performance: President	Pearson Corr.	0.049**	0.340**	0.359**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	33475	33655	31645	34551
Trust president	Pearson Corr.	0.070**	0.347**	0.581**	0.548**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	36577	36759	34923	33925
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

The results suggest that in the context of my cases, SWD is more closely associated with more specific measures of political support, that it is with a more diffuse measure, such as support for democracy. Moreover, it appears that SWD is equally associated with support for regime institutions ($r(34560) = 0.319$, $p < 0.001$; measured as trust in said institutions) as it is with support for

¹⁶⁹ Rose et al. (1998) propose yet a different approach by including a set of questions which explicitly avoid using the term 'Democracy'.

¹⁷⁰ See also Fuchs (1993). Given the wide application of the SWD question and especially given the prolonged debate over the validity and reliability of the SWD question in the literature, it is puzzling why the question has not been reformulated, similar question posed together to understand variations in what is being queried and understood by respondents, or plain and straight follow-up questions introduced into surveys. Such questions could follow up on the respondent's answer and would shed insight into what or whom the respondent is referring to when they say they are 'satisfied' or 'dissatisfied'.

authorities (performance of the president: $r(33655) = 0.340$, $p < 0.001$; trust in the president: $r(36759) = 0.347$, $p < 0.001$). In both cases, the correlation coefficient suggests low to moderate association between the three items, suggesting some shared variance. Using a factor and reliability analysis I was moreover able to confirm that SWD, institutional trust and performance do not reflect an underlying factor.¹⁷¹

In light of the debate surrounding the SWD item, described above, the results suggest that SWD in the context of my cases must likely be understood as an 'in-between' dimension of political support. The correlation and factor analysis suggest that SWD is only minimally related to more diffuse support. Conversely, some overlap exists between SWD and more specific support, such as trust in institutions and performance evaluations of the president. This overlap, however, is not sufficient to motivate collapsing SWD and said measures.

2.3 Inequality and satisfaction with democracy

Somewhat surprisingly, given the strong interest in the media and public debate only a limited literature exists scrutinizing the effect of inequality on SWD.

In a study of 25 European countries in the mid-2000s, Schäfer (2012) finds that country-level income inequality reduces satisfaction with democracy, especially among the more developed western European states. Schäfer finds that trust in institutions and incumbents as well as more positive views of the economy and personal income significantly improve satisfaction. Similar results are also obtained by Anderson and Singer (2008) in a study of 20 European countries using European Social Survey data from 2002- 2003. Anderson and Singer (2008) find that higher country levels of income inequality significantly reduces satisfaction with democracy. This effect is especially strong among those respondents who self-categorize as being on the left, but not moderated by the respondent's absolute income.

These significant results may however not hold elsewhere. In what to date appears to be the broadest study on inequality and SWD, Han et al. (2016) use data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) project consisting of 76 cross-national elections surveys in 43

¹⁷¹ A factor analysis (extraction method: principal axis factoring) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be unsuitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) but a KMO of only 0.628. Further, a reliability analysis produced a Cronbach's alpha of only 0.427.

I additionally included demand for democracy, a measure of diffuse support using principal axis factoring and direct oblimin rotation. Again, the results did not support the use of an index variable. The items were found to be unsuitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) but a KMO of only 0.623. Further, a reliability analysis produced a Cronbach's alpha of only 0.379.

countries between 2001 and 2011 (CSES module 2 and 3).¹⁷² South Africa is the only case in Africa. Unlike, Schäfer (2012) and Anderson and Singer (2008), Han et al. (2016) find no significant effect of (country-level) income inequality on SWD. But they do report a strong interaction effect between income inequality and winner-looser status. This means that the effect of being a winner or loser strengthens as income inequality increases. What is more, their models also suggest that once the interaction between income inequality and winner-loser status is considered, the interaction between the winner-loser distinction and electoral system is insignificant. As Han et al. conclude this suggests that “the mediating effect of income inequality on the relationship between democratic satisfaction and winner-loser status eclipses the mediating effect of electoral systems” (2016: 91).

None of Schäfer (2012), Anderson and Singer (2008) and Han et al. (2016) include a perception based, individual-level, measure of inequality. And generally, research linking individual-level perceptual or attitudinal measures of inequality and SWD is limited. Kang (2014) in a study of Korean attitudes towards democracy, uses an Asianbarometer survey question from 2006 which asks respondents whether economic inequality causes them great concern. Kang (2014) finds that Koreans who reported to be concerned about economic inequality to be significantly less satisfied with democracy in their country.

Research using perception-based measures for African cases is therefore limited. In a study of ten African countries¹⁷³ Cho (2004) found evidence of perceived relative situation being a significant predictor of more SWD in 8 of his ten countries.¹⁷⁴ The effect of perceived relative situation was larger than of interest in politics in all 8 cases. It was comparable or larger in size to perceived national economic performance in six countries (Mali, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Tanzania, Malawi and Botswana). These results suggest that both national and individual economic considerations play a role in how respondents evaluate democracy and how satisfied they are with the functioning thereof. In Zimbabwe and Nigeria perceived relative situation was moreover equal in size to being a partisan.¹⁷⁵ In Africa, to the best of my knowledge, no other study has examined the linkage between perceptions of individual inequality and SWD.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷² The CSES itself consist of more surveys. Han et al. (2016) include only survey in which SWD is available and exclude countries which cannot be considered a democracy in the election year (using Cheibub et al.’s (2020) dichotomous variable of democracy).

¹⁷³ The dataset that Cho (2004) uses includes the following countries: Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

¹⁷⁴ Cho (2004) chose to run country models for each of the 10 countries, rather than a single analysis accounting for country effects. The effect of perceived relative situation was significant in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Nigeria, Tanzania, Malawi, Mali, Botswana and South Africa. The effect was not significant in Lesotho and Mali.

¹⁷⁵ Cho (2004) codes people who say they feel close to the ruling party, or no party as ‘winners’ and people who say they feel close to the opposition party as ‘losers’. Cho codes people who feel close to any party (ruling or opposition) as ‘partisans’ and people who do not feel close to a party as ‘non-partisan’.

¹⁷⁶ Cho (2004) never refers to this variable as a measure of perceived inequality.

Data from the Afrobarometer have in the past been frequently used to capture horizontal, group-based, perceptions of inequality in the study of group mobilization (Langer 2005) and conflict (Stewart et al. 2008; Langer et al. 2009; Brown et al. 2010; Langer & Stewart 2015)).

From the overview of the literature little evidence is available of whether perceptions of inequality shape satisfaction with democracy. This chapter therefore represents the first attempt at testing this linkage cross-nationally for cases in Africa. To assess whether any finding is of value to future modeling of SWD, it is nonetheless important to first understand what is understood to be informing SWD. In the following sections I provide an oversight of the broader literature on predictors of SWD.

2.4 Predictors of satisfaction with democracy

Past research has pointed to a number of predictors of satisfaction with democracy. A number of these predictors can be summarized as perceived positive-both political or economic-performance. These findings support the rational institutional theory which posits that satisfaction is rationally based and informed by how people evaluate institutional performance (Mishler & Rose, 2001). For example, economic performance is widely noted as a predictor of satisfaction with democracy (Powell, 1982; Lewis- Beck, 1988; Evans & Whitefield, 1995; Mishler & Rose, 1996; Carlsen, 2000; Kim, 2009). On the other hand, research has also pointed to political performance such as adherence to rule of law as well as low corruption increasing satisfaction with democracy (Bratton & Mattes, 2001; Anderson & Tverdova, 2003; Mattes & Bratton 2007; Guldbrandtsen & Skaaning, 2010; Norris, 2011; Stockemer & Sundström, 2011; Linde, 2012; Ariely, 2013; Dahlberg & Holmberg, 2014; Christmann & Torcal, 2017; van der Meer & Hakhverdian, 2017). And other aspects of 'good governance' and what democracy stands for intrinsically appear to produce satisfaction with democracy as well. Empirical studies have suggested that accountable government, individual freedoms and rights, procedural integrity in decision-making process and feeling represented by elected officials may increase satisfaction with democracy (Hofferbert & Klingemann, 1999, Bratton & Mattes, 2001; Mattes & Bratton, 2007; Aarts & Thomassen, 2008; Norris, 2011; Quaranta & Martini, 2016; Christman, 2018).

Performance evaluations may be important as they allow people to make judgements about the system as a whole without needing to be too informed about the day to day of government. As Anderson and Guillory note, perceived performance is important because "performance evaluations shape the reputation of political institutions and of the political

system as a whole. Because the policy process involves multiple governmental agents and a lengthy gestation period, citizens have more evidence available about the system as an institutional design for problem solving than about specific political actors" (Anderson & Guillory, 1997: 72).

But positive performance can also be more fundamental. In democratic systems, representation is closely linked to elections. The literature on satisfaction with democracy has produced a strong argument which posits that feeling represented is not as important as feeling to be an election 'winner'. The 'winner/loser hypothesis' introduces institutional features as predictors of satisfaction with democracy. The hypothesis argues that people who support the 'winning' party in elections will consequently perceive their interests to be better represented than those who support a 'losing' party. Subsequent research has linked this 'winner/ loser' effect to the electoral system. Majoritarian systems tend to favour larger parties while commonly disfavours smaller parties. In single-member districts, a large share of the electorate may thus fail to be represented, making them de-facto 'losers'. Conversely, proportional, or consensual systems allow greater access to legislation for smaller parties and a greater chance for smaller parties (and hence interests) to be represented or even partake in a coalition government). This is because majoritarian and proportional systems have fundamentally different principles of representation. In majoritarian systems, 'the majority' rules, in proportional systems, 'as many people as possible' rule (Lijphart, 1984, 4). Importantly, the argument is not that one system creates more satisfaction than the other, but that the type of electoral systems interact with being a winner/ loser. In majoritarian system being a 'loser' is more detrimental to satisfaction as majoritarian system tend to be more polarized. Conversely, in consensual/ proportional systems, being a 'loser' is less detrimental as smaller parties are more likely to coalesce and the distance between government and opposition is likely to be smaller.

2.5 Evidence on SWD in Africa

Research on cases in Africa is far less common than in cases of the global north. Much of the available empirical research of SWD in this context is based on the availability of cross-country data collected by the Afrobarometer since the late 1990s. As will become evident in the discussion below, research employing the Afrobarometer SWD question has operationalized the variable in slightly different forms and assumed different levels of measurement. This makes a clear and direct comparison of results across studies difficult.

Gulbrandsen and Skaaning (2010) used Afrobarometer Round 3 data (2005) to test the effect of system performance on SWD. Their dataset contains 18 countries, although Zimbabwe and

Uganda are excluded on the grounds of not meeting any minimal definition of democracy.¹⁷⁷ Guldbrandsen and Skaaning (2010) used SWD as a continuous 5-point scale ranging from 'very satisfied' as the most positive response to 'this country is not a democracy' as the most negative response. Using a multi-level regression model, the authors found that SWD was significantly shaped by the perceived country's economic situation, past GDP growth, perceived election quality and fair treatment under the law. Likewise, the authors found that political interest and generalized trust were strongly associated with more SWD. These findings point to both egocentric and sociotropic considerations shaping SWD. The results further indicate that while both micro- and macroeconomic explanations are important to consider, only micro-level political ones appear to be relevant. The authors found no significant association between SWD and free elections and civil liberties, respectively. In line with Bratton and Mattes (2001), Guldbrandsen and Skaaning concluded that SWD in the context of Africa is informed by both perceived economic performance and perceived political performance.

Similar results in terms of economic performance are also obtained by Memoli and Quaranta (2019) in a study of 32 African countries using 85 Afrobarometer country-surveys collected between 2002 and 2013. Unlike Guldbrandsen and Skaaning (2010), Memoli and Quaranta use SWD as an ordinal variable and run an ordinal logistic multilevel model accounting for time at level 2 and country at level 3. The models suggest that government performance evaluations in terms of handling the economy and corruption as well as the country's economic situation are significantly associated with SWD.¹⁷⁸

Past research for cases outside of Africa have pointed to strong winner/ loser differences in SWD. However, the studies discussed so far for African cases did not include variables to test or control for such effects. In an earlier study of 10 African countries using Afrobarometer Round 1 data (1999- 2001), Cho (2004) found that both election winners (defined as feeling close to the ruling party or no party) and partisans (defined as people who feel close to any party) were

¹⁷⁷ The findings discussed in this section results from a model which included the following cases: Tanzania, Ghana, Namibia, Mozambique, South Africa, Botswana, Senegal, Kenya, Mali, Benin, Cape Verde, Lesotho, Madagascar, Zambia, Malawi and Nigeria.

¹⁷⁸ Memoli and Quaranta (2019) don't include political performance evaluations as such. They do however include an index of 'economic freedom'. This country-year index is taken from the Heritage Foundation and The Wall Street Journal and comprises "four areas of economic freedom – rule of law, government size, regulatory efficiency, and market openness" (Memoli & Quaranta, 2019: 6). The authors find that positive economic performance evaluations and economic freedom have a conditional association with satisfaction with democracy. In the past rule of law has been used as a political performance and it could be argued that the same applies to regulatory efficiency and market openness. As such, while not directly stated by the authors, their significant finding of freedom of the economy being associated with SWD likely largely reflects effects found by studies linking political performance to SWD. The conditional effect described above, likely reflects the widely accepted collinearity between political and economic performance evaluations.

significantly more satisfied with democracy than election-losers and non-co-partisans.¹⁷⁹ These effects were significant even when controlling for national economic performance, interest in politics and perceived relative situation (discussed above).¹⁸⁰ Cho's (2004) results moreover suggested that the government structure (presidential/ parliamentary system) mediates the relation described above with losers in presidential systems being more dissatisfied than losers in parliamentary systems. Cho's findings have recently been updated and confirmed in a study of 92 elections in 27 European countries using the European Social Surveys rounds 1- 8 by Loveless (2021).

But respondents may also draw from beyond the individual and country level. Gold (2010) conducted a multi-level model of 20 countries for Afrobarometer rounds 1 to 4 (1999- 2009) using SWD as a recoded binary outcome variable (very/ fairly satisfied vs. not very/ not at all satisfied). The results suggest that (ethnic) group-based, meso-level considerations and grievances also shaped SWD in the context of sub-Saharan Africa. These, Gold concluded, were held simultaneously to individual level predictors of SWD, such as level of education and personal living conditions.

2.6 Section conclusion

In this section I overviewed the empirical literature both for cases within and outside of Africa on predictors of satisfaction with democracy. Only a limited literature to date exists testing the effect of inequality on satisfaction with democracy for cases outside of Africa and even fewer exist for cases in Africa. Of course, the question arises whether cases in Africa should be expected to perform differently from cases elsewhere. A comparison of the predictors of SWD present in the literature for cases in and outside of Africa suggests that this is not the case (at least empirically). For cases both outside of and in Africa, research suggests that positive performance evaluations in political and economic matters enhance satisfaction, as does a sense of being a 'winner' of the system (by having voted or being partisan of the ruling party). Some uncertainty exists in the literature on what exactly SWD measures and I used correlation and factor analysis to establish that in the context of my cases, SWD is not a measure of diffuse support for the democracy system in principle, but rather associated with incumbent and institution support. Next, I discuss the data and variables that I will be employing to test the hypotheses laid out in the introduction.

¹⁷⁹ Cho (2004) operationalized SWD as an ordinal variable and ran ordered-logit models.

¹⁸⁰ Respondents were asked in regard to the national economic performance: *How satisfied are you with your life now compared to one year ago?* Respondents were asked in regard to the personal economic conditions: *Now let us speak about your personal economic conditions. Would you say they are worse, the same, or better than other people in (your country)?* Cho (2004) refers to this variable as the 'personal economic condition'. However, I do not agree with this name as it conveys the idea of a measure of an absolute conditions, rather than a measure of relative conditions.

3. Data, methodology and variables

For my analysis I employ Afrobarometer survey data (Round 7), which were collected between September 2016 and September 2018 in 34 African countries.¹⁸¹ The survey was conducted face-to-face, in the respondent's choice of language, using nationally representative samples.¹⁸² The dataset consists of 45812 cases, clustered in 34 countries. Country samples range from 1193 (Guinea) to 2400 (Tanzania, Ghana), yielding an error rate of 2% (N=2400) and 3% (N=1200), respectively. I exclude respondents who said their country is 'not a democracy' as it is unclear whether their response should be considered a factual statement or an evaluation which fits into the scale as an extreme, negative statement.¹⁸³ Moreover, these respondents are excluded from the analysis as it is of little value to ask respondents how satisfied they are with the way democracy is working in their country, if they do not believe their country is a democracy.¹⁸⁴ This leaves N=39092.

Due to the sampling framework (which is nationally representative) the data are clustered within country units.¹⁸⁵ It is therefore recommended to use multilevel modeling (MLM) as a single

¹⁸¹ My dataset includes the following countries: Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, eSwatini, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe. For the Round 7 Afrobarometer data see Afrobarometer (2019).

¹⁸² I apply national weights to ensure gender parity in each country.

¹⁸³ I excluded respondents based on two survey questions. First, I excluded respondents who said that their country is not a democracy, or that they don't understand either the question or term democracy, to the question: *In your opinion how much of a democracy is [country] today?* Respondents are read out response options: *Not a democracy* (coded 1), *A democracy, with major problems* (2), *A democracy, but with minor problems* (3), *A full democracy* (4). I excluded respondents who said they *don't know* or *refuse to answer* the question. I also excluded respondents who said *the country is not a democracy* when asked how satisfied they are with the function of democracy in their country. In the dataset, 830 say that their *country is not a democrcay* in the context of SWD, and 5616 say their *country is not a democrcay* in the context of evalauting the extent of democrcay. I excluded respondents from the analysis who said their country *was not a democrcay* to either question. I moreover excluded respondents who said they *don't understand the term democrcay* (which is a response option in the Extent of democrcay question. See appendix 1 of chapter 4 for further details. I generally excluded cases from the analysis who said they *didn't know*, *refused to answer* or where data were missing.

¹⁸⁴ Note that this approach is different to Guldbrandtsen and Skaaning (2010) (discussed above), who exclude Uganda and Zimbabwe on the grounds that the countries do not meet a minimalist definition of democracy. However, respondents in both countries may think they do live in democracies. In fact, the authors (2010: 166) show that Ugandans report the fifth highest satisfaction with democracy among the countries they consider. Conversely, respondents in countries that were included in the study by Guldbrandtsen and Skaaning (2010) may not feel that their country is a democracy. For this reason – and because I am interested in micro-level relations – I chose to exclude and include cases based on perceptions and evaluations reported by respondents, rather than expert country-ratings.

¹⁸⁵ For information on the sampling methodology of Afrobarometer data see Afrobarometer (2020b).

level analysis would not account for variation in the slopes and intercepts of the predictor variables across clusters (country-units) within the data. These differences can be accounted for by including a second level in the analysis. My level 1 analysis is at the individual level, while my level 2 analysis is at the national level. Given the relative sample sizes at level 1 and level 2 I test only random intercept models and use only restricted maximum likelihood models.¹⁸⁶

3.1 Dependent variable: Satisfaction with democracy

I use an Afrobarometer survey item to measure satisfaction with democracy. The question follows a widely used question text and answer format and reads:

“Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in [respondents' country]?”

Four response options were read out to the respondent, ranging from 'not very satisfied' to 'very satisfied'. Unlike the more diffuse support for democracy as a regime type, this question asks respondent to reflect on the situation in *their* specific country.¹⁸⁷ As such, satisfaction with democracy gauges an evaluation rather than an attitude or value. The question posed in the Afrobarometer closely follows the well-established 'satisfaction with democracy' survey item which has been asked and subsequently analyzed in the existing literature. A slight departure from the standard SWD item is that the question used by Afrobarometer does not mention the response options in the question itself.¹⁸⁸ A limitation to this variable is that no context is given as to what the respondents think democracy ought to deliver or entail or what specifically they are dissatisfied with. A dissatisfied citizen could therefore not mean that democracy is not functioning in that country, but maybe the citizen has a different view of what democracy should be or is thinking of dissatisfaction with the incumbent or their performance. Moreover,

¹⁸⁶ One of the possible issues with my data is that my *n* at level 2 (country) is relatively small (*N*=34), compared to the *n* (*n*<45000) at level 1 (individual). Ideally, data used in an MLM analysis is structured with a large *n* at level 2 and a small *n* at level 1. A possible problem arising from my data could be the overestimation of effect size due to limited case number at level 2. Data with low case numbers at level 2 tend to yield overly small effect sizes when using random slope model. As such I test only random intercept models. To establish whether a multi-level model is warranted, I begin by establishing whether the estimates of covariance parameters are significant. MLM analysis allows for two estimation modes: maximum likelihood and restricted maximum likelihood. Restricted maximum likelihood (REML) is advised to be used when the case number at level two is relatively small. This is the case in my dataset as I use only 34 country cases. To test whether clustering at the country level is significant I first ran a null-model with no predictor variable. The estimates of covariance parameters are significant at the 1% level. To further confirm the necessity for a MLM analysis, I calculated the interclass correlation coefficient (ICC) for either dependent variable. In both cases (using REML estimation) the ICC for Satisfaction with democracy (0.13) meet the minimum threshold of 0.05.

¹⁸⁷ The question in Afrobarometer on support for democracy reads: *Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion? Statement 1: Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government; Statement 2: In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable; Statement 3: For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have.* Taken from Afrobarometer (2020a).

¹⁸⁸ The widely used standard format for the SWD question reads : *On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in {country}?*

the question text and response option may lead respondents to be less likely to say that the country 'is not a democracy' (which isn't read out but captured by the interviewer should the respondents give such assessment) as the question and the answers that are read out may suggest to respondents that the country is in fact a democracy, or that the interviewer (or who the interview is believed to be representing) thinks the country is a democracy.

Evidence for this can be found when looking at the number of respondents who say 'the country is not a democracy' when asked in the context of SWD, compared to being asked about the extent of democracy in their country (to which 'the country is not a democracy' is read out). In the former cases, 830 respondents said 'the country is not a democracy. In the latter case, 5616 said 'the country is not a democracy'. Given this limitation, I excluded respondents who said 'the country is not a democracy' to either question.¹⁸⁹

Across the 34-country sample (N=37902)¹⁹⁰ almost half of respondents are either 'not very satisfied' (30%) or 'not at all satisfied' (17%), while half are 'very satisfied' (16%) or 'fairly satisfied' (36%) (see first bar in figure 4.2, above). Large country variations emerge however, once responses are grouped by country.¹⁹¹ For example, while large majorities in Tanzania (80%), Ghana (80%), Sierra Leone (68%) and Namibia (68%) are satisfied (fairly satisfied+ very satisfied), 87% of Gabonese and 85% of Malagasy are dissatisfied (not very satisfied+ not at all satisfied).¹⁹²

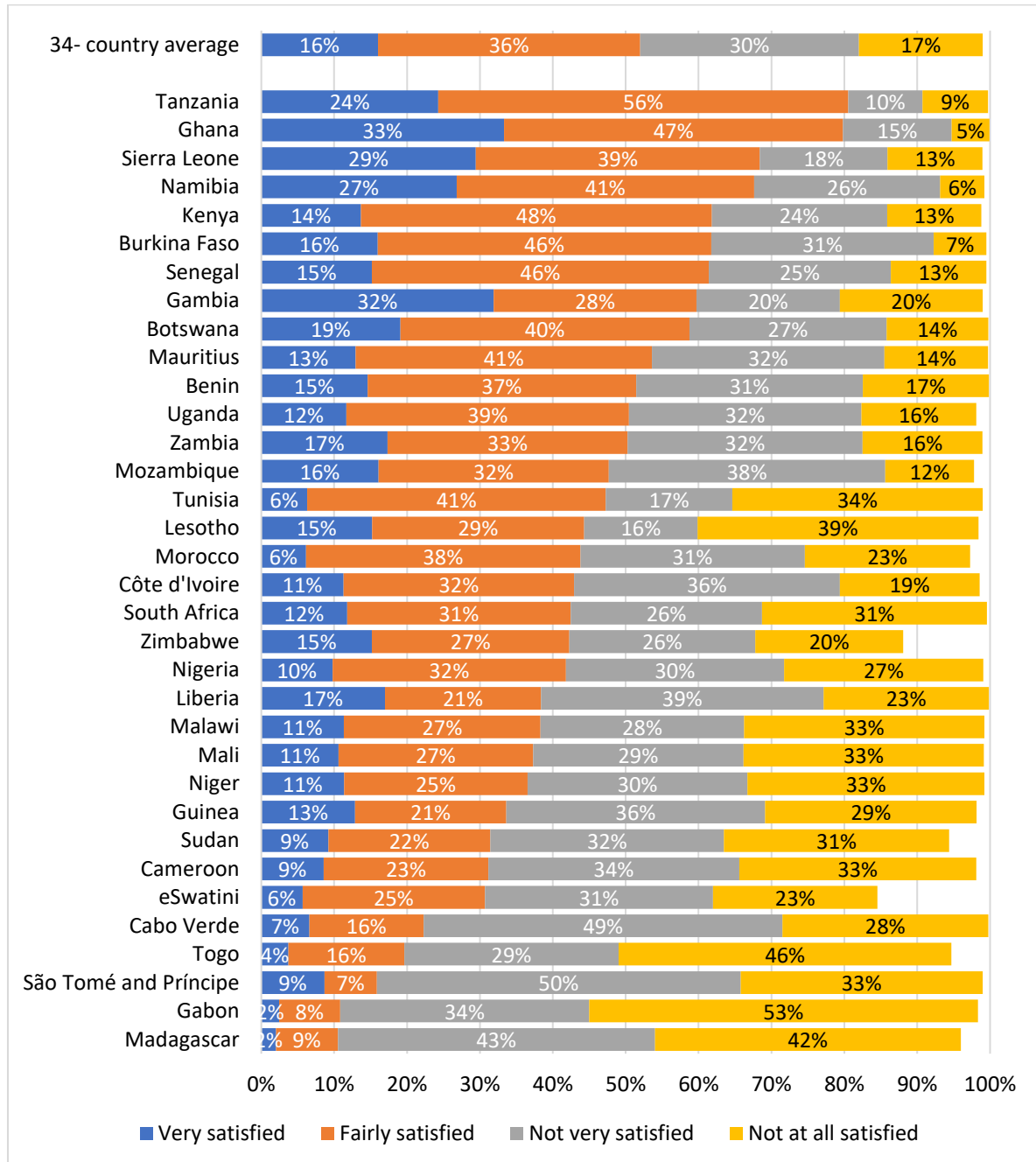
¹⁸⁹ See appendix 1 of chapter 4 for the crosstabulation between SWD and extent of democracy. See appendix 2 of chapter 4 for the correlation coefficients between the two variables by country.

¹⁹⁰ I excluded missing data as well as respondents who *refused to answer* (n=90) or said they *didn't know* (n=1100). The percentage reflect the unweighted percentages, meaning that larger country-samples account for a large share of the data used. While countries with larger populations tend to have a larger sample size of N=2400, and countries with smaller populations tend to have national samples of N=1200, these sample size differences do not reflect the differences in actual populations. The incongruence in sample-to-population ratios may affect the reliability of comparisons of within country results. The data are weighted at country level to ensure gender parity.

¹⁹¹ The data are not weighted to ensure the country sample sizes are equal. I do apply weights within country datasets to ensure gender parity.

¹⁹² In the literature some suggest using a broader conceptualization of political support by distinguishing between demand for, and supply of democracy. Hereby, demand for democracy refers to how much people want democracy (support democracy as a regime type and reject non-democratic regime types), while supply of democracy refers to how much they think they are getting. The later includes SWD as well as a measure of perceived extent of democracy, which asks respondents how democratic they feel their country is. Analogous to how SWD varies markedly between the countries in the Round 7 data, so too does the association between SWD and the perceived extent for democracy vary by country. For example, the association between the two is $r(1788)=0.34$; $p<0.01$ for South Africa, but $r(1059)=0.833$, $p<0.01$ for Zimbabwe. I also tested for internal reliability if I were to collapse SWD and Extent of democracy. The reliability test did not meet the threshold (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.683$). I therefore decided not to collapse the two measures into a single measure of supply for democracy.

Figure 4.2: Satisfaction with democracy. By country. 34 countries (N=39092). Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)



3.2 Predictor variables: Perceived relative deprivation and advantage

In this chapter I test whether perceived equality and perceived relative advantage shape people's satisfaction with democracy. Analogous to other chapters of this thesis, both predictors in this chapter – perceived relative deprivation and advantage – are computed

from the variable 'perceived relative living situation'.¹⁹³ This question asks respondents how they feel their living conditions compared to other people in their country.¹⁹⁴ As in all chapters, I use the terms 'living conditions' (as it reads in the question) and 'living situation' interchangeably. This variable makes no reference to what 'living conditions' refers to. Substantive responses to this question are 'much worse (coded as '1'), worse, same, better, much better' (5).¹⁹⁵

To test whether perceived relative economic equality or advantage inform SWD, I compute four dummy variables which dichotomize the perceived relative situation variable (discussed above) by coding each of the four 'unequal' categories (much better, better, worse, much worse) as 1, respectively, and all other categories as 0. I do not include a dummy for 'equal', making it a reference category. The two dummy variables 'much better or other' and 'better or other' reflect perceived relative economic advantage.

A first descriptive test using the 34-country data without considering country-differences¹⁹⁶ (N=36596), suggests that people who feel better or much better off on average also report more SWD than people who feel equal to others or worse off (see figure 4.3, below).

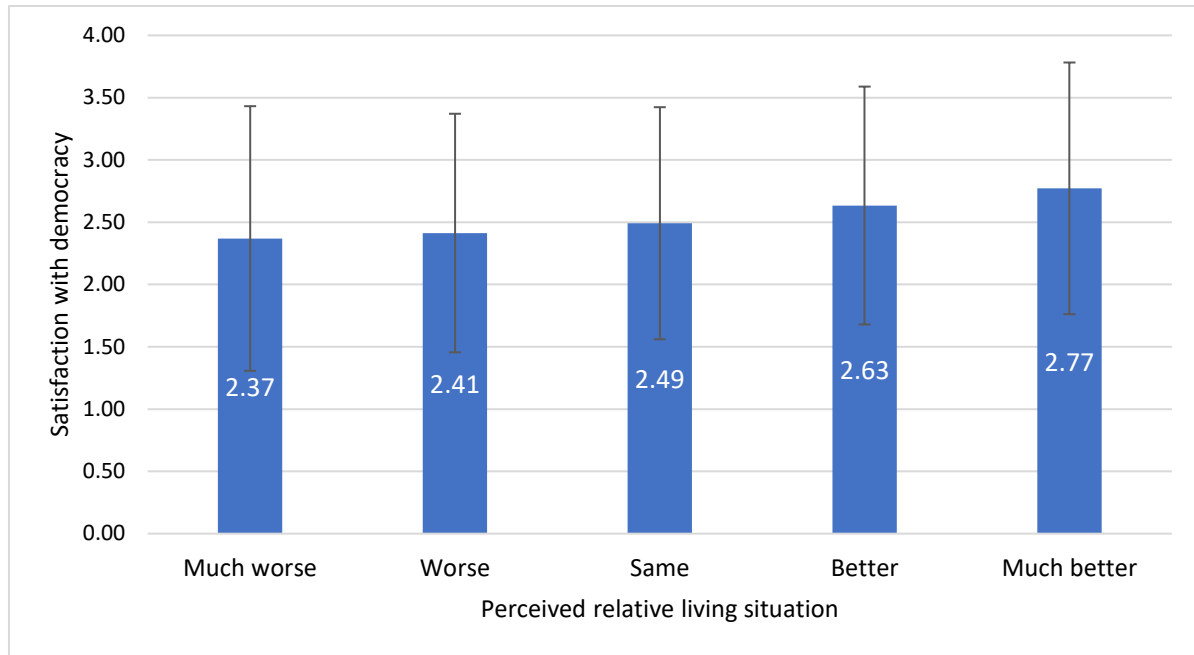
Figure 4.3: Mean satisfaction with democracy (and standard deviation) by perceived relative situation. 34 countries (N=39092). Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)

¹⁹³ I also refer to this variable as a measure of subjective relative living situation or conditions.

¹⁹⁴ Respondents were asked: *In general, how do you rate your living conditions compared to those of other South Africans?*

¹⁹⁵ In my sample of 34 countries, around one in three respondents feel equal (35%), while the majority say they feel either 'better' or 'worse' (54%). Only one in ten say their situation is very different ('much better/ much worse') (11%). For a detailed discussion of the country variation of this variable, see chapter 2 of the thesis.

¹⁹⁶ This data are not weighted to account for country sample-size. This means that larger countries have a larger effect on the scores than smaller countries.



3.3 Control variables

Past research has suggested a number of explanations of why people are satisfied with democracy in their countries, or not. To assess whether perceived equality or relative advantage (as per the hypotheses) are important in understanding satisfaction with democracy, I must hold constant the effect of these known explanations. I therefore include a number of control variables.

3.3.1 Absolute and relative poverty experiences

How satisfied people are with the functioning of democracy is likely not only influenced by how they feel their living situation compares to others, but also their absolute experience of poverty or material deprivations. I include two indices to measure people's absolute experience of deprivation. First, the Lived Poverty Index reflects people's reported experience of poverty in the past year. The index is computed through addition of people's reported poverty experience in five dimensions: food, water, medical care, cooking fuel and cash income. The scale of the Lived Poverty Index is computed into a four-point scale running from 'no lived poverty' (coded 0) to 'high lived poverty' (3).¹⁹⁷ Second, I compute an index which measures people's

¹⁹⁷ The questions read: *Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough food to eat? Gone without enough clean water for home use? Gone without medicines or medical treatment? Gone without enough fuel to cook your food? Gone without a cash income?* A factor analysis (extraction method: maximum likelihood) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.817). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.612 (5 items) and accounted for 52.24% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha of 0.746.

ownership of access to non-elemental goods. These goods are: a radio, television, mobile phone, computer, motor vehicle and bank account.¹⁹⁸ The scale runs from 0 (no access or personal ownership to any item) to 12 (personal ownership of all six items).

Analogous to the previous chapter, I also control for where people fall within a national poverty distribution. I compute two variables which represent the respondent's relative distance to the national LPI and Asset Index mean score (using the indices described above). I refer to these variables as measures of objective relative poverty. As discussed in the introduction, past research (outside of Africa) has suggested that people are less satisfied with democracy. To control for this, I control for income inequality at country level using the Gini coefficient. Lastly, at country level, I control for the level of development by using the Human Development Index.

3.3.2 Intrinsic evaluations of democracy

I largely follow Mattes and Bratton (2007) in the variables I include as political performance evaluations. First, I account for immaterial outputs of the regime by controlling for perceptions of civil freedoms and rights. I create an index which entails survey items which ask respondents to evaluate how often they have to be careful what they say in public, which political organization they join and how they vote.¹⁹⁹ The index is computed through the simple addition of constituent variable scores and without recoding of the resulting scale. Although people enjoy freedoms in political and private life, they might still suffer from discrimination based on group membership. Past research has suggested that ethnicity is highly salient in many African countries (Posner, 2004, 2005; Habyarimana et al., 2007; Eifert et al., 2010;). As such, I include a variable which reflects perceived discrimination of the respondent's ethnic group by government. Moreover, I include a variable which queries how free and fair respondents felt the past national election was.²⁰⁰

Previous studies have found that SWD is negatively influenced by corruption and lack of regime responsiveness (Bratton & Mattes, 2001; Anderson & Tverdova, 2003; Mattes & Bratton, 2007;

¹⁹⁸ The questions read: *Which of these things do you or anyone in your household own? Radio, television, mobile phone, computer, motor vehicle and bank account?* A factor analysis (extraction method: maximum likelihood) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.802). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.665 (6 items) and accounted for 44.42% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha of 0.768.

¹⁹⁹ Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, how often, in this country: do people have to be careful of what they say about politics?/ Do people have to be careful about what political organizations they join?/ Do people have to be careful about how they vote in an election?* A factor analysis (extraction method: principal axis factoring) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.707). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.250 (3 items) and accounted for 74.99% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha of 0.833.

²⁰⁰ Respondents were asked: *On the whole, how would you rate the freeness and fairness of the last national election, held in [20xx].*

Aarts & Thomassen, 2008; Guldbrandtsen & Skaaning, 2010; Norris, 2011; Stockemer & Sundström, 2011; Linde, 2012; Ariely, 2013; Dahlberg & Holmberg, 2014; Christmann & Torcal, 2017; van der Meer & Hakhverdian, 2017). I control for reported overall level of corruption as a proxy for what the respondent deems to be the most salient form of perpetrator of corruption.²⁰¹ To gauge responsiveness, I include a survey item which asks respondents to evaluation whether they feel that MPs listen to them, when they need help.²⁰²

3.3.3 Instrumental evaluations of democracy

I compute two indices which capture respondents' evaluation of how the government is doing in terms of economic performance and service delivery, respectively. Economic performance entails questions about how government is perceived to be managing the economy, improving the living standards of the poor, creating jobs and keeping prices stable.²⁰³ Conversely, social service delivery entails evaluations of how government is handling providing enough to eat, drinking water, health and education.²⁰⁴ The indices are computed by adding response scores for each respondent and do not recode the additive score. The indices are coded for higher scores to represent more positive evaluations.

Related to economic performance evaluations is the assessment of how government is handling inequality. I use a question which asks respondents to evaluate how government is handling narrowing gaps between "rich" and "poor".²⁰⁵ Rather than capturing perceptions of inequality, this variable speaks to how respondents evaluate government to be handling narrowing of gaps between "rich" and "poor". This variable thus speaks to a broad sense of the inequality gap but does not allow any further reasoning as to what form of inequality

²⁰¹ Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, over the past year, has the level of corruption in this country increased, decreased, or stayed the same?*

²⁰² Respondents were asked: *How much of the time do you think the following try their best to listen to what people like you have to say? Members of Parliament*

²⁰³ See appendix 4 of chapter 4. for full description of questions. I used factor analysis to test whether the variables reflected a connected concept. A factor analysis (extraction method: maximum likelihood) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.748). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.405 (4 items) and accounted for 60.14% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha of 0.778.

²⁰⁴ Respondents were asked: *How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say? Ensuring everyone has enough to eat? Providing water and sanitation services? Improving basic health services? Addressing educational needs?*

I used factor analysis to test whether the variables reflected a connected concept. A factor analysis (extraction method: maximum likelihood) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.788). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.547 (4 items) and accounted for 64.35% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha of 0.815.

²⁰⁵ Respondents were asked: *How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say? Narrowing gaps between rich and poor?*

(wealth, income, assets) the respondents is referring to, how much inequality a respondent perceives to exist or how much inequality a respondent deems acceptable or desirable. Widely, respondents report negative views on their government performance in this regard, with more than 3 in 4 saying the government is doing “very badly” or “fairly badly”.

It is likely that people's satisfaction with the functioning of democracy is shaped by what they have experienced in the past or how they expect the functioning to change in the future. To test whether people's SWD is associated with such cross-time considerations, I include a variable which reflects respondent's assessment of the overall direction of the country.²⁰⁶ Respondents were asked whether they feel the country is going in the right or wrong direction and two response options were given in the survey: country going in the wrong direction (0) and country going in the right direction (1).²⁰⁷ Lastly, I include the evaluation of the president's performance.²⁰⁸

3.3.4 Personal ties

In their assessment of democracy, people may evaluate democracy as a means to allow people or parties whom they support, to rule. In the empirical literature, it is widely noted that winner/ loser considerations shape satisfaction with democracy, with election winners being more satisfied than election losers (Anderson & Guillory, 1997; Anderson & Tverdova, 2001; Blais & Gélinau, 2007; Singh et al., 2012; Loveless, 2021). In previous studies on this topic, the winner/ loser variable was captured by using the respondent's reported voting-behavior in the past election. However, this is not captured by Afrobarometer. Following Mattes and Bratton (2007) I instead control for the winner/ loser effect by coding a control variable which distinguishes whether someone feels close to the party of the President or Prime Minister (coded 2), a

²⁰⁶ Respondents were asked: *Let's start with your general view about the current direction of our country. Some people might think the country is going in the wrong direction. Others may feel it is going in the right direction. So let me ask YOU about the overall direction of the country: Would you say that the country is going in the wrong direction or going in the right direction?* (capitalization in original).

²⁰⁷ As the question makes no reference as to what is being queried (politics, economy, conflict), the best estimation is that respondents are reporting upon whatever is most salient to them. The question also makes no reference to whether the question is asking about retrospective comparison or prospective expectations. Indeed, a simple correlation analysis suggests that the variable is equally correlated with retrospective ($r(37043) = 0.298$; $p < .01$) and prospective ($r(34049) = 0.328$; $p < .01$) economic evaluations. Despite this limitation, the question allows me to include some estimation of cross-time considerations. In past round Afrobarometer also asked respondents about their personal situation compared to the past and their expected personal situation in the near future. However, these questions were not asked in Round 7.

²⁰⁸ Respondents were asked: *Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the following people have performed their jobs over the past twelve months, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? The President.* Responses were *strongly disapprove* (coded as 1), *disapprove* (2), *approve* (3) and *strongly approve* (4). I fully acknowledge that from the question alone it is unclear whether the ‘president's performance’ should be deemed a political, economic, cultural or otherwise evaluation. I rather follow Mattes and Bratton's (2007) opinion and categorize the variable as a political evaluation.

different party (1) or no party (0).²⁰⁹ Following Mattes and Bratton (2007) I also include an index of trust in state institutions. The factor is computed by simple addition of four variables: reported trust in the police, army, election committee and courts of law.²¹⁰ The scale runs from no trust (0) to trust a lot (12).

Table 4.4: Descriptive statistics of variables in this chapter. 34 countries (N=39092). Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)²¹¹

Descriptive Statistics				
Name	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
<i>Individual level</i>				
Satisfaction with Democracy	1	4	2.51	0.96
Lived Poverty Index	0	3	1.49	0.93
Asset Index	0	12	5.79	3.23
Freedoms index	0	9	5.86	2.90
Free elections	1	4	3.12	1.03
Ethnic group treated fairly	0	3	0.48	0.84
Level of corruption	1	5	2.48	1.33
MPs listen	0	3	0.77	0.89
Economic performance index	4	16	8.06	2.94
Service delivery index	5	20	12.11	3.53
Government handling income gaps	1	4	1.86	0.87
Performance of the president	1	4	2.75	0.98
Country going in the right direction= 1	53.8% 'country going in the wrong direction'; 46.2% 'right direction'			
Incumbent partisan	0	2	0.73	0.85
Trust state institutions	0	9	5.36	2.77
Interest in politics	0	2	0.79	0.71
Rural= 1	44.5% urban; 55.5% rural			
Level of education	0	9	3.43	2.22
Age	18	106	37.10	14.93

²⁰⁹ Respondents were asked: *Do you feel close to any particular political party? if "Yes": Which party is that?* Respondents who didn't feel close to a party were coded as 0, while those who felt close to any party which was not in power were coded as 1. Respondents who said they were close to a or the ruling party were coded as 2.

²¹⁰ Mattes and Bratton (2007) included a variable on trust in the national broadcaster, however that question is not queried in Round 7. Respondents were asked: *How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? Electoral Commission/ The Police/ Courts of law/ The army?* Responses range from *not at all* (coded as 0), *just a little* (1), *somewhat* (2), to *a lot* (3). A factor analysis (extraction method: maximum likelihood) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.765). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.324 (4 items) and accounted for 58.09% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha of 0.752.

²¹¹ Throughout this chapter (and thesis as a whole) I apply within country weight to ensure gender parity within countries. The percentages displayed in table 4.4 represent valid responses. I exclude respondents who said *don't know*, *refused*, or for whom data are missing. Moreover, only respondents who believe that live in a democracy (even one with major flaws) are included.

Female= 1	49.7% Men; 50.3% Women			
Country level				
Rule of law index	0.07	0.91	0.57	0.21
Economic growth in % (mean: 2011-2017)	1.74	6.93	4.64	1.49
Majoritarian electoral system= 1	44.1% non-majoritarian electoral system; 55.9% majoritarian			
Income inequality (Gini)	30.80	63.00	42.62	8.41
GDP (pc/PPP)	1200	21600	5358	5250
Human Development Index	0.35	0.79	0.55	0.10

3.3.5 Interest

Anderson and Guillory (1997) find that interest in politics increases SWD. Unfortunately, the most recent available Afrobarometer round (R7) does not ask respondents about their interests in politics. Rather, I use a proxy for interest, which is discussing politics with friends and family.²¹²

I also include sociodemographic variables which have been commonly used in the literature. I control for age, gender, location (urban vs rural setting), and level of education.

²¹² Respondents were asked: *When you get together with your friends or family, would you say you discuss political matters?* Response options ranged from *never* (coded as '0') to *frequently* (coded as '2').

4. Analysis

In this section I test whether perceived lived equality (hypothesis 1) or perceived relative advantage (hypothesis 2) shapes how satisfied ordinary Africans are with the way democracy is working in their country. I proceed in two steps. I first test the hypotheses in a series of models in which I only include sociodemographic control variables, measures of objective and relative poverty as well as level 2 country-controls (section 4.1)²¹³. In section 4.2, I then construct more comprehensive models in which I compare the predictors of interest against known predictors of SWD from past research. This will allow me to say not only which hypothesis holds true, but whether my predictor variables of interest are important, compared to what we know to be predictors of SWD.

4.1 Testing the main effects

The regression results – displayed in table 4.5 – suggest that satisfaction with democracy is associated with egocentric considerations, rather than perceptions of equality.²¹⁴ If satisfaction with democracy was associated with a sense of equality, we would expect that feeling anything but equal to others would be consistently associated with less or more satisfaction with democracy. Rather, the coefficients suggest that respondents who feel relatively deprived are less satisfied with democracy, while those who feel they are better off than others, are more satisfied. Further, models 1b to 3b demonstrate that these results are significant even when controlling for respondent's absolute poverty levels (both objective and subjective) as well as sociodemographic factors, such as location, age and education. This means that regardless of how poor someone is objectively (which in itself is associated with less SWD – see model 2a), people who feel better off than others are more satisfied with how democracy is working and people who feel worse off are less satisfied with democracy. These results suggest that hypothesis 1 – which expected that feeling equal to others would enhance

²¹³ The data I use are clustered at various levels, but most obviously at the country level. Country-units may be significant in how causal relations work at the individual level. To test whether national level inequality affects satisfaction with democracy I include the Gini score. Second, I control for type of electoral system using data from International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). In the literature, authors have pointed to heightened winner/loser divide in majoritarian systems (Lijphart, 1999; Klingemann, 1999; Aarts & Thomassen, 2008; Bohrman & Golder, 2013; Thomassen 2014). I recode the IDEA data to code '1' if a country uses a majoritarian system and '0' if it does not (PR, mixed, both). A full list of electoral systems by country can be found in appendix 5 of chapter 4. I also control for rule of law using the Varieties of democracy rule of law index, economic growth using the national GDP per capita (PPP) and mean economic growth between 2011 and 2017. I also include control variables at individual level for education, location (urban or rural), gender and age.

²¹⁴ The coefficients reported here in-text and in the tables are estimates of fixed effects. The estimates indicate the change in value in the dependent variable with each 1-unit change in the independent variable.

satisfaction – must be rejected. Conversely, hypothesis 2 – which expects those who feel relatively better off – can tentatively be accepted.

In the previous chapter, we examined the linkage between perceived relative living situation and support and demand for democracy. The results suggested that in most cases feeling only moderately relatively deprived was not significantly associated with more or less support or demand for democracy. The findings here tell a different story. Even people who feel only moderately relatively deprived are significantly less satisfied with democracy, even when controlling for their objective poverty experience and sociodemographic variables. This suggest that although people who feel moderately relatively deprived appear not to question the regime form in principle, they are very much aware of their relative situation when judging democracy in action. In addition, the findings here suggest that feelings of moderate relative deprivation are most strongly linked to satisfaction with democracy than feelings of moderately relative advantage. Comparing the respective effect sized (in all models shown in table 4.5, below), we can see that the effect size for feeling moderately deprived compared to others ($\beta = -0.116^{***}$, model 1) is considerably larger than feeling moderately advantaged compared to others ($\beta = 0.065^{***}$, model 1).²¹⁵ It is only for feeling extreme perceptions that the effect size is larger for those who feel severely advantaged ($\beta = 0.206^{***}$, model 1) than it is for those who feel severely deprived compared to others ($\beta = -0.143^{***}$, model 1).

These results demonstrate that how people feel their living conditions compare to other people has different effects on support for a democratic regime in principle than on actual evaluations of the functioning of a democratic regime in practice.²¹⁶ Analogous to the previous chapter, I find that country-level income inequality is not significantly associated with satisfaction with democracy.²¹⁷

²¹⁵ Throughout this section I use the following classification: * $p \leq 0.05$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, *** $p \leq 0.001$.

²¹⁶ As a reminder, I only include people who say that their country is a democracy, a democracy with minor problems or a democracy with major problems. I exclude people who say that 'their country is not a democracy'.

²¹⁷ It must be emphasized that this could be an issue of time-incongruent data. As noted in the discussion of the Gini data in the previous chapter, Gini data are not regularly available for African countries. Throughout this thesis I use the most recently available data, however this in some cases is 10 years older than the Afrobarometer survey data. However, Gini scores generally do not change dramatically over short periods of time and it is documented that inequality levels in many African countries have been stable for some time (see Beegle et al. (2016), for example)

Table 4.5: Predicting satisfaction with democracy with perceived equality and perceived relative position. 34 countries (N=39092). Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)

	M1a: relative living situation	M1b: controls	M1c: objective relative poverty (LPI)	M1c: objective relative poverty (Assets)	M1d: country inequality	M2a: poverty	M2b: country poverty	M3a: Complete economic model 1	M3b: Complete economic model 2
<i>Intercept</i>	2.477***(0.056)	2.386***(0.063)	2.381***(0.063)	2.389***(0.063)	2.494***(0.297)	2.623***(0.063)	2.3***(0.307)	2.671***(0.377)	2.41***(0.397)
Much Worse= 1	-0.143***(0.02)	-0.184***(0.02)	-0.14***(0.02)	-0.188***(0.02)	-0.184***(0.02)	-0.144***(0.02)	-0.184***(0.02)	-0.144***(0.02)	-0.144***(0.02)
Worse= 1	-0.116***(0.013)	-0.145***(0.013)	-0.119***(0.013)	-0.151***(0.013)	-0.145***(0.013)	-0.126***(0.013)	-0.145***(0.013)	-0.126***(0.013)	-0.126***(0.013)
Better= 1	0.065***(0.012)	0.075***(0.012)	0.06***(0.012)	0.08***(0.012)	0.075***(0.012)	0.065***(0.012)	0.075***(0.012)	0.065***(0.012)	0.065***(0.012)
Much Better= 1	0.206***(0.028)	0.232***(0.028)	0.214***(0.028)	0.231***(0.028)	0.232***(0.028)	0.214***(0.028)	0.232***(0.028)	0.214***(0.028)	0.214***(0.028)
Relative to national LPI mean			-0.098***(0.006)						-0.103***(0.006)
Relative to national Asset Index mean				-0.009***(0.002)				-0.014***(0.002)	
Lived Poverty Index						-0.103***(0.006)		-0.103***(0.006)	
Asset Index						-0.014***(0.002)			-0.014***(0.002)
Age		0.003***(0)	0.003***(0)	0.003***(0)	0.003***(0)	0.003***(0)	0.003***(0)	0.003***(0)	0.003***(0)
Female= 1		-0.019*(0.009)	-0.022*(0.009)	-0.026***(0.01)	-0.019*(0.009)	-0.03***(0.01)	-0.02*(0.009)	-0.03***(0.01)	-0.03***(0.01)
Rural= 1		0.102****(0.01)	0.116****(0.01)	0.091****(0.011)	0.102****(0.01)	0.1****(0.011)	0.102****(0.01)	0.1****(0.011)	0.1****(0.011)
Level of education		-0.036****(0.002)	-0.042****(0.003)	-0.031****(0.003)	-0.036****(0.002)	-0.035****(0.003)	-0.036****(0.002)	-0.035****(0.003)	-0.035****(0.003)
Income inequality (Gini)					-0.003(0.007)			-0.002(0.007)	-0.003(0.007)
Human Development Index							0.156(0.547)	-0.07(0.539)	0.356(0.568)
<i>Within country R²</i>	0.010	0.024	0.031	0.026	0.024	0.033	0.024	0.033	0.033
<i>Between country R²</i>	0.021	0.021	0.009	0.022	-0.005	0.107	-0.007	0.056	-0.049

Note: Cell entries are linear mixed model coefficients and standard errors in parentheses. Some effect-sizes may be displayed as zero in the table as they have been rounded off. *p <= 0.05, **p <= 0.01, ***p <= 0.001.

While the results suggest a significant association between relative situation and SWD, it is unclear whether relative situation ought to be considered in future research on SWD. First, as with the models for support and demand for democracy discussed in the previous chapter, perceived relative living situation alone accounts for little variance of satisfaction with democracy within countries. In all models (1 to 3b) the explained within-country variance accounted for by the models was less than 1%, suggesting that other – unaccounted – explanations are more important. And second, it is unclear as to how the effect size compares to other known predictors of SWD or whether the effect of relative situation is partially or even fully accounted for by other predictors of SWD. To test this, I test relative situation in the context of known predictors of SWD as per the literature (section 4.3).

4.2 Does equality shape satisfaction only for those who see it as a core feature of democracy?

The results in the previous section suggest that satisfaction with democracy is shaped by egocentric relative comparisons, rather than a sense of being equal to others. While this finding is not implausible given past research which also suggests egocentric motives, it stands in contrast to the descriptive findings discussed in the introduction of this chapter which found that a sizeable share of respondents actually view notions of equality and equity as core characteristics of democracy. Given this finding, one would assume that people are satisfied with the functioning of democracy when they feel that a core characteristic of democracy – equality – is fulfilled. From the findings above this appears not to be the case. However, it may also be that equality matters only for those who view equality as a core characteristic of democracy, but not for others. Modelling the relation between equality and satisfaction with democracy without disaggregating between these two groups may therefore blur important differences for either group.

To disaggregate the linkage between equality and satisfaction with democracy I use Afrobarometer Round 5 data (as I did in the introduction), which is the most recent round of available data in which respondents were asked about what they see as core elements of democracy.²¹⁸ Using the two questions regarding what they see as the core characteristic of democracy, I group respondents by whether they chose a response which reflects a notion of

²¹⁸ Round 5 was conducted in Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mauritius, Sierra Leone, Niger, Togo, Burundi, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Swaziland, Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia.

equality or whether they chose a different response. The responses which capture a notion of equality are 'Government narrows the gap between the rich and the poor' and 'Government ensures job opportunities for all'.²¹⁹ The grouped multilevel model results are displayed in table 4.6, below.

Estimating the relation between perceived relative living situation and satisfaction with democracy in this disaggregated way suggests that egocentric motivations shape satisfaction with democracy regardless of whether someone views equality as a core characteristic of democracy or not. For both groups, respondents who feel they are relatively better off are more satisfied with the way democracy is working and those who feel relatively deprived compared to others are less satisfied.

Table 4.6: Modelling Satisfaction with democracy by perceived relative situation and perceived essential characteristic of democracy. 34 countries . Afrobarometer Round 5 data (2011-2012)

	Essential characteristic of democracy			
	Narrowing gaps between rich and poor	Other	Inclusive job opportunities	Other
<i>Intercept</i>	2.64(0.05)***	2.74(0.05)***	2.66(0.05)***	2.66(0.04)***
Much worse vs other	-0.19(0.02)***	-0.18(0.03)***	-0.17(0.02)***	-0.21(0.03)***
Worse vs other	-0.1(0.01)***	-0.16(0.02)***	-0.1(0.01)***	-0.13(0.02)***
Better vs other	0.05(0.01)***	0.02(0.02)	0.03(0.01)*	0.05(0.02)**
Much better vs other	0.2(0.03)***	0.2(0.06)***	0.2(0.03)***	0.17(0.04)***
<i>Within country R²</i>	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
<i>Between country R²</i>	0.02	-0.03	0.01	0.00

Note: Cell entries are linear mixed model coefficients and standard errors in parentheses. Some effect-sizes may be displayed as zero in the table as they have been rounded off.

*p <= 0.05, **p <= 0.01, ***p <= 0.001.

While the results suggest a significant association between relative situation and SWD, it is unclear whether relative situation ought to be considered in future research on SWD. First, it is unclear as to how the effect size compares to other known predictors of SWD. And second, it is unknown as to whether the effect of relative situation is partially or even fully accounted for by other predictors of SWD. To test this, I build a more complex model in which I run relative situation concurrently with known predictors of SWD as per the literature.

²¹⁹ See appendix 3 of chapter 4 for a detailed description of the question and response options.

4.3 Is relative situation important in the context of known predictors of SWD?

The existing literature (see section 1 above) points to a number of predictors of satisfaction with democracy. To test the effect of perceived relative situation above and beyond such variables, I include both complementary and competing predictors of SWD as well as commonly used sociodemographic control-variables in the predictor models. Following the recommendation by Lee Ray (2003), I run separate models for separate explanatory variable-groups as to not to include intervening variables in a single model.²²⁰

Results

The results emphasize that how people feel compared to others – both negative and positive comparisons – is significantly associated with SWD, even when controlling for widely used explanations of SWD. Table 4.7, below, displays the regression results.

In all models, feeling much better off than others was significantly associated with more SWD.²²¹ This effect is statistically significant above and beyond intrinsic and instrumental evaluations, partisanship and interest. This means that people who feel much better off than others are more satisfied with democracy than people who feel equal, regardless of how they evaluate performance in regard the intrinsic and instrumental performance, whether they support the ruling party or not and whether they are interested in politics or not (as well as the control variables discussed in the first series of models in section 4.1). In addition, the results demonstrate that people who feel deprived compared to others, are less satisfied with democracy, even when controlling for intrinsic evaluation of democracy, partisanship and interest. In the case of instrumental evaluations – such as the performance of the president and the direction of the country more widely – the effect for feeling moderately deprived compared to others was significant, while an severe sense of relative deprivation was not (see model 5). This suggest

²²⁰ I nonetheless encounter some issues of multicollinearity. I have included a correlation matrix of all control variables in appendix 6 of chapter 4. For example, I find economic performance evaluation and social services performance were highly correlated ($r(33968) = 0.636$; $p < 0.001$) as were economic performance evaluations and handling of income gaps ($r(34534) = 0.664$; $p < 0.001$).

²²¹ For many results discussed in this section, it is impossible to determine a causal direction between the hypothesized independent and dependent variables. For example, respondents who are more satisfied with democracy (for whatever reason) may therefore think more highly of the president's performance or say that the country is headed in the right direction (see discussion below). In this chapter, I follow past research in my decision as to what variables I view as independent and what variable I view as dependent (see discussion in section 1). Further, I try to discuss the results of the regression analysis in purely association terms as not to suggest a causal direction.

Table 4.7: Modelling satisfaction with democracy. 33 countries. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)²²²

	M4: Intrinsic evaluations of democracy	M5: Instrumental evaluations of democracy	M6: Partisanship and trust	M7: Interest	M8: Complete model
<i>Intercept</i>	1.613(0.349)	0.769(0.432)	2.101(0.337)	2.691(0.378)	0.127(0.408)
Much Worse= 1	-0.068*** (0.022)	-0.006(0.021)	-0.131*** (0.021)	-0.146*** (0.02)	-0.009(0.024)
Worse= 1	-0.071*** (0.014)	-0.038*** (0.013)	-0.105*** (0.013)	-0.126*** (0.013)	-0.02(0.015)
Better= 1	0.05*** (0.013)	0.031* (0.013)	0.064*** (0.012)	0.065*** (0.012)	0.028(0.014)
Much Better= 1	0.17*** (0.03)	0.112*** (0.03)	0.193*** (0.028)	0.213*** (0.028)	0.129*** (0.034)
Rel. to nat. Asset Index mean	-0.006** (0.002)	-0.007** (0.002)	-0.01*** (0.002)	-0.013*** (0.002)	-0.002(0.002)
Lived Poverty Index	-0.059*** (0.007)	-0.048*** (0.006)	-0.088*** (0.006)	-0.102*** (0.006)	-0.031*** (0.007)
Freedoms index	-0.014*** (0.002)				-0.008*** (0.002)
Free elections	0.202*** (0.006)				0.136*** (0.006)
Ethnic group treated fairly	-0.061*** (0.007)				-0.028*** (0.007)
Change in corruption	0.113*** (0.004)				0.054*** (0.005)
MPs listen	0.089*** (0.006)				0.035*** (0.007)
Economic performance index		0.045*** (0.003)			0.031*** (0.003)
Service delivery index		0.015*** (0.002)			0.008*** (0.002)
Government handling income gaps		0.002(0.008)			0.004(0.009)
Country going in the right direction= 1		0.167*** (0.006)			0.108*** (0.007)
Performance of the president		0.241*** (0.011)			0.173*** (0.013)
Incumbent partisan			0.097*** (0.006)		0.033*** (0.007)
Trust in state institutions			0.073*** (0.002)		0.035*** (0.002)
Interest in politics				-0.024** (0.007)	-0.019* (0.008)
Age	0.002*** (0)	0.002*** (0)	0.002*** (0)	0.003*** (0)	0.001*** (0)
Female= 1	-0.02(0.011)	-0.003(0.01)	-0.006(0.01)	-0.035*** (0.01)	0.004(0.012)
Rural= 1	0.056*** (0.012)	0.06*** (0.011)	0.058*** (0.011)	0.102*** (0.011)	0.032* (0.013)
Level of education	-0.03*** (0.003)	-0.026*** (0.003)	-0.028*** (0.003)	-0.033*** (0.003)	-0.022*** (0.003)
Rule of Law index	0.244(0.249)				0.097(0.204)
Economic growth (mean: 2011- 2017)		0.04(0.034)			0.068(0.033)
Majoritarian electoral system= 1			0.1(0.097)		0.054(0.088)
Income inequality (Gini)	-0.004(0.007)	-0.004(0.005)	-0.002(0.006)	-0.002(0.007)	-0.001(0.006)
Human Development Index	0.195(0.524)	0.611(0.504)	0.025(0.475)	-0.07(0.541)	0.693(0.483)
<i>Within country R²</i>	0.124	0.169	0.087	0.034	0.208
<i>Between country R²</i>	0.245	0.384	0.282	0.050	0.532

Note: Cell entries are linear mixed model coefficients and standard errors in parentheses. Some effect-sizes may be displayed as zero in the table as they have been rounded off. *p <= 0.05, **p <= 0.01, ***p <= 0.001.

that how people evaluate democracy in terms of instrumental expectations mitigates the effect of feeling much worse off than others.

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, empirical scrutiny of the predictors of SWD in Africa are few and far between. For example, Guldbrandtsen and Skaaning (2010) used Afrobarometer Round 3 data and Memoli and Quaranta (2019) used data collected up to 2013. Both studies therefore use data collected further back than the data used here. It is therefore worth elaborating on a few observations as to what informs SWD in Africa. Both Guldbrandtsen and Skaaning (2010) and Memoli and Quaranta (2019) concluded that SWD in Africa is informed by both perceived economic performance and perceived political

²²² eSwatini – an absolute monarchy – is not included in the analyses.

performance. The results in this chapter are able to confirm this conclusion with the newest Afrobarometer data, suggesting time-stable cognitive models by which respondents assess the functioning of democracy in Africa. This is interesting not only given the passing of time, but also the additional country cases which were included in this chapter, compared to the earlier study by Guldbrandtsen and Skaaning (2010) and Memoli and Quaranta (2019).²²³

Among intrinsic evaluations of democracy, quality of elections ($\beta = 0.202^{***}$, model 4) and the change in perceived levels of corruption ($\beta = 0.113^{***}$; model 4) have the strongest effects on SWD. The results suggest that perceiving elections to be of good quality and levels of corruption to be declining is significantly associated with more satisfaction with democracy. Other evaluations feeling that MPs listen ($\beta = 0.089^{***}$, model 4) and feeling that one's ethnic group is not discriminated against ($\beta = -0.061^{***}$, model 4), while significant are smaller in effect size. Across all models, no variable was more strongly correlated with SWD than the performance of the president ($\beta = 0.241^{***}$, model 5). Other instrumental evaluation such as positive government performance evaluations in both economic matters ($\beta = 0.045^{***}$, model 5) and social services ($\beta = 0.015^{***}$, model 5) were also significantly correlated with SWD but how government was perceived to be handling narrowing gaps between rich and was not.

Further, people appear to make cross-time assessments when judging democracy's performance. People who said that the country was going in the right direction, as opposed to the wrong one, were significantly more satisfied with democracy ($\beta = 0.108^{***}$, model 8). This suggests that while current performance matters, satisfaction with democracy appears to also be linked to cross-time comparisons. Unlike Guldbrandtsen and Skaaning (2010: 169) who find that the average GDP/cap growth between 2000 and 2005 was significantly associated with more SWD, I find that country economic growth in the recent past is not significantly associated with SWD at country level. To test whether economic growth taken alone (without controlling for income inequality and human development) matters, I re-ran model 5 including only economic growth at the country level. Alas, the effect remained non-significant.²²⁴

In line with previous work – both in Africa and beyond – I find that people who are partisans of the ruling party were significantly more satisfied with democracy, than those who were not ($\beta = 0.1^{***}$, model 6). While being a partisan of the incumbent's party is significantly associated with more SWD, partisanship does not mitigate the effect of being worse off. This could suggest a certain degree of sophistication in the assessments of democracy that Africans display, where affiliation with the ruling party does not 'gloss over' insufficiencies in the day-to-day of people's lives.

²²³ Countries that were surveyed in Round 7, but not in round 3 are: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, The Gambia, Guinea, Liberia, Mauritius, Morocco, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Togo and Tunisia. There are no countries that were surveyed in round 3 but not in round 7.

²²⁴ See Appendix 7 of chapter 4.

In model 8 I included all explanatory and control variables. When all competing explanations are considered in a single model, only feeling much better off than others is significantly associated with satisfaction with democracy. Feeling much better off – in this model – had one of the strongest effects on satisfaction with democracy along the performance of the president quality of elections and the overall direction of the country. This model accounted for around 20% of variance in satisfaction with democracy within countries and approximately 53% of variance between countries which is comparable at country-level. The results suggest that these are powerful models in explaining variance in satisfaction with democracy in Africa. The results also underline that perceived relative situation is significantly associated with SWD. In particular, perceptions of relative advantage should be considered along widely used explanatory variables of SWD in the future.

4.4 Section conclusion

What do we take away? The results suggest that relative self-placement is significantly associated with SWD and should be included in predictor models in the future. Feeling much better off than others shapes SWD above and beyond known predictors of SWD. If one feels this much better off, everything else may not be irrelevant, but feeling much better off than others increases SWD regardless of other factors. Comparing across the models, only political evaluations completely suppress the effects of feeling relative worse off. This is important. The results suggest that if countries get political performance right, egocentric notions of relative living situation are no longer significantly associated with SWD. Taking the explained variance between countries into account further underlines the importance of political factors in explaining SWD in Africa. 54% of variance between countries in terms of satisfaction with democracy is accounted for by the political evaluations model, more than any other model.

The results in this section reflect the most recent Afrobarometer survey data and thus provide a much-needed update to past studies of SWD in Africa. I am able to confirm that how respondents evaluate the functioning of democracies appears stable across time. Both political and economic evaluations shape SWD, as do winner/ loser gaps. Moreover, the results point to strong cross-time considerations that respondents make in assessing democracy. This is weakly understood from past research.²²⁵ Of course a limitation to the results presented here is that likely different evaluations and predictor of SWD are related and are likely intervening, rather than strictly independent variables. Here the use of a structural equation models to conduct path analyses would be advised. However, the aim of this chapter is not to argue how competing and complimentary predictor are best understood to shape SWD, but

²²⁵ Mattes and Bratton (2007) include comparisons to the past regime (prior to democracy), but not to past performance of the democratic regime. Guldbrandtson and Skaaning (2010) include only the average GDP/cap growth 2000- 2005, but no perceptual variable.

whether or not subjective comparisons should be considered as one of those predictors or not. The results suggest that they should.

5. Conclusion

Given the public and media interest in the effects of inequality on democracy, surprisingly little empirical research has tested this linkage from an individual perspective: are people who don't feel equal to other people in their country less satisfied with democracy?

Using the most recent round of Afrobarometer data (collected 2016- 2018) comprised of 34 African countries (N=39092) I find that feeling relatively advantaged compared to others in regard to ones living situation is significantly associated with higher levels of satisfaction with democracy while feeling relatively deprived to others is significantly associated with less SWD. Rather than individual perceptions of feeling materially equal to others, SWD appears to be a function of feeling relatively better off than others. This seems to tell us about egocentric expectations that ordinary Africans have regarding democracy.

However, taken alone these findings are only of limited value. The important question is whether perceptions of relative situation account for something which is previously unaccounted for in the literature. In other words, do perceptions of relative situation remain significant predictors of SWD when pitted against other, known predictors? If so, this chapter would show that perceptions of relative situation should be included in explanatory models of SWD going forward. I was able to confirm that perceived relative economic advantage holds up against widely used predictors of SWD such as political performance evaluations, the country's economic situation, incumbent support and engagement. The results therefor suggest the value of including subjective measures in future models of SWD as competing predictors.

This chapter contributes to the literature in several ways. First, I provide an update to the understanding of predictors of SWD in Africa using the most recent round of Afrobarometer data (2016- 2018). By comparison, the most recent cross-national study of SWD used data collected in 2013 (Memoli & Quaranta, 2019). I am able to largely confirm results obtained in earlier work (Cho, 2004; Gold, 2010; Guldbrandtsen & Skaaning, 2010; Memoli & Quaranta, 2019), namely that SWD is significantly associated by both political and economic performance evaluations as well as partisan winner/ loser considerations. This suggests that the explanatory model for SWD in Africa is relatively stable across time.

Second, I contribute to the literature by showing that perceived relative economic advantage is significantly correlated with SWD, above and beyond previously used predictors of SWD. As such, my work motivates the inclusion of such measures in future work examining SWD in Africa. Moreover, my findings in regard to covariates of SWD in Africa are in line with what has been found in other cases, outside of Africa. As such it is plausible that my finding regarding perceived relative situation may hold in cases outside of Africa as well. A revision of past models for cases outside of Africa may be advisable.

Third, I contribute to the literature on the relationship between inequality and attitudes towards democracy and political support. The results in this chapter suggest that perceived relative economic advantage, rather than feeling equal to others, increases satisfaction with democracy. These results stand in contrast to the previous chapter, which found that feeling equal to others rather than relatively advantaged or deprived, significantly increased support and demand for democracy. Unlike support for democracy as a regime type, satisfaction with democracy is shaped by hierarchical relative considerations, rather than subjective experiences of equality. This could suggest that sociotropic considerations are more pertinent in regard to more diffuse support, while egocentric ones emerge in regard to more specific support.

Lastly, I contribute to a growing literature which explores the value of perception and experience-based measures of inequality in explaining behavior and attitudes, rather than objective measures of inequality. A growing body of research suggests that objective measures of inequality only weakly correlate (if at all) with how ordinary people perceive inequality levels. This study helps in furthering the understanding of capturing inequality from an individual level, perceptual perspective. My findings highlight that experiences of inequality are not purely framed by material considerations. I moreover contribute to the conceptual understanding of perceptual measures of relative situation.

Several limitations must be acknowledged and may provide promising starting positions for future research in this area. First, it is possible that the causal direction assumed in this chapter in fact runs in the reverse direction, meaning that more satisfaction with democracy leads to perceptions of more positive relative circumstances, political evaluations, economic performance evaluations etc. This problem has also been acknowledged by Memoli and Quaranta (2019) who suggest using, where and if possible, panel data to account for patterns of attitudes across time. Second, as the regression models suggest, cross-time assessments appear important in understanding how satisfied people are with the functioning of democracy. Here, controlling for the effect of time in a multi-level model may provide further insight. Alternatively, if possible, a longitudinal panel study on SWD would allow for the tracking of economic and political assessment and their (changing) relation with satisfaction with democracy. Third, it is not explicitly captured what respondents are referring to when they say their 'living situation' is better or the same as others. Here follow up question in the Afrobarometer querying the comprehension of the question would be advisable. Alternatively, a qualitative study could be useful to understand localized patterns of how respondents are responding to this question.

This chapter offers a first oversight of accounting for variance in satisfaction with democracy using perception-based, relational, and individual-level factors in Africa, and possibly beyond. The results are promising and should encourage the use of such measures in future research.

References - Chapter 4

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Chapter 5

Keeping tabs?

Perceptions of relative deprivation and political trust in Africa

Abstract - Chapter 5

What are the implications of economic inequality for political trust (i.e. trust in government and state institutions)? Political trust forms an important function in representative political systems. On the one hand, political trust facilitates the efficient functioning of government by allowing governments to make day-to-day decisions without consulting the electorate or using coercion (Newton et al., 2018). On the other hand, political trust simplifies complex political processes and reduces monitoring costs for ordinary people. The existing literature has shown that macroeconomic performance (including levels of inequality) and evaluations shape political trust, but the literature has paid little attention, until recently, to the role of individual perceptions and subjective experiences of inequality. However, little research has focused on cases in Africa regarding inequality and political trust.

In this chapter, I use Afrobarometer survey data collected from over 40000 respondents in 34 African countries between 2016 and 2018. I use multi-level modelling to demonstrate that perceptions of relative deprivation are significantly associated with less trust in representative government institutions and, more weakly, with less trust in state institutions. The effect for perceptions of relative deprivation remains significant when controlling for macroeconomic conditions and performance evaluations. For trust in representative government institutions, the effect size of relative deprivation is comparable or larger in size to frequently cited covariates of trust, such as location, level of education, and government economic performance, suggesting that perceived relative deprivation is indeed an important covariate of such trust. Feeling relatively advantaged is also significantly associated with more trust in representative government institutions. This may reflect strong neopatrimonial ties between citizens and political agents. In demonstrating that individual level economic considerations affect political trust in Africa, this chapter challenges the conventional wisdom that only macroeconomic factors affect trust.

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1. Introduction

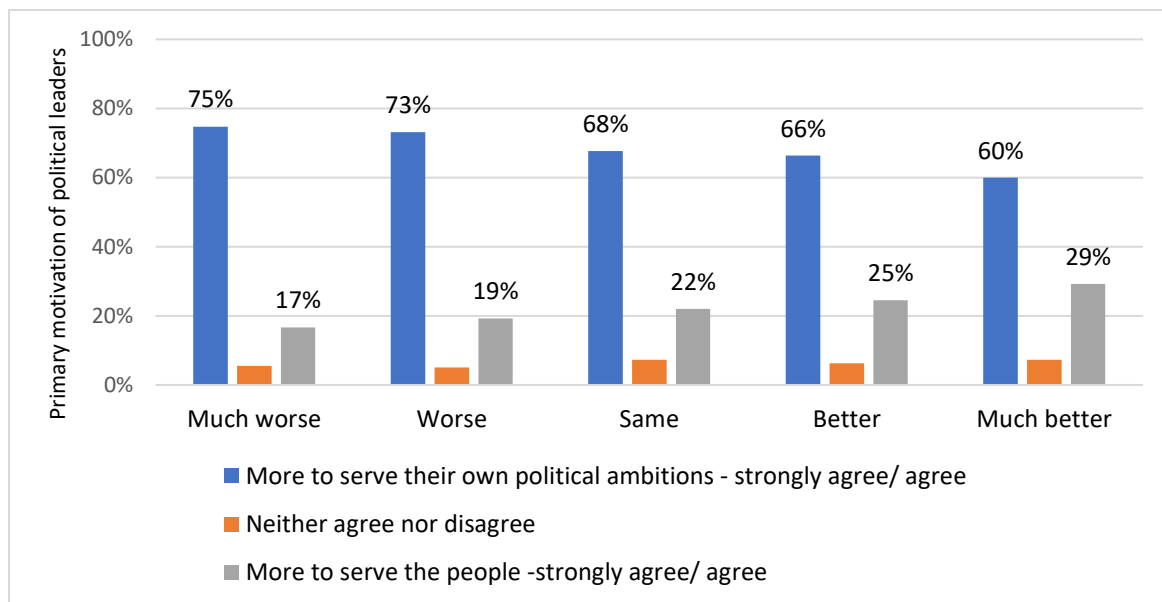
Political trust has been declining over the past decades in many established and new democracies, and many feared that such crisis of trust could weaken support or demand for democracy (Dalton & Wattenberg, 2002; Dalton, 2004, 2008; Catterberg & Moreno, 2006; Denmark & Niemi, 2012). In this context, Africa represents an interesting paradox. Africans report among the highest levels of institutional trust or confidence by world region (Mattes & Moreno, 2018). What is more, such trust is relatively consistent over time (Mattes & Moreno, 2018: 27- 28). At the same time, Africa, as a region, records among the highest levels of economic inequality in the world (Beegle et al., 2016). However, little research – both in Africa and elsewhere – has been conducted on the linkage between inequality and political trust, especially at the individual-level (Van der Meer, 2018). To my knowledge, no previous research has examined the effects of perceptions of relative deprivation on trust in African contexts.

In this chapter, I explore the relationship between perceptions of relative deprivation and political trust using representative survey data collected between 2016 and 2018 in 34 African countries. Importantly, I explore whether perceptions of relative deprivation are associated with variance in political trust within African countries and between African countries, not variance in political trust between different world regions. A rich literature exists suggesting that economic inequality is associated with a range of negative phenomena including increased mortality, mental illness, poor educational performance, homicide and imprisonment rates, low social capital and solidarity, low social mobility and racism (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2007; Anderson, 2010; Elgar & Aitken, 2010; Anderson & Curtis, 2012). Particular interest has been given to the linkage of inequality and political trust (Anderson & Singer, 2008; Jordahl, 2009; Newton & Zmerli, 2011; Uslaner, 2011, 2018; Paskov & Dewilde, 2012; van de Werfhorst & Salverda, 2012). Research suggests that economic and social inequality is linked to a deterioration of trust that ordinary people have in each other and the political and state institutions (Uslaner, 2011, 2017; Zmerli & Castillo 2015; Gustavsson & Jordahl 2008; Alesina & La Ferrara 2002).²²⁶

²²⁶ Seeing political trust as being in crisis is by no means a new phenomenon (Offe, 1972; Citrin, 1974; Miller, 1974; Crozier et al., 1975; Dalton, 2004). Evidence is not strong that the ‘crisis’ is actually a global one, but is possibly strongly shaped by a few highly scrutinized cases (United States and Western Europe) (see: Dalton, 2004; Van der Meer & Zmerli, 2017). Others – see Citrin (1974) and Norris (2011) – argue that the crisis of political trust is widely overstated and caused by focusing only on a narrow definition and view of what constitutes and causes political

Economic inequality has been linked to political trust by suggesting that economic inequality is linked to feelings of a lack of responsiveness and accountability of government as well as to perceptions of government failing to meet expectations among a large number of citizens (Citrin, 1974; Miller, 1974; Miller & Listhaug, 1990; Hetherington, 1998, 2005; Uslaner, 2002, 2011). For example, the bivariate tests displayed in figure 5.1 and 5.2 (using round 6 data of the Afrobarometer survey collected 2014- 2015 in 36 African countries²²⁷) suggest that respondents who feel relatively deprived are more likely to feel that political leaders are motivated to serve their own political ambitions and that members of parliament 'never' listen to ordinary people, compared with respondents who feel relatively better off than others. This suggests that perceptions of relative deprivation are associated with lower perceptions of accountability and responsiveness among politicians, which could be an explanation of lower levels of trust.

Figure 5.1: Perceived primary motivation of political leaders. By perceived relative living situation. N=53935. Afrobarometer Round 6 (2014-2016)²²⁸



Political trust is important in several ways. It allows incumbents to make decisions and govern (within their democratic mandate) without having to seek constant confirmation or approval from the people or use coercion to enforce their own decisions (Newton et al., 2018). Political

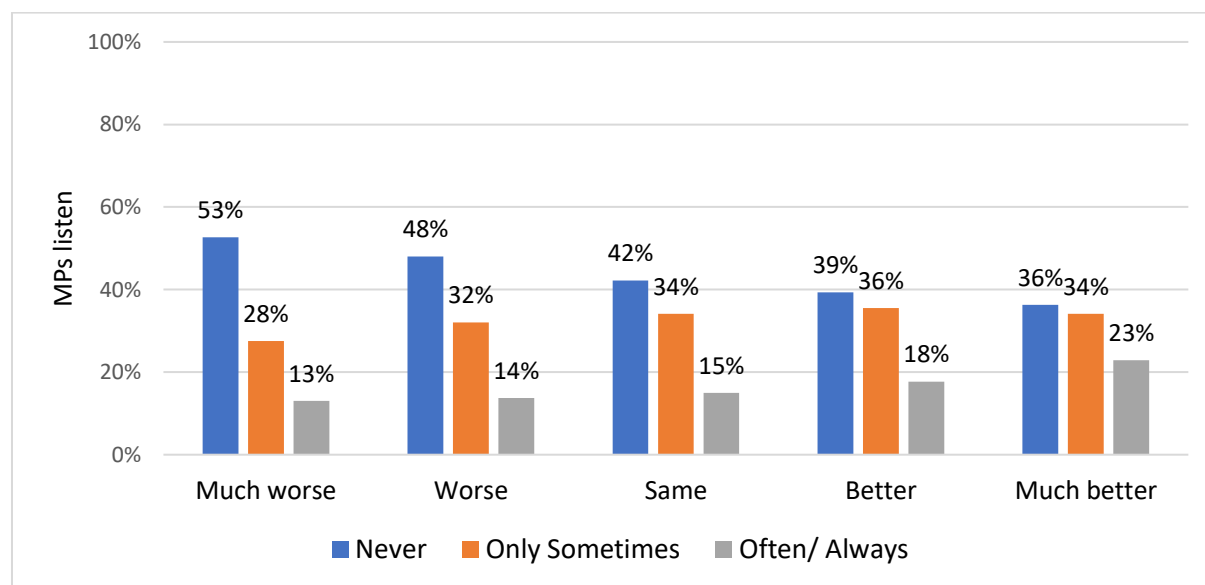
trust. As Listhaug and Jakobsen (2018) note, the perspective of crisis is strongly associated with the social capital literature, of which political trust is a core component. In political behaviour research, the notion of political trust being 'in crisis' is not widely shared. Rather, Norris (2011:24-31) finds 'trendless fluctuation' of political trust using a broadened and revised set of Eastonian political support indicators.

²²⁷ Round 6 was conducted in 36 countries (Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe)

²²⁸ Respondents were asked: *Do you think that leaders of political parties in this country are more concerned with serving the interests of the people, or more concerned with advancing their own political ambitions, or haven't you heard enough to say?* For further details see appendix 3 of chapter 5.

trust also reduces complexity and monitoring costs for people as they are not required to make difficult and technical day-to-day decisions but can decide between broader, less complex entities, such as political parties or candidates, during elections or party preliminaries. As Van der Meer and Zmerli (2017: 1) note “[p]olitical trust thus functions as the glue that keeps the system together and as the oil that lubricates the policy machine”. Past research moreover suggests that political trust is associated with participation and political interest, external efficacy perceptions of corruption, compliance with laws, and tax compliance among citizens (Brehm & Rahn, 1997; Scholz & Lubell, 1998; Catterberg & Moreno, 2006). Research in Africa has also suggested that more trusted institutions are important to provide developmental outcomes (Bratton & Gyimah-Boadi, 2016). Given the importance of political trust in political systems, any deterioration of public trust in government and state institutions can have considerable consequences for the ability of governments to make policy, and for political stability more generally (Anderson & Singer, 2008; Hetherington & Rudolph, 2008; Newton & Zmerli, 2011; Uslaner, 2011).²²⁹

Figure 5.2: MPs listen. By perceived relative living situation. N=53935. Afrobarometer Round 6 (2014-2016)²³⁰



²²⁹ Lack of trust may not necessarily be a sign of a lack of democracy, and declining trust in government is a healthy symptom of postmodern democracies. As Warren notes “Citizens should be distrustful of state powers and the political elites who wield the power. Yet citizens who generalize distrust – of political elites, of political institutions, and of one another – will find themselves collectively disempowered.” (2018: 91- 92). In fact, Mishler and Rose (1997: 419) note that democracy requires active and ‘vigilant’ citizens that keep a “healthy scepticism of government and [if necessary are willing] [...] to suspend trust and assert control over government”.

²³⁰ Respondents were asked: *How much of the time do you think the following try their best to listen to what people like you have to say? Members of Parliament.*

1.1 Perceptions of relative deprivation as a source of political (mis)trust

Past research – both in Africa and beyond – has pointed to the importance of macroeconomic performance and subjective evaluations of such performance as a source of political trust. Less attention has been paid to individual-level sources of political trust, and, in particular, to the role of perceptions of individual-level conditions. In fact, Wroe (2016: 133) goes as far as stating that “the conventional wisdom is that personal economic experiences and evaluations do not play much of a role”. However, subjective individual-level evaluations may be important sources of political trust. Research has found that people are widely not aware of actual levels of inequality and are commonly not able to place themselves correctly within income or wealth distributions (Kaltenthaler et al., 2008; Norton & Ariely, 2011; Eriksson & Simpson, 2012, 2013; Cruces et al., 2013; Loveless, 2013, 2016; McCall & Chin, 2013; Chambers et al., 2014, 2015; Engelhardt & Wagener, 2014; Niehues, 2014; Bartels, 2018; Gimpelson & Treisman, 2018). Other scholars have pointed out that objective and subjective levels of inequality are associated with each other only loosely, if at all (Loveless & Whitefield, 2011; Loveless, 2013; Binelli & Loveless, 2016). In this regard, several authors suggest that levels of trust are better explained by perceptions of inequality, rather than by actual inequality levels (Gustavsson & Jordahl, 2008; Loveless, 2013; Medve-Bálint & Boda, 2014).

Individual-level economic conditions may be particularly important for political trust in the context of Africa. As noted by Newton (2007), political trust is linked to notions of legitimacy. Much of the empirical literature is focused on cases of the global north, and the nature of such legitimacy may look different in the African context, in particular regarding the relations between state and society in post-colonial Africa.²³¹ In other words, these mechanisms of legitimacy may “work” (in reference to Chabal & Daloz, 1999) through different modes in Africa. The specific relationships of state and society in post-colonial Africa have been identified and summarized as “neopatrimonialism” (Bratton & Van de Walle, 1993).²³² These neopatrimonial relations – or the “Africanised” political modernity as per Chabal and Daloz (1999) – are centrally built on patron-client relationships between those in power (patrons) and those who are not (clients). Importantly, these relationships are informed by a logic of reciprocity (Chabal & Daloz, 1999; Erdman & Engel, 2007, Erdman, 2013) or an “economy of affection” as per Hyden

²³¹ As Beresford (2014: 1) notes, neopatrimonialism is not an intrinsic or deeply rooted element of African politics, but rather emerged from the “colonial encounter” or a “peculiar Euro-African History”. See also: Cooper (2002)

²³² The use of neopatrimonialism to describe the nature of legitimacy and more generally relations between state, political elites and citizens in post-colonial Africa is not without critics. For a discussion see for example: Pitcher et al. (2009) or Mkandawire (2015). Moreover, neopatrimonialism is not identical across different regions in Africa (Cheeseman 2015).

(1983), by which the patrons are able to use their political power to distribute the resources of the state to personalized client networks which in turn wins them "affection" which can be translated into more (political) power. These personalized patron-client relations emphasize the particularized well-being of individuals (within patronage networks) and sharpen notions of competition for resources among both the patrons and the clients (Bayart, 2009). As Beresford (2014: 1) – in reference to Schatzberg (2001) – contests:

political authority rests, therefore, not necessarily on augmenting positive developmental outcomes for the nation as a whole, but on being capable of meeting the needs of his political family, because while the father/patron is expected to eat, he must also ensure his children/clients are able to eat as well.

Chabal and Daloz (1999: 161) in this regard note that:

The logic of neopatrimonialism is focused on the proximate: the local and the communal. Its legitimacy depends on the ability to deliver to those who are linked with political elites through the micro-networks of patronage and clientelism. There is no scope within such a perspective for deferring to a larger but less immediate macro-rationality, most significantly to the greater good of the country as a whole. Clients will not necessarily accept sacrifices for more ambitious national goals in a context where it is assumed that patrons only work for their clients. So that the claim by one Big Man that he must reduce expenditures on his clients because resources are needed for national development would not normally be credible or acceptable.

The reciprocal back and forth commences. These informal, personalized patron-client networks stand in contrast to 'modern' Western statehood – the context in which most empirical research on political trust has been conducted – which is defined by "formal, impersonalized channels of the Weberian legal-rational state" (Beresford, 2014: 1). In this context, how much individuals perceive themselves to be 'getting out of' a patron-client relation is therefore of heightened importance, which in turn suggests that subjective experiences of inequality have an important linkage with trust in political leaders.

ILLUSTRATION I: HARAMBEE IN KENYA

An example of such neopatrimonial network, is the politization of the harambee custom In Kenya, post-independence. Following independence, Jomo Kenyatta– first President of Kenya– elevated the local custom of 'harambee'– meaning 'all pull together' in Swahili– into the defining mode by which government and citizens engage. Harambee describes a custom by which resources and labour are pooled communally, to achieve locally defined needs and projects. To emphasize the individual responsibility that Kenyan's bore for their development

and motivate localized, communal efforts to drive development, Kenyatta politicized the custom of harambee by locating the responsibility of managing local harambee efforts with the respective members of parliament (MPs). Local harambee efforts would be supported by the national government once completed, with MPs effectively functioning as the middlemen between national government (controlled by Kenyatta) and local constituents. For local constituents, MPs thus became vehicles to access state resources to support development efforts. On the one hand, this meant that MPs – who faced regular (albeit one-party dominated) elections– were held accountable by local constituents. On the other hand, MPs were primarily evaluated on the basis of delivering economic benefits to local communities and maximizing access to state resources. A strong patron-client network resulted which politically rewarded particularized, local economic benefit over national or long-term policy. As Cheeseman (2015: 62ff), notes, this Kenyan variant of neopatrimonialism over time directly fed into corruption, a growing acceptance of plundering of state resources by the political elite (as long as some of the rewards trickled down to the local community), the politization of ethnicity, and ultimately a politics of 'big men' : "part representative, part local celebrity, part welfare state" (Cheeseman, 2015: 64).

ILLUSTRATION II: THE AUTHORITARIAN BARGAIN IN NORTHERN AFRICA

While neopatrimonial networks in sub-Saharan Africa have largely formed within the context of (varied and in parts rudimentary) democratic consolidation, individual-level economic realities are tied to legitimacy in a different way in authoritarian regimes, but nonetheless important. Compared to other countries in Africa, respondents in the countries in the North African region report low levels of trust in political institutions, such as parliaments (see figure 5.4, below). Of course, in authoritarian regimes, political leaders are not dependent upon public approval through open elections. But nonetheless, authoritarian regimes require some form of legitimacy to remain in place over time (Tullock, 1987; Wintrobe, 2007). One way in which such regimes achieve a base-level of legitimacy is through the 'authoritarian bargain' (Desai et al. 2009). In this bargain, people accept (or at least not actively subvert or rebel against) the authoritarian regime in 'exchange' for material and non-material deliverables, such as heavily subsidize food and energy, state-funded health and education services as well as widespread employment within the public sector. Unlike the neopatrimonial system in which the linkage between patron and client is personalized to specific patrons and specific clients, this authoritarian bargain functions at a more collective level, with the 'state' as a single patron. Despite being impersonal in this sense, the system functions on the basis that everyone is able to access these public goods and thus has their individual material needs met (at least to an acceptable

extent).²³³ In Northern Africa and the wider Middle East and North Africa region (MENA) this bargain– which has been described as a form of ‘social contract’ (Ianchovichina et al., 2015; Devarajan & Ianchovichina, 2018)– came crashing down in the events of 2011 and after, when people took to the streets to protest rising food costs, continued decline in access to public employment, perceived diminishing economic mobility and opportunity and political corruption among a closed elite (Brynen et al. 2012; Moore, 2015). While many called for democratic reforms, the underlying motivations were largely informed by economic grievances and the perception that the ‘authoritarian bargain’ had been broken (Arampatzis et al. 2018; Devarajan & Ianchovichina, 2018; Ianchovichina, 2018).

1.2 Measurement

As in previous chapters, I use a survey question which asks respondents how they feel their living situation compares to other people in their country to gauge an individual's subjective experience of inequality (see chapter 1 an overview).²³⁴ I refer to this item as ‘perceived relative living situation’ throughout this thesis. From this item, I differentiate between ‘perceived relative deprivation’ (respondents who say they are ‘much worse off’ or ‘worse off’ than others), ‘perceived relative advantage’ (respondents who say that they are ‘much better off’ or ‘better off’ than others) and ‘perceived relative equality’ (people who feel their living situation is ‘the same’ as other people in their country).

The literature on the causes and consequences of political trust (or lack thereof) is rich, but not uniform, in both theoretical and measurement issues regarding what political trust is, what it means and how it should be measured (I return to this issue in section 3.1). In this chapter, I follow Mattes and Moreno (2018) – who represent the most recent scrutiny of causes of political trust in Africa – and construct two additive indices. The first index, ‘trust in representative government institutions’, is comprised of trust in the president/prime minister, trust in the parliament/national assembly, trust in the local government council and trust in the ruling party/parties. This broadly echoes what has been referred to as “political institutions” in the past (Newton et al., 2018; Rothstein & Stolle, 2008). The second index, ‘trust in state institutions’, is comprised of trust in the police, the army and courts of law. These have in the past been referred to as “neutral and impartial institutions of the state” (Newton et al., 2018), although in

²³³ As Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2002) note, most policies in authoritarian regimes which are aimed at the societal level (public goods), typically include private goods for specific groups.

²³⁴ No further information was given to respondents as to what ‘living situation’ specifically implies, and no further data were collected as to what respondents understood by this. I discuss this variable in greater detail in section 3.

African contexts they are often not neutral nor impartial. To construct these indices, I use Afrobarometer survey data collected between 2016 and 2018 for 34 African countries. I discuss both in greater detail in section 3.1.

1.3 Research question

Following the operationalization of subjective experience of inequality as the respondent's perceived relative living situation and distinguishing two forms of political trust (following previous research using earlier survey rounds of Afrobarometer surveys), this chapter addresses the following research question:

Does the perceived relative living situation shape how much ordinary Africans trust representative government institutions and state institutions?

This chapter contributes to literature in several ways. First, I provide evidence about previously underexamined cases in Africa. Much of the empirical literature has focused on North America and Europe (Van der Meer, 2017) and to date it is unclear to what extent findings and causal mechanisms suggested from said findings are universal or case specific. Second, I employ the most recent round of Afrobarometer survey data, which have previously not been employed in estimating sources of political trust in Africa. This data – collected between 2016 and 2018 – provide the most recent cross-country data available for the given cases. Third, I employ multi-level modelling, which has been underutilized in the past study of political trust in Africa. This estimation method allows for individual- and country-level variables to be estimated simultaneously, and thus provides a more nuanced picture of the sources of political trust, compared to past research in this topic for these cases. Fourth, I introduce a novel indicator for perceptions of individual – level inequality. As is discussed in sections 2.2 and 2.3, past research has predominantly focused on macroeconomic conditions and assessment as sources of political trust. Little attention was paid to individual-level conditions and evaluations. Increasingly however – again discussed in sections 2.2 and 2.3 – research suggests that such individual-level factors, in particular perceptual indicators of inequality, are important. I introduce a measure based on the respondent's perceived relative living situation, which has previously not been employed in such models. Fifth, I contribute to the existing literature by suggesting that perceptions of individual-level inequality are significantly associated with political trust – in particular with trust in government institutions, such as the president, parliament, local councillors and the ruling party.

1.4 Structure

This chapter is organized as follows. In the following section I review the existing literature exploring the linkages between inequality and political trust (section 2). From this review I draw a set of hypotheses to be tested in the analysis section. In section 3 I introduce the data and statistical model chosen to test the hypothesis. I further discuss the variables employed in the models, paying particular attention to the operationalization of political trust. I then turn to modelling political trust through multi-level modelling (section 4). The results suggest that perceptions of relative deprivation are significantly linked to less trust in government institutions and state institutions. The results also underline the importance of how political trust is conceptualized. The significant effect of perceptions of relative deprivation for government institutions remains significant even when controlling for individual-level experiences of poverty, subjective economic performance evaluations, perceptions of corruption and partisanship. Conversely, the effect of perceptions of relative deprivation becomes non-significant once macroeconomic evaluations are included in the regression model.

2. Literature review

In this section I introduce the definition of political trust and highlight the conceptualization of political trust by grounding it within a broader framework of political support. I then overview the sources of political trust found in the literature, placing particular emphasis on past research detailing how economic and social inequality – both at the country- and individual-level – are linked to political trust. Finally, I introduce a set of expectations which will be tested in section 4 of this chapter.

2.1 Definitions and grounding of political trust

Numerous definitions of trust and even more related concepts exist today, often used interchangeably (Seligman, 2000; Hooghe, 2011; Schneider, 2017). Widely accepted definitions of trust are provided by Luhmann (1979) and Warren (1999). As Luhmann (1979) wrote, trust “as a modality of action [...] is essentially concerned with coping with uncertainty over time” (1979: 30) – providing certainty that actions by others can be depended on and they won’t choose

to maliciously harm us (Offe, 1999).²³⁵ Similarly, according to Warren (1999: 14), trust describes “the way groups of individuals presume the good will of others with respect to shared interests as well as the divisions of knowledge necessary to make use of explicit rules for collective action”.²³⁶

The theoretical and empirical literature distinguishes between social and political trust. While social trust refers to relations with other people, whether family, neighbours or strangers, political trust involves government and state institutions (although some use the latter to describe evaluations of political output, i.e. services and policies). Social trust is often referred to as inter-personal trust or horizontal trust, while political trust is often referred to as institutional trust or vertical trust. Some even suggest using social, or inter-personal trust and political trust, or institutional trust, interchangeably in modern, large-scale societies (Seligman, 2000). Research, however, remains divided about whether, and if so how, the two types of trust are correlated.

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As Catterberg and Moreno (2006: 33) noted, much of the research on political trust has been based on ambiguous concepts of political trust (see also: Hooghe, 2011). The differences between trust in political institutions – detached from performance – and trust in government performance – trust in the fact that government will deliver certain services or policies – are especially weakly defined. To better conceptualize the term and differentiate political trust from related concepts, it is useful to ground political trust within the broader concept of ‘political support’.²³⁸

2.1.1 Political trust as a measure of political support

In the past, political trust has been used to represent evaluations about regime institutions (or, if queried specifically, about incumbent office holders).²³⁹ Such evaluations represent one of several different levels or categories of what is summarily described as ‘political support’. The concept of political support originates from the question why and under what circumstances people accept system of authority (Hardin, 1999; Warren, 2018). The argument is that a system of authority or system will only persevere, in the long term, if it can win sufficient

²³⁵ The importance of malicious actions and intentions is in particular emphasized in the definitory work by Gambetta (1988) and Warren (1999).

²³⁶ Warren’s (1999) definition draws heavily from Annette Baier’s (1986) notion of trust as reciprocal good will.

²³⁷ On the one hand, Newton (2001a) concluded that social and political trust do not have a common origin. Similarly, Kaase (1999) and Newton (2001b) found no significant relation between the two. Conversely, Rothstein and Stolle (2003) and Freitag and Bühlmann (2009) noted that people may project institutional untrustworthiness onto other people.

²³⁸ See section 3.1, below, for a discussion of the different measurements of political trust in the literature.

²³⁹ I use the term ‘evaluation’ here in reference to the framework provided in table 5.1, below (adapted from Norris, 1999, 2011).

support among the citizenry, which lends legitimacy to the government (Lipset, 1959; Klingemann, 1999).

Following Easton (1965,1975), political support can be conceptualized as a continuous construct ranging from diffuse types of support to specific types of support. Diffuse support refers to evaluations “of what an object is or represents – to the general meaning it has for a person – not for what it does” (Easton, 1975: 444). Specific support, on the other hand, is linked to perceived performance or outputs of political actors, such as the successful economic policy of a president or the lowering of crime rates by security forces. Thinking of support as a continuum, Easton proposed that different objects of support could be located along this continuum. Easton noted three objects ranging from the most diffuse to the most specific: the political community, the regime and the incumbent authorities.²⁴⁰

Easton's conceptualization of three objects of support has since been refined by Norris (1999; 2011), who proposed a five-fold distinction (displayed in table 5.1, below).²⁴¹ As in Easton's original model, Norris's most diffuse objects of support are the “political community” and “regime principles” (Norris, 2011). The third, fourth and fifth objects in Norris conceptualization of support broadly reflect Easton's original “incumbent authority” category. In this chapter, I focus on the fourth level in Norris's model: regime institutions. Specifically, this level of analysis focuses on “trust and confidence in the core institutions of state” (Norris 2011: 29), such as the legislature, executive and judiciary, and security forces, as well as various levels of government (national, regional, local) (Norris, 2011: 23- 31).

²⁴⁰ ‘Political community’ entails the cultural entity which “transcends particularities of formal governing structures and inscribes the elemental identity of the collectivity constituting the polity” (Klingemann, 1999:33). ‘Regime’ entails principles, processes and formal institutions which transcend incumbents. And lastly, ‘incumbent authorities’ are leaders and officials who hold power within offices and institutions at a given time.

²⁴¹ Norris argues the five-fold distinction is more valid as “factor analysis strongly suggests that the public makes these distinctions, and there are divergent trends over time in support for different levels” (Norris, 1999: 13). As seen in table 5.1, a second distinction found in the literature is between affective orientations and instrumental evaluations. Affective orientations – similar to Easton’s notion of diffuse support – represent adherence to core values or deeper feelings towards the unit or level of analysis. Instrumental evaluations are more similar to Easton’s concept of specific support and include judgments or assessments about political phenomena (see Dalton, in Norris 1999: 58- 59).

Table 5.1: Conceptualization of political support

	<i>Level of Analysis</i>	<i>Affective Orientations</i>	<i>Evaluations</i>
Diffuse Support 	Political Community	National pride Sense of national identity	Best nation to live in
	Regime: Principles	Democratic values	Democracy best form of government
	Regime: Performance	Participatory norms Political rights	Evaluations of rights Satisfaction with democratic process
	Regime: Institutions	Institutional expectations Support party government Output expectations	Performance judgments Trust in institutions Trust party system Trust bureaucracy
	Authorities	Identify with party	Candidate evaluations Party support
Specific Support			

Adapted from Norris (1999, 2011)

2.2 Inequality as a source of political (mis) trust – understanding the mechanisms

The literature provides diverse explanations of political trust.²⁴² Some, such as the psychological propensity model, argue that long-term optimism and psychological predisposition to framing life in general, acquired during socialization, as well as social causes such as education, social class and happiness, shape whether someone is trusting or not (Uslaner 2002; Glanville & Paxton, 2007; Newton et al., 2018). In this approach people are – more or less – either trusting or not, regardless of context or object of trust. However, others – and this chapter follows this latter approach – point to political trust largely being a function of performance evaluations. This approach is commonly summarized as the ‘top-down’ theory (Zmerli & Castillo, 2015; Newton et al., 2018). Conversely, psychological or genetic explanations of trust reflect an alternative, ‘bottom-up’ approach to locating the sources of political trust more centrally in explanations of social capital (see Mondak et al., 2017; Cawvey et al., 2018). Top-down theories argue that political trust is not once acquired and kept for life (as a psychological or genetical predisposition) but that performance evaluations, and therefore trust, can change over time (prompted by a new government, global recession, high-profile corruption case, etc.). The role

²⁴² For an overview see Mishler & Rose, 2001; Newton et al., 2018.

of inequality has been studied in both the top-down approach as well as the bottom-up approach of studying trust.

There are multiple ways of linking inequality to political trust. Here I discuss three common explanations found in the literature. The first two explanations reflect top-down approaches that closely echo Hetherington's (2005: 9) definition of political trust as "the degree to which people perceive that government is producing outcomes consistent with their expectations". The third explanation reflects the bottom-up approach to trust, emphasizing the effect that inequality has on the very fabric of society and on its core institutions of fairness and mutual considerations.

2.2.1 Inequality as (a lack of) performance

Despite ambiguity in the conceptualization and operationalization, three core sources of political trust repeatedly and consistently emerge in both cross-national and cross-time empirical analyses. Among these – corruption and partisanship being the other two – economic performance has been repeatedly linked to political trust (Van der Meer, 2018).²⁴³ In highly unequal systems, inequality is seen as a system output and evaluated as a system performance. Because more people are relatively worse off in highly unequal systems, a large number of people are likely to report negative performance evaluations. This – it is argued – results in less political trust in more unequal systems. As Goubin (2018: 25) noted:

"Income inequality is associated with less qualitative performance of government services and negative perceptions of economic policies in particular, tendencies towards corruption and disproportionate political power for the rich."

2.2.2 Inequality as (a lack of) accountability

Goubin's latter point (see quotation above) touches upon a second explanation of how inequality is linked to trust. In systems with high levels of inequality, individuals are likely to report lower levels of accountability or perceptions thereof, and to experience larger discrepancies in their economic lived reality with a large number experiencing economic hardship (Goubin, 2020). As Goubin (2020) noted, high economic inequality suggests that the system is not responsive to the needs of all citizens, creating a distance between citizen expectations of system responsiveness and what they feel they are getting. A similar argument is found in Uslaner (2017: 302), who argued that inequality "leads people to believe that leaders listen to

²⁴³ Note that the three factors mentioned here largely emanate from the 'top-down' approach to political trust. An alternative 'bottom-up' approach locates the sources of political trust more centrally in explanations of social capital (see: Stolle, 2003; Zmerli & Castillo, 2015; Newton et al., 2018).

the rich far more than others in society". And indeed, consistently high and rising levels of economic inequality in most developed economies in the past decades (Milanovic, 2011; 2016; Stiglitz, 2012; Piketty, 2014 suggest that the influence of the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' on government policy has not been equally distributed, but have been skewed in favour of the former (Gilens 2005; 2012, Uslaner, 2011).²⁴⁴

2.2.3 Interrelations with social trust

Related to the notion of accountability and responsiveness, a third explanation in literature of the linkage between economic inequality and political trust considers the effect of economic inequality on the 'fabric' of a society, in particular on people's sense of system fairness and sociotropic consideration for others (Zmerli & Castillo, 2015; Uslaner, 2011; Rothstein, 2011). Essentially, these approaches focus on the role of social trust, but they note implications for political trust, too. For example, Uslaner's "inequality trap" describes economic inequality leading to less social trust which in turn leads to more corruption which further reduces social trust, again leading to more corruption (Uslaner, 2005, 2008, 2011). A negative downward spiral results, "trapping" societies. Uslaner noted that this trap moreover weakens political trust (Uslaner, 2008; see also Zmerli & Castillo, 2015). Likewise, Rothstein (2011) wrote of a "social trap" in which economic inequality reduces social trust which in turn would be required to address economic inequality through policy (such as universalistic social welfare). Hereby economic inequality again reduces social trust, entrapping society in a status in which society is unable to address inequality. As Rothstein (2011: 154) concluded: "the prevalence of distrust results in more distrust". In these explanations, inequality affects the core basis of trust, reflected in diminishing social and political trust over time.

2.3. Inequality as a source of political (mis) trust – evidence in the literature

Despite (or possibly precisely because of) much attention in the literature awarded to inequality and political trust, the empirical landscape in terms of consistent results is not easily navigated or summarized. In particular, this is due to two reasons. First, political trust as a concept is weakly defined and empirical research in the literature frequently employs different conceptualizations and measurements (see section 3.1, below). Empirical findings are thus

²⁴⁴ For historical evidence that high levels of inequality do in fact allow the rich to subvert legal, political and regulatory systems and institutions, see: Glaeser et al., 2003; Sonin, 2003; Jong-Sung & Khagram, 2005.

difficult to compare (Uslaner, 2017). Second, the term ‘economic inequality’ is also ambiguously used in the literature. This too, makes comparisons of empirical findings difficult. To make sense of the existing literature and empirical findings, I use a simple two-dimensional distinction to conceptualize ‘economic inequality’ (displayed in table 5.2, below). Using the two dimensions – level of analysis and type of measurement – creates a four-field grid, allowing for a clearer structuring of the relevant literature in terms of how ‘economic inequality’ is conceptualized and what (if any) consistent findings emerge.²⁴⁵ For each grid-cell I have also included the key finding that emerges from the literature.

Table 5.2: Navigating measurements of ‘economic inequality’ in the empirical literature

Type of measurement	Level of analysis	
	<i>Country</i>	<i>Individual</i>
<i>Objective</i>	People in more unequal countries are less trusting.	People who are lower in the economic distribution are less trusting.
<i>Subjective</i>	People who think their country is unequal are less trusting.	People who think they are at the bottom of the distribution/worse off than others are less trusting.

2.3.1 Objective measures

In the study of the consequences of economic inequality on political trust, the most common measurement of the independent variables is at the country level, using arithmetic indicators of inequality, such as the Gini coefficient or various ratio-indicators describing the respective relative sizes of top and bottom income groups.

Country level

At country level, the empirical evidence on the linkage between economic inequality and political trust is not consistent. For example, Anderson and Singer (2008) – using 2002- 2003 European Social Survey data (20 countries) – found that higher country-level income inequality

²⁴⁵ Of course, this matrix could be expanded by incorporating different types of inequality (social, economic, opportunity) and by incorporating meso-levels and levels above the national level (which is widely used as the country level).

(Gini) and more poverty is significantly related to lower levels of political trust (as trust in parliament, legal systems, police and politicians). Likewise, Zmerli and Castillo (2015) – in a study of 18 Latin American countries (using Latinobarometer data for 2011) – found that higher levels of income inequality (as per Gini coefficient) are significantly associated with less political trust.²⁴⁶ Meanwhile, for a sample of African and Latin American cases using the Afrobarometer and Latinobarometer, Mattes and Moreno (2018) found that national level inequality (measured by the income Gini coefficient) has only a weak effect on political trust²⁴⁷ (see section 3.1 for details on operationalization).

Others have suggested that inequality and political trust are not linked directly. For example, Goubin (2020) – using the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) Citizenship rounds of 2004 and 2014 for 37 European and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member countries – found that inequality (as Gini coefficient of net income and the country poverty rate) has no direct significant effect on political trust (as confidence that government will do the right thing most of the time), but that both forms of country-level inequality moderate the effect of political responsiveness on political trust.

Individual level

Within top-down approaches to the study of trust, it is accepted that macroeconomic performance forms a central source of political trust. This is the case for both objective performance (as per Gross domestic product (GDP) for example) as well as for subjective evaluations of performance (typically captured in representative surveys). Widely, empirical studies suggest that more positive macroeconomic performance and evaluations thereof produce greater political trust (Citrin et al., 1975; McAllister, 1999; Dalton, 2004; Keele, 2007).

Somewhat surprisingly, comparatively little evidence is available in regard to evaluations at the individual-level. Wroe (2016) noted that while the literature widely agrees that country-level economic performance evaluations matter in determining political trust, little emphasis has been placed on individual-level conditions – whether relative or not. Wroe (2016: 133) wrote, “the conventional wisdom is that personal economic experiences and evaluations do not play much of a role” in regard to understanding political trust. A number of studies in the literature suggest that individual-level experiences and evaluations are important in understanding political trust, nonetheless.

²⁴⁶ Zmerli and Castillo compute an index of political trust which includes reported trust in government, national congress/parliament, judiciary and political parties. The authors report a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.80 but no factor analysis results.

²⁴⁷ However, the authors do find a significant, moderate-size, negative effect for country level inequality and social trust.

Frequently, researchers have used the household income decile as a measure of individual deprivation. Catterberg and Moreno (2006) – using World Value Survey data (1995-2001) – found that household income deciles are significantly associated with less political trust, although the effect is inconsistent across “world regions”. Political trust is operationalized as confidence in the civil service and confidence in parliament. Catterberg and Moreno found that people in higher income deciles are less trusting in a sample of six established democracies, but more trusting in eight new democracies in Eastern Europe and four Latin American nations.²⁴⁸

Conversely, Kaasa and Parts (2008) found no significant effect of relative income (household income decile) on institutional trust using the fourth round of World Value Survey (1999-2002).²⁴⁹ Boda and Medve-Balint (2014) – in a study of 14 West European and nine East-Central European countries using the fifth wave of the European Social Survey (ESS) – found that that household income deciles increase institutional trust in Western European countries, but reduce trust in Eastern European countries.

Others have used different approaches yet found results consistent with the relation described in Catterberg and Moreno (2006) and Boda and Medve-Balint (2014). For example, Shoon and Cheng (2011) – using two nationally representative cohort studies (1958 and 1970) for Great Britain²⁵⁰ – found that experiences of economic disadvantage (as per family social status at birth (parental occupational status + parental education) and occupational attainment) – are significantly associated with lower levels of political trust.²⁵¹

2.3.2 Perceptual measures

Despite much theoretical attention, the empirical evidence in regard to political trust and economic inequality is far from consistent (Zmerli & Castillo, 2015) and some authors question the empirical linkage altogether (Boda and Medve-Balint, 2014; Fairbrother & Martin, 2013; Olivera, 2015). Some of the inconsistencies probably follow from choices in conceptualization and measurement of political trust (see discussion in section 3.1), and some are probably due to actual differences in how the linkage between economic inequality and political trust works in different contextual settings. By contrast, a growing body of evidence suggests that

²⁴⁸ See Catterberg & Moreno for a list of countries in each “world region”.

²⁴⁹ Institutionalized trust is operationalized as confidence in parliament, the police and the press.

²⁵⁰ Shoon and Cheng (2011) employed the 1958 National Child Development Study (NCDS) and the 1970 British Cohort Study (BCS70).

²⁵¹ Shoon and Cheng (2011:635) used a seven-item attitude scale recording respondents’ attitudes and views about government and institutions as indicators of political trust. For example, some of the attitudes that are probed in the survey read: “There is one law for the rich and one law for the poor”; “Politicians are in politics for their own benefit”; “No political party would benefit me”. I would argue these attitudes are more indicative of perceived fairness and responsiveness of the political system or politicians rather than political trust itself.

perceptions of inequality, rather than objective levels of inequality, shape levels of political trust (Goubin, 2018). Inconsistent findings may be due to how people perceive and evaluate²⁵² inequality at both the country- and individual-level (Loveless & Whitefield, 2011; Loveless, 2013; Boda and Medve-Balint, 2014; Zmerli & Castillo, 2015; Goubin, 2018).

Country level

And indeed, some evidence exists suggesting that perceptions and evaluations of country-level inequality is associated with individual level political trust. For example, Zmerli and Castillo (2015) – using 2011 Latinobarometer data for 18 Latin American countries²⁵³ – found that individual perceptions of distributive fairness within a country are strongly associated with less political trust at the individual level. Similar results were reported in a recent study by Lee et al. (2020). Using the fourth wave of the Asian Barometer (2014– 2016; N=20667) for 14 Asian countries²⁵⁴, Lee et al. found that perceived fairness of the income distribution within a country is significantly correlated with more political trust (operationalized as trust in president/prime minister, courts, national government, political parties and parliament). Likewise, Uslaner (2017) used 2004 Afrobarometer data and computed political trust as trust in the president, parliament, ruling party, courts and the police. He found that – at individual level – political trust is shaped by individuals' evaluations of government performance in handling the economy and of perceived corruption in the presidency, and by whether people agree with equal treatment in theory (i.e. whether they agree that it would be better if all people were treated equally).

Individual level

Lastly, economic inequality can be conceptualized and measured at the individual-level using a perceptual measure. Despite evidence suggesting that perception-based measures of inequality may yield more useful results in regard to political trust, most of the available research thus far focuses on social trust (see: Uslaner & Brown, 2005)²⁵⁵. In regard to political trust, Zmerli

²⁵² Conceptually, evaluations of economic inequality are distinct from perceptions of economic inequality. For example, I may perceive economic inequity as being high, but evaluate that such levels are fair (or not). In practice, evidence suggests that in fact evaluations and perceptions are strongly associated. As Wegener (1987) and others suggest, perceptions of inequality (How unequal is a country?) appear to be strongly shaped by evaluations of inequality (Is inequality fair, good, bad, unjust, worth addressing?) – see Zmerli & Castillo (2015).

²⁵³ Zmerli and Castillo's sample consists of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

²⁵⁴ Lee et al.'s sample consists of Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, China, Mongolia, Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Vietnam, Cambodia, Malaysia and Myanmar.

²⁵⁵ Much evidence in the literature supports the expectation that relative deprivation shapes social trust (Rothstein & Uslaner, 2005; Wilkinson, 2005; Putnam, 2007; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2007; Bjørnskov, 2008). Medve-Bálint and

and Castillo (2015) found a positive significant effect for subjective social status. The authors' models suggest that when citizens' self-ratings on the poor– rich ladder are high, political trust (measured as trust in government, parliament, judiciary and political parties) is enhanced.

Most studies that use subjective individual-level measures use measures which are nominally about absolute subjective, individual economic well-being, rather than explicitly comparative well-being. For example, Boda and Medve-Balint (2014) – in a study of 14 West European and nine East-Central European countries using the fifth wave of the European Social Survey (ESS) – found that whether or not respondents report to be coping or struggling on their present household income significantly shapes trust in institutions.²⁵⁶

In some cases, it is plausible that respondents compare themselves to others, even though the indicator refers to absolute evaluations. For example, Catterberg and Moreno (2006) found that the self-reported level of financial satisfaction is significantly associated with more political trust. Similarly, Wroe (2016) used subjective economic insecurity in a study of trust in government in the United States.²⁵⁷ Wroe found that subjective, individual-level perceptions of economic insecurity have a significant and negative effect of political trust. Wroe (2016: 140) argued that “insecurity activates deep-seated psychological biases, rooted in human evolution and survival, to avert losses and preserve the status quo. Government and the political class are blamed for insecurity, because economic precariousness violates citizens' expectations about the role of the state.”

2.4 Hypotheses

From the discussion of past research employing individual-level, perceptual measures of either inequality or deprivation, it appears that people's political trust is driven by egocentric considerations. As such we expect that:

Boda (2014) also claim that the rich literature on inequality and social trust should encourage the testing of the linkage between inequality and political trust.

²⁵⁶ The authors use an 11-point indicator as a measure of institutional trust. The index is comprised of the mean values (of valid responses) to questions regarding the respondents' trust in the national parliament, the legal system, the police and political parties.

²⁵⁷ Wroe (2016) uses a survey item which asks respondents how often government does what “most Americans” want it to do (always, most of the times, about half of the times, once in a while and never).

H1a: Feeling relatively deprived compared to others is associated with less trust in government institutions

H1b: Feeling relatively deprived compared to others is associated with less trust in state institutions

And that:

H2a: Feeling relatively advantaged compared to others is associated with less trust in government institutions

H2b: Feeling relatively advantaged compared to others is associated with less trust in state institutions

These hypotheses will be tested using representative survey data collected in 34 African countries between 2016 and 2018. The data are discussed in more detail in section 3 and the results are presented in section 4.

2.5 Section summary

In this section I have introduced the concept of political trust by both providing definitions of the term and grounding the concept within the broader concept of political support. Political trust is important for efficient governance and enables ordinary people to make evaluations of incumbents and government more readily. Economic inequality has been linked to political trust by arguing that it undermines the extent to which the government and institutions are deemed to be performing and how responsive they are to the needs and demands from ordinary people. Further, it has been suggested that economic inequality is linked to social trust which limits the ability of political actors and institutions to address inequality. Overviewing the empirical evidence in regard to sources of political trust is no easy feat, largely due to the limited homogeneity in the literature as to how political trust is measured. It appears that economic inequality at country level is associated with less political trust and that the relatively poor within income distributions are less trusting than the relatively well-off. However, some authors – in particular in regard to the relation at country level – find only weak effects. A growing literature considers the importance of perceptions of economic inequality. Here, past research suggests that perceiving levels of country-level inequality to be unfair or unjust is associated with less political trust, as is feeling economically insecure.

In the following section I provide an overview of the data and methodology of this chapter. A fairly consistent set of sources of political trust have been identified in the empirical literature to date. These have not been explicitly discussed so far but are included as control variables in

the explanatory models to compete with the predictor variable relative deprivation. I discuss previous findings for each of these commonly found sources in section 3.3.

3. Data, methodology and variables

For my analysis I use nationally representative Afrobarometer survey data (Round 7), which were collected between September 2016 and September 2018 in 34 African countries (N=45811).²⁵⁸ However, since the question on trust in the ruling party was not asked in eSwatini, the country was dropped from the analysis of trust in representative government institutions. The survey is conducted face-to-face, in the respondent's choice of language in a nationally representative sample. Country samples range from 1193 (Guinea) to 2400 (Tanzania, Ghana), yielding an error rate of 2% (N=2400) and 3% (N=1200), respectively.²⁵⁹ Due to the clustering of data within country units, I use multilevel modeling (MLM), with level 1 at the individual level, and level 2 at the national level.²⁶⁰ Given the data-structure (small number of level 2 units N=34), I run only random intercept models and restricted maximum likelihood estimation.²⁶¹

²⁵⁸ My dataset includes the following countries: Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, eSwatini, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe. eSwatini— an absolute monarchy is not included in some analyses of this chapter. To access data used in this chapter see: Afrobarometer (2019). For the survey codebook see Afrobarometer (2020a). For information on the sampling methodology, see: Afrobarometer (2020b).

²⁵⁹ I use data which are weighted within countries to ensure gender parity. Importantly, I do not weight the data by population size. While countries with larger populations tend to have a larger sample size of N=2400, and countries with smaller populations tend to have national samples of N=1200, these sample size differences do not reflect the differences in actual populations. The incongruence in sample-to-population ratios may affect the reliability of comparisons of within country results.

²⁶⁰ Beyond the clustered nature of my dataset, I can also calculate whether a multi-level model is warranted, I begin by establishing whether the estimates of covariance parameters are significant. To test whether clustering at the country level is significant I first ran a null-model with no predictor variable. For both dependent variables (trust in elected representatives and trust in state institutions) the estimates of covariance parameters are significant at the 1% level. To further confirm the necessity for an MLM analysis, I calculated the interclass correlation coefficient (ICC) for each dependent variable. For both trust in elected officials (ICC= 0.146) and Trust in state institutions (0.13) the ICC meets the threshold 0.05.

²⁶¹ A possible problem arising from my data could be the overestimation of effect size due to the limited case number at level 2. Data with low case numbers at level 2 tend to yield overly small effect sizes when using a random slope model. Multilevel modelling analysis allows for two estimation modes: maximum likelihood and restricted maximum likelihood. Restricted maximum likelihood (REML) is advised to be used when the case number at level two is relatively small.

3.1 Dependent variables

One of the issues making a comparative review of the literature more difficult is that the term, the conceptualization and the measurement of 'political trust' differs in the literature. A number of alternative concepts – such as “political confidence” and “trust in government” – are used equivalently in much of the literature (Newton, 2001a; PytlikZillig & Kimbrough, 2015; Uslaner, 2017; Van der Meer & Zmerli, 2017).²⁶² In regard to measurement of political trust, for example, some research uses single objects of trust, such as trust in parliament or trust in the police (Dunn, 2012; Wroe, 2016; Uslaner, 2017; Goubin, 2018), while other research uses a single index comprised of several trust items (Zmerli & Castillo, 2015; Hooghe et al., 2015). To complicate the matter (and comparability) further, indices found in the literature reflect two (Catterberg & Moreno, 2006), three (Marien, 2011), four (Moehler, 2009; Ellinas & Lamprianou, 2014), five (Uslaner, 2017) or six (Hooghe et al., 2015) items of trust. Yet other research proposes the use of several indices (each comprised of different items) to measure political trust (Rothstein & Stolle, 2007; Mattes & Moreno, 2018, Newton et al., 2018). The comparison and replication of findings as to covariates, causes and consequences of political trust is moreover made more difficult by different survey methods across surveys and changes across time within surveys (Newton et al., 2018). To highlight the issue, I have provided an overview of different operationalization of 'political trust' in the recent literature in table 5.3.²⁶³

²⁶² Moreover, uncertainty exists as to how the lack of trust is conceptualized. As Van der Meer and Zmerli (2017:5) noted, the lack of trust may be understood as “political mistrust (i.e., the absence of trust), political distrust (i.e., the opposite of trust) and political skepticism (i.e., withholding one’s judgement)”.

²⁶³ The table was adapted and expanded from Listhaug & Jakobsen (2018: 567- 568).

Table 5.3: Overview of operationalization of political trust in a selection of recent studies

Publication	Dependent variable (scale)	Source
Catterberg and Moreno (2006)	Scale (1-7) composed of confidence in civil service and confidence in parliament	3 rd and 4 th wave of the World Values Survey (1995- 2001)
Moehler (2009)	Scale (-1 to +1), composed of trust in the police, courts of law, the army and the electoral commission	Afrobarometer Round 1
Van der Meer (2010)	Variable (0- 10) denoting trust in parliament	European Social Survey 2002, 2004 and 2006, 29 countries
Hutchison and Johnson (2011)	Scale (0- 18) composed of trust in executive, courts, police, armed forces, electoral commission and government run media	Afrobarometer Rounds 1- 3
Marien (2011)	Scale (0- 30) composed of three variables on trust in parliament, political parties, and politicians	European Social Survey 2006 and 2008, 23 countries
Dunn (2012)	Variable (1- 4) denoting trust in parliament	World Values Survey 1995, 1999 and 2005, global sample
Bauer and Fatke (2014)	Variable (0- 10) denoting trust in cantonal authorities	Swiss Electoral Studies 2007
De Juan and Pierskalla (2014)	Political trust in the national government (1- 5)	World Health Survey 2003, Nepal
Ellinas and Lamprianou (2014)	Scale (0- 10) showing average scores on trust in parliament, legal system, police, and politicians	European Social Survey 2002, 2004 and 2010, Greece
Freitag and Ackermann (2015)	Variable (0- 10) denoting trust in cantonal authorities	Politics and Society in Switzerland 2012
Hooghe et al. (2015)	Scale (0- 10) composed of six questions on trust in police, courts, federal parliament, regional parliament, European parliament, and political parties	Belgian Political Panel Study 2006- 2011, which tracks respondents aged 16- 21
Kroknes et al. (2015)	Scale (0- 30) composed of three variables on trust in parliament, politicians, and political parties	European Social Survey 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2010, 25 countries
Reitan et al. (2015)	Legitimacy index (1- 15) composed of five questions on local politicians	Norwegian Citizen Study 2009
Zmerli and Castillo (2015)	Scale (1- 4) composed of confidence in government, national congress/parliament, judiciary, and political parties	Latinobarometer 2011
Wroe (2016)	Variable (1- 5) denoting trust in government	American National Election study Studies 2008- 2009 panel
Uslaner (2017)	Factor reflecting trust in president, parliament, ruling party, courts and the police (no information as to scale provided)	Afrobarometer (Round 2)
Goubin (2020)	Variable (1- 5) denoting trust in government	ISSP 2004 and 2014
Mattes and Moreno (2018)	2 factors reflecting trust in representative government institutions (0- 4) and state institutions (0- 4)	Afrobarometer Round 5 and Latinobarometer 2013

In this chapter I follow Mattes and Moreno (2018) and use two index-variables as dependent variables for political trust. As noted above, Africans report among the highest levels of institutional trust or confidence by world region (Mattes & Moreno, 2018.). What is more, such trust is relatively consistent over time (Mattes & Moreno, 2018: 27- 28). However, Afrobarometer survey data (Round 5) reveal that Africans display considerable differences in trust between institutions. While more than six in 10 Africans report trusting the national military (66%), the president (61%) and courts (61%), only around half report trusting political parties (52%) and local government (49%) (Mattes & Moreno, 2018: 17). Using factor analysis, Mattes and Moreno (2018) found that Africans do not view institutions as a single entity upon which they bestow trust or not, but as two distinct dimensions of political trust: first, towards partisan, representative institutions of government and second, towards state institutions.²⁶⁴

The first index – ‘trust in representative government institutions’ – is computed by adding respondent's scores for trust in the president/prime minister, trust in the legislature (parliament/national assembly), trust in the elected local council and trust in the ruling party.²⁶⁵ To allow for the greatest amount of variance in the dependent variable I did not recode the index to create categories. The index has a minimum value of 0 (no trust in any of the four government institutions) and a maximum value of 12 (high trust in all 4 institutions).²⁶⁶ On average (across the sample of 33 countries), respondents score a mean of around 6, suggesting neither high nor low levels of government trust (see figure 5.3, below).

This mean score hides considerable variance between countries, once levels of trust in government institutions are viewed on a country level. For example, Tanzanians, Gambians, Mozambicans and Burkinabe score closer to a mean value of 8 on the scale, while Gabonese and Moroccans score below 3, on average. Figure 5.3 also displays the respective mean scores of the four index-items. On average, respondents appear to be most trusting of the president

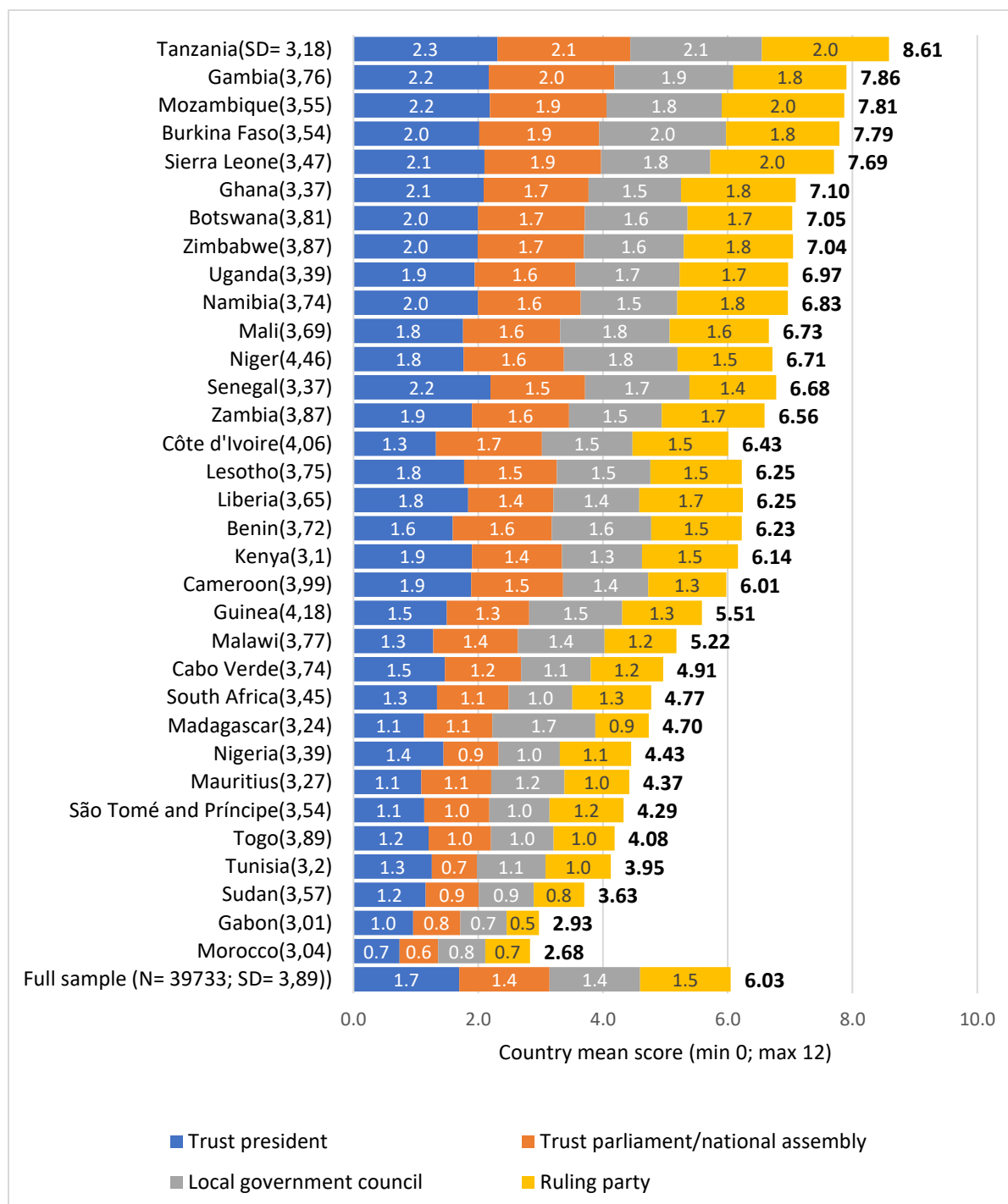
²⁶⁴ For Round 7 data, the two indices of trust correlate significantly, with a moderate strength. The relation between the two indices is positive (see appendix 4 of chapter 5), suggesting that respondents who are more trusting of government institutions also report more trust in state institutions, and vice versa ($r(38606) = 0.634$; $p < .001$). Moreover, using a sub-sample of 18 countries for which longitudinal data are available (2005- 2018), it appears that levels of trust in the president/prime minister and trust in courts of law – for example – display very similar trends over time (appendix 5 of chapter 5). The sub-sample consists of: Benin, Botswana, Cabo Verde, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

²⁶⁵ Respondents were asked: *How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? The President/Prime Minister? Parliament/ National Assembly? Elected local council? Ruling party?* Response options were: *not at all* (coded as 0), *just a little* (1), *somewhat* (2), *a lot* (3). See appendix 1 of chapter 5, for more details on the questions. The choice of variables in each factor reflects the results of an exploratory factor analysis by Mattes and Moreno, who found two related but distinct dimensions of political trust – trust in representative institutions and trust in state institutions. See: Mattes & Moreno (2018: 11).

²⁶⁶ A factor analysis (extraction method: maximum likelihood) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.807). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.867 (4 items) and accounted for 71.67% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha of 0.868.

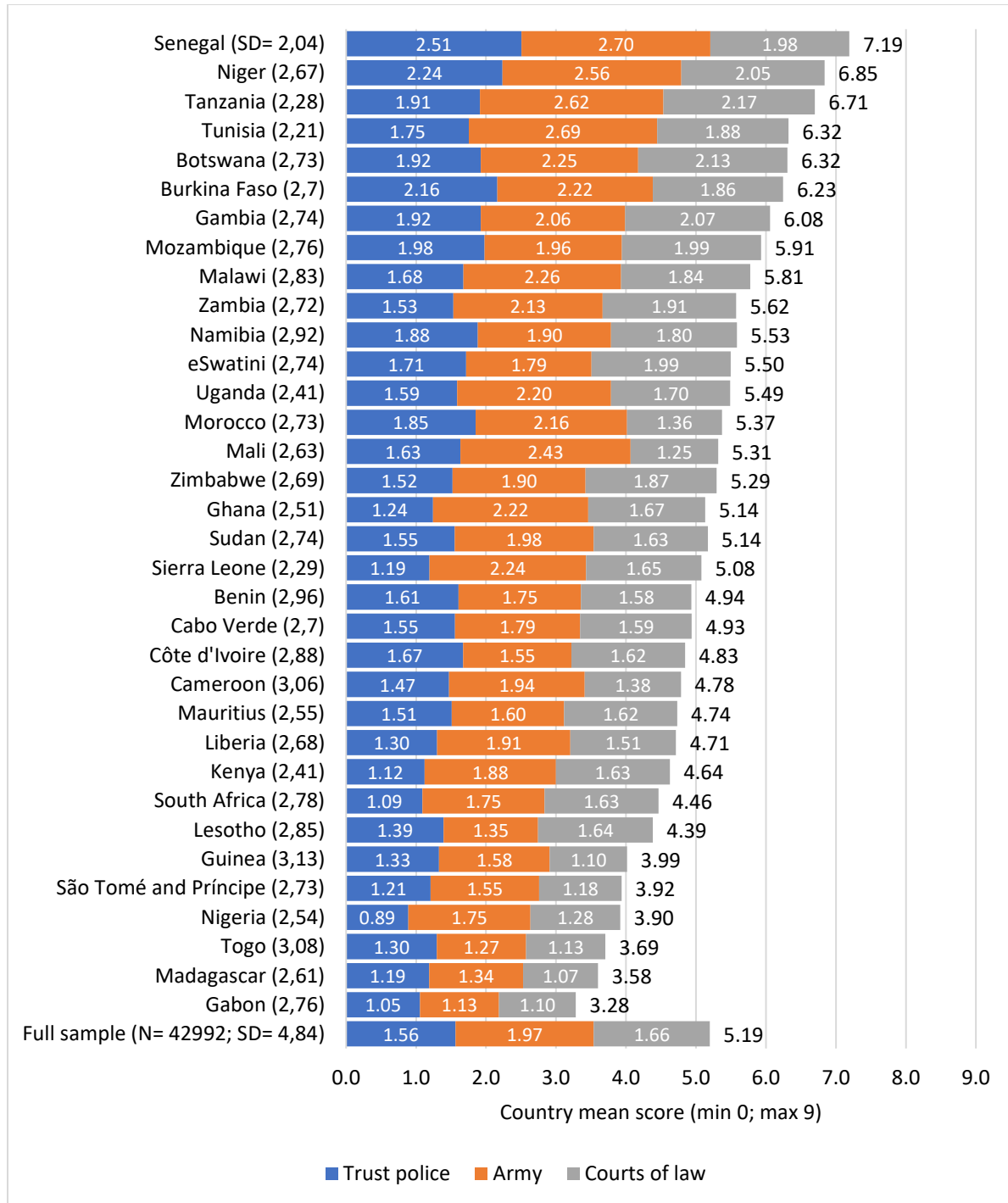
(mean=1.7) and equally trusting of parliament (1.4), local government (1.4) and the ruling party (1.5).

Figure 5.3: Trust in representative government institutions (country mean-score). 33 countries (N=39733). Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)²⁶⁷



²⁶⁷ As the mean scores for each component of trust in representative government institutions are rounded, the overall index mean score may not be equal to the sum of the displayed (rounded) component variables.

Figure 5.4: Trust in state institutions (country mean-score). 34 countries (N=42992). Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)²⁶⁸



²⁶⁸ As the mean scores for each component of trust in representative government institutions are rounded, the overall index mean score may not be equal to the sum of the displayed (rounded) component variables.

The second index – ‘trust in state institutions’ – is composed of scores for trust in the police, army and courts of law. Again, I form an index by adding scores of the three variables, and refrain from recoding the index-variable. The scale runs from 0 (no trust) to 9 (high trust).²⁶⁹

As displayed in figure 5.4, above, respondents across all 34-countries reported an average trust in institutions of 5.19. While this mean-score is not particularly telling in itself, comparing the results with the mean score obtained for trust in government institutions does suggest that, on average, respondents are slightly more trusting than non-trusting in regard to state institutions, and were fairly equally trusting and non-trusting in regard to government institutions. Again, considerable country differences appear. Here, Senegalese, Nigeriens and Tanzanians are most trusting of state institutions, while Togolese, Malagasy and Gabonese are least trusting. Likewise, figure 5.4 also displays the respective mean scores of the four index-items. On average, respondents appear to be most trusting of the army (mean=1.97) and least trusting of the police (1.56).

3.2 Independent variables: Perception of relative deprivation and advantage

I operationalize ‘perceptions of relative deprivation’ by using an Afrobarometer survey question which asks respondents how they feel their living conditions compared with other people in their country.²⁷⁰ This variable makes no reference to what ‘living condition’ refers to but the analysis in chapter 2 of this thesis suggests that the variable is measuring perceptions of individual rather than collective and material rather than political or social inequality. Substantive responses to this question were: ‘much worse (coded as ‘1’), worse, same, better, much better’ (coded as ‘5’). Responses were read out to respondents.²⁷¹ Throughout this thesis I use the terms ‘living conditions’ (as it reads in the question text) and ‘living situation’ interchangeably. Further, I refer to this variable as both *subjective* relative living situation and *perceived* relative living situation.

²⁶⁹ Respondents were asked: *How much do you trust each of the following, or haven’t you heard enough about them to say? The Police? The Arm? Courts of Law?* Response options were: *not at all* (coded as 0), *just a little* (1), *somewhat* (2), *a lot* (3). See appendix 1 of chapter 5. for more details on the questions.

A factor analysis (extraction method: principal axis factoring) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.708). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.143 (3 items) and accounted for 71.43% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach’s alpha of 0.800.

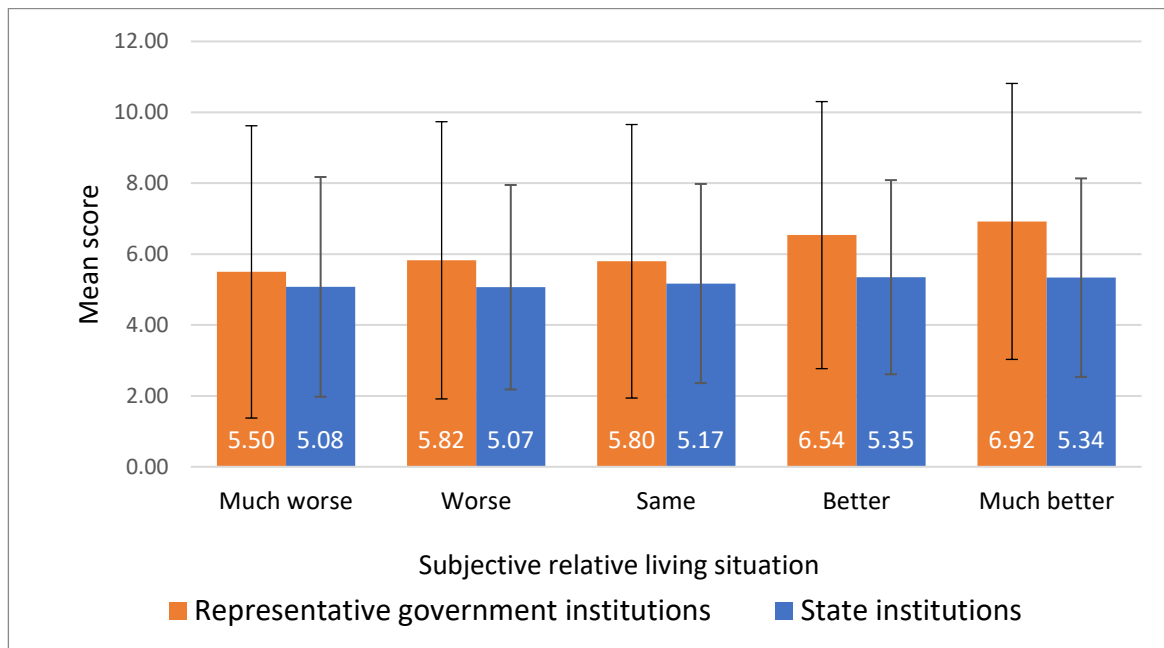
²⁷⁰ Respondents were asked: *In general, how do you rate your living conditions compared to those of other South Africans/ Batswana/ Kenyans (e.g.)?* For further details see appendix 1 of chapter 5.

²⁷¹ For a detailed discussion and country-disaggregation of this variable see the introduction chapter. To recall, in my sample of 34 countries ($N=45811$), around one in three respondents report to feeling equal (35%), with similar proportions feeling either worse off/much worse off (34%) or better/much better off (32%).

To test the effect of relative situation I compute four dummy variables from the variable described above. For each variable I code 'much better', 'better', 'worse', 'much worse' as 1, respectively, and all other categories as 0. I do not compute a dummy for the 'equal' category, making it a reference category.

Indeed, the bivariate results suggest that feeling relatively deprived is associated with less trust in government institutions. Examining the bivariate results (see figure 5.5, below), it appears that respondents who feel much worse off or worse off than others have lower political trust, compared with respondents who feel better or much better off than others.²⁷² While the same relation emerges in regard to trust in state institutions, the differences in trust appear much less pronounced, compared with trust in government institutions.

Figure 5.5: Trust in representative government institutions and state institutions (mean scores and standard deviations displayed). By perceived relative living situation. N=42992. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)²⁷³



²⁷² Trust in government institutions: $r(38586) = 0.088$; $p < 0.01$; Trust in state institutions: $r(41683) = 0.037$; $p < 0.01$.

²⁷³ The data are weighted by country to ensure gender parity within countries. No weight has been applied to equalize the country-level sample sizes. To recall, the index for trust in government institutions can only be computed for 33 countries (eSwatini is missing), while the index for trust in state institutions can be computed for all 34 countries.

3.3 Control variables

To assess the relative importance of perceived relative living situation as a predictor of political trust, I include a number of control variables which are known to be associated with political trust. An overview of question texts and response options is given in appendix 1 of chapter 5.²⁷⁴

3.3.1 Absolute and relative poverty experiences

Compared to economic conditions and evaluations at the country level, the effect of individual economic well-being is far less often considered in literature on political trust. Past research has noted the influence of absolute conditions of material well-being on political trust. For example, sociological explanations of trust argue that income and social class (which are partially products of absolute economic well-being) are associated with political trust (Newton et al., 2018). The authors find a significant and positive effect of income for new democracies in Eastern Europe and four Latin American nations. Mattes and Moreno (2018), in the most comprehensive recent study of sources of political trust in Africa, do not include measures of absolute well-being. Hutchison and Johnson (2011) – using Afrobarometer Rounds 1 to 3 (2000-2005) for 16 different countries – compute an “economic hardship” index, which is comprised of respondents’ assessments of how often they went without food, water or medicine in the past year. The authors found that the effect for economic hardship is significant and negative, even when controlling for a number of other predictors of trust, such as economic satisfaction, state capacity and satisfaction with democracy. The results suggested that higher levels of economic hardship are significantly associated with less political trust.²⁷⁵ Others, however, suggest that the role of absolute economic well-being may not be universal, but rather dependent on other contextual factors. For example, Catterberg and Moreno (2006) – using the 3rd and 4th round of World Value survey data (1995-2001) for four world regions²⁷⁶ – found that income is significantly negatively associated with political trust (an additive index of trust

²⁷⁴ A summary table including descriptive statistics on all level 1 control variables is given in appendix 2 of chapter 5.

²⁷⁵ Hutchison and Johnson (2011) use an additive index of political trust (range: 0 (least) to 18 (most)) computed from trust indicators on trust in the executive, courts, police, armed forces, electoral commission and government-run media. Similar results were obtained by Bakonyi (2011), who – in a study of Hungarian survey data – used the monthly household income per capita and found that people with higher income – independent from level of education – also placed greater trust in democratic institutions.

²⁷⁶ Taken from Catterberg and Moreno (2006:44): “*Nations* included: Six established democracies: Finland, Japan, Spain, Sweden, USA, West Germany. Six former Soviet Republics: Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Ukraine. Eight new democracies in Eastern Europe: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia. Four Latin American Nations: Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Peru.”

in parliament and civil service) for established democracies (see footnote) but has no significant effect for a sub-sample of former Soviet republics.

To examine the effect of absolute economic and material well-being of individuals I include two additive indices: the Lived Poverty Index (LPI) and the Asset Index.²⁷⁷ The LPI was developed by Afrobarometer as a measure of poverty which would allow the interviewer to capture the “experiential core of poverty” (Mattes, 2008: 1).²⁷⁸ The LPI is an additive index of five variables which query how often a respondent or anyone in their family has gone without basic commodities in the past year.²⁷⁹ The commodities are: enough food, enough water for personal consumption, medical services, enough cooking fuel and cash income. Responses range from ‘never’ having gone without to ‘always’. The index is computed by adding a respondent’s five responses. The scale of the additive index is recoded, and categories are created running from ‘no lived poverty’ (coded ‘0’) to ‘high lived poverty’ (coded ‘3’).²⁸⁰

The Asset Index reflects how many non-elemental goods a respondent has access to or owns personally. The index reflects whether respondents say they have access to, or personally own: a radio, television, mobile phone, computer, motor vehicle and bank account.²⁸¹ The scores for the six items were added without any weighting and the resulting scale was not recoded. The scale runs from 0 (no access or personal ownership to any item) to 12 (personal ownership of all six items).²⁸²

Analogous to the previous chapters, I also test whether any association between how people feel their living situation compares to others and political trust is partially or fully explained by

²⁷⁷ I acknowledge that the argument can be made that the LPI is in fact also a relative assessment. For example, it is plausible to argue that people are unable to recall how often they went without food or income in the past year, and use a comparative heuristic to answer the question (assess their absolute situation compared to others, even though the question does not ask them to).

²⁷⁸ Importantly, the questions underpinning the LPI could be captured as part of the broader attitudinal interview, without having to spend too much time and effort on capturing economic conditions, behaviors and habits as studies on poverty do in economic research. On the validity and reliability of the LPI as a measure of core poverty, see: Bratton & Mattes, 2003; Bratton et al., 2005; Mattes, 2008.

²⁷⁹ The question reads: *Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough food to eat? Gone without enough clean water for home use? Gone without medicines or medical treatment? Gone without enough fuel to cook your food? Gone without a cash income?*

²⁸⁰ A factor analysis (extraction method: maximum likelihood) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.816). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.611 (5 items) and accounted for 52.22% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach’s alpha of 0.768.

²⁸¹ A factor analysis (extraction method: maximum likelihood) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.803). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.659 (6 items) and accounted for 44.32% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach’s alpha of 0.744.

²⁸² In a study of perceived horizontal inequalities in Ghana, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Nigeria and Kenya, Langer and Mikami (2013) used the same set of variables and a similar approach to recoding. Langer and Mikami dichotomized the six items and computed an Asset Index ranging from 0 to 6.

how people are objectively doing compared to others. To compute measures of objective relative well-being I compute the relative position and distance of an respondents versus the national Lived Poverty and Asset Index mean score. To account for possible economic country-level effects, I include the level of development using the Human Development Index (HDI) and the Gini-coefficient to control for levels of income inequality. The Gini coefficient is widely used in the literature and previously has been found to be significantly associated with levels of political trust. Past research suggests a positive linkage between levels of development and levels of democratic values (tolerance, trust and efficacy) (Hutchison & Johnson, 2011). The HDI is a multi-item index comprised of scores from dimension-indexes for life expectancy, education and per capita gross national income.

3.3.2 Partisanship

Partisanship is important in informing how much someone trusts government institutions or the state.²⁸³ For example, Hetherington and Rudolph (2015, 2018) note that political trust has become increasingly polarized (in the past decades) in the United States. Importantly, the authors note that motivated reasoning and partisan weighting of evaluative criteria is driving such polarization. Motivated reasoning is a decision-making process which results in individuals consuming information and evidence and consequently coming to conclusions in a biased way (favorable to whom they are partisan). This means that individuals not only trust government more if they are a partisan of the party or government, but they also perceive performance to be more positive which in turn increases trust. Partisan-weighting refers to the process by which partisans assign different criteria or importance in policy areas in which their partisan government is doing best – in other words they focus on areas in which ‘their’ government does best and the ‘other’ does worst.²⁸⁴ While Hetherington and Rudolf (2018) focus on the US, Mattes and Moreno (2018) – in an analysis of determinants of political trust in

²⁸³ Here the argument of political distance or ‘gaps’ could also be useful to consider. The argument posits that someone will have more trust in government or institutions, the closer the institutions’ issue positions are to the issue positions of the individual (the shorter the distance between the two). By extension, institutions will be more trusted if they are closer to a larger share of the population (Listhaug & Jakobsen, 2018). I argue that partisanship is a good proxy for such ‘distance’ and that people choose whom they support based on the shortest distance between their position in regard to what is salient to them, and the respective issue position of various candidates.

²⁸⁴ Because of these clear linkages between partisanship and performance evaluations and between both of these with political trust, I decided to include partisanship in a separate model. Including partisanship with concurrent predictors, such as economic evaluations and perceptions of corruption, I run the risk of not only statistical multicollinearity, but also of ‘muddying the water’ in terms of distinguishing between whether evaluations are shaping trust, or whether evaluations are being shaped by partisanship and both (or actually just one) is shaping trust.

Moreover, it is completely plausible to assume that the causal direction runs in the opposite direction – i.e. that people who are more trusting of government (for whatever reason) thus become supporters of the ruling party or parties. Through the data and the tests used in this chapter, it is impossible to ascertain a definitive causal direction between the two variables. Rather, I follow previous research (as referenced in the discussion) which uses partisanship as an independent variable and trust as the dependent variable.

Sub-Saharan African and Latin America using survey data – found partisanship to be one of the strongest predictors of trust in government institutions and a strong predictor of trust in state institutions. Similar results were obtained by Moehler (2009), using Afrobarometer Round 1 data (1999- 2001; 20 countries, N=15715). This suggests that the effect of partisanship on political trust is present in African cases, too, and stable over time. To capture partisanship, I compute a variable which is coded a '2' if the respondent identifies with the party of the president or prime minister, and coded '1' if the respondent identifies with another party '0' if they identify with no party.²⁸⁵

Table 5.4: Descriptive statistics of variables in this chapter. 34 countries. Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)²⁸⁶

Descriptive Statistics				
Name	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Trust in representative government institutions	0	12	6.03	3.89
Trust in state institutions	0	9	5.19	2.84
Lived Poverty Index	0	3	1.53	0.94
Asset Index	0	12	5.75	3.24
Incumbent partisan	0	2	0.69	0.83
Free elections	1	4	3.02	1.10
Economic performance index	4	16	7.81	2.97
Service delivery index	5	20	11.81	3.62
Government handling income gaps	1	4	1.81	0.86
Performance of the president	1	4	2.65	1.02
Corruption: office of the Presidency	0	3	1.37	0.93
Corruption: Members of Parliament	0	3	1.42	0.88
Level of corruption	1	5	3.61	1.33
Age	18	106	37.11	14.90
Female= 1	49.9% Men; 50.1% Women			
Rural= 1	44.5% urban; 55.5% rural			
Level of education	0	3	1.47	0.97
Majoritarian electoral system= 1	45.9% non-majoritarian; 54.1% majoritarian electoral systems			
Economic growth in % (mean: 2011- 2017)	-2	13	4.21	2.74
Rule of law index	0	1	0.56	0.22
Political corruption Index	0	1	0.56	0.22
Income inequality (Gini)	30.80	63.00	42.53	8.30
Human Development Index	0.35	0.79	0.55	0.10

²⁸⁵ For details on the partisanship variable see appendix 1 of chapter 5.

²⁸⁶ Throughout this chapter (and thesis as a whole) I apply within country weight to ensure gender parity within countries. The percentages displayed in the table represent valid responses. I exclude respondents who said *don't know*, *refused*, or for whom data are missing.

I also control for the 'type of electoral system' as the type of electoral system likely has consequence on the relationship of electorate and representatives (Binzer Hobolt & Klemmensen, 2007; Spoon & Klüver, 2014). I control for type of electoral system using data from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). I recode the IDEA data to code '1' if a country uses a majoritarian system and '0' if it does not (proportional representation or mixed system).

3.3.3 Performance evaluations

Previous research has found that government performance and evaluations of performance are a central determinant of trust in government institutions.²⁸⁷ I include a number of variables which reflect different types of regime outputs. First, I include a respondent evaluation of 'free and fair national elections' in the country. This variable reflects a performance evaluation in regard to good governance.²⁸⁸ Second, I include an 'economic performance' index which reflects how people assess the government's performance in managing the economy, improving living standards of the poor, creating jobs and keeping prices down.²⁸⁹ I also include an index-variable which reflects assessments of 'government performance in service delivery'. This index includes assessments of government reducing crime, providing basic health services, addressing education needs, and providing water and sanitation services, and enough food, for everyone.²⁹⁰ Confirmatory factor analysis and reliability analysis were performed for both indices, which confirmed an underlying latent dimension in all three cases (see respective footnotes for details). Both indices are scaled to run from negative evaluations (low scores) to positive evaluations (high scores). Given the interest in the role of perceptions of economic inequality on trust in this chapter, I also include variable which queries how people feel government is handling narrowing income gaps between rich and poor. Lastly, I include a

²⁸⁷ For African cases see: Moehler, 2009; Hutchison & Johnson, 2011; Uslaner, 2017; Mattes & Moreno, 2018. For cases outside of Africa see: Citrin 1974; Easton, 1975; Lijphart 1995; Alesina & Wacziarg, 2000; Scharpf, 1999; Hetherington, 2005; Keele, 2007; Newton, 2007; Uslaner, 2011; Van der Meer, 2018.

²⁸⁸ Some debate exists as to what role the formal structure of institutions has on political trust (see Lijphart 1999; Aarts & Thomassen, 2008; Marien 2011), but recent empirical research has noted that rather than formal structure, the practical functioning of institutions – such as electoral systems and electoral commissions – serves as a source of political trust (Sanders et al., 2014; Thomassen, 2014).

²⁸⁹ A factor analysis (extraction method: maximum likelihood) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.793). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.620 (4 items) and accounted for 65.49% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha of 0.824. This index is not recoded.

²⁹⁰ A factor analysis (extraction method: maximum likelihood) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.807). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.778 (5 items) and accounted for 55.55% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha of 0.797. The index is computed by adding scores across the composite variables and I do not recode the scale of the index variable.

variable which reflects respondents' evaluations of the performance of the president (or prime minister in countries in which the prime minister heads government).

At country level, I therefore include a control variable– the rule of law index– from the Varieties of Democracies Project which captures to what extent “laws transparently, independently, predictably, impartially, and equally enforced, and to what extent do the actions of government officials comply with the law?” (Coppedge et al., 2019: 266).²⁹¹ Moreover, I control for economic development using the mean score of GDP (per capita) growth in the economy between 2011 and 2017.

3.3.4 Perceptions of corruption

Past research suggests that political trust is strongly tied to the ideas of representation and accountability (Grimes, 2006; Uslaner, 2005, 2011, 2013, 2017, 2018; Van der Meer & Dekker, 2011; You, 2018). Corruption inherently goes against these ideas, as the interest and benefit of the individual or a small group of clients is placed over the interest and benefit of the electorate. Indeed, Lavallée et al. (2008) – using round 2 and 3 Afrobarometer survey data (2002/2003 and 2005/2006) for 18 countries – find that perceptions of general levels of corruption as well as personal experiences of petty corruption (paying a bribe) are significantly associated with less trust in political institutions.²⁹² I include three variables capturing perceptions of corruption. First, I include two variables which measure how much people they feel the president (and his office) and members of parliament are corrupt, respectively. Second, I include a variable which asks respondents to evaluate changes in the overall level of corruption in their country.²⁹³ At country level past research has routinely found a significant, negative effect of corruption on political trust. I use the ‘Political corruption index’ by V-Dem, which is comprised of indicators relating to corruption in the legislature, judiciary, executive and public sector (Varieties of Democracy, 2019).

In line with past research, I include sociodemographic variables which have been found to be associated with political trust. I control for age, gender, location (urban vs rural setting), and level of education.

²⁹¹ For details on aggregation method and an exact list of variables use see: Coppedge et al., 2019: 269.

²⁹² Political institutions are defined by the authors as: president, parliament, independent electoral commission, ruling party and opposition parties.

²⁹³ Respondents were asked: *In your opinion, over the past year, has the level of corruption in this country increased, decreased, or stayed the same?* For description of the variable, see appendix 1 of chapter 5.

4. Analysis

In this section I test the hypotheses laid out in section 2.4 above. I expect respondents who feel relatively deprived to be less trusting of government institutions and state institutions. I begin by testing the main effects with no control variables before introducing measures of individual and country level poverty and objective inequality. I then (in section 4.2) run my main predictors against commonly used explanations of political trust to assess how useful my main predictors are above and beyond what we already know from the literature. In line with Mattes and Moreno (2018), I differentiate between two 'recipients' of trust – representative government institutions (from here on simply 'government institutions') and state institutions²⁹⁴, and, following their recommendation for future research, I control for micro- and macro-level determinants to account for individual- and country level effects.

4.1 Testing main effects

The results – displayed in tables 5.5 and 5.6 – support both hypotheses, namely that feeling relatively deprived is significantly associated with less trust in both government and state institutions. The effect sizes for perceptions of relative deprivation are considerably larger for trust in government institutions than for trust in state institutions. This could suggest that the perceived relative living situation is politicised by ordinary people, rather than seen as a system-output (in which case one would assume that, for example, perceptions of relative deprivation are associated with less trust equally in government and state). The results also show that trust in government and state institutions is linked to feelings of relative advantage, with feeling better and much better off than others being significantly associated with more trust.²⁹⁵ For feelings of both relative deprivation and advantage, the correlation is weaker for those who feel only moderately deprived or advantaged and stronger for those who feel only severely deprived or advantaged, respectively. These results suggest that the association of perceived relative living situation and political trust is linear and people are being driven by primarily egocentric considerations.

Models 1b-3b confirm that how people feel their living situation compares to others is significantly associated with both trust in representative government and state institutions even

²⁹⁴ To refresh: the former entails trust in the president, members of parliament, the ruling party and local councillors. The latter entails trust in police, army and courts of law.

²⁹⁵ Feeling much better off is only significantly correlated with trust in state institutions once sociodemographic and absolute and relative experiences of poverty are considered.

when controlling for sociodemographic characteristics, such as location and level of education (model 1b), as well as objective (model 1c) and subjective poverty experiences (model 2a). While experiencing more lived poverty is associated with less trust in both government and state institutions, trust appears more strongly associated with how people feel they fare compared to others (model 2a).

This is an important finding as it suggests that the relation between people and politics is not improved by addressing only absolute conditions but that relational considerations are important to understanding political trust (the rising tide lifts all boats, comes to mind). The significant effect of perceived relative living situation, above and beyond experienced absolute poverty, moreover, provides empirical support for the narrative of trust breaking down as a result of being 'left behind' (which is an inherently comparative status) rather than 'being poor'. Strikingly, the results also suggest that respondents who own more assets are also less trusting of both government and state institutions, although the effect-size is much smaller than the effect of lived poverty (model 2a). Regardless of which index is consulted, however, subjective relative assessments remain significant, underlining the importance of how people think they fare compared to others in informing political trust, regardless of their absolute situation. This means that regardless of how poor people report to be and how poor they are compared to others objectively, feeling relatively deprived is significantly associated with less political trust and feeling relatively advantaged is significantly associated with more political trust.

While the results here are not directly comparable with past research (as, to my knowledge, no one has used the variable or a similar item in this way), the significant association between feeling relatively deprived and being less trusting of government and state institutions does echo the findings of Wroe (2016), Zmerli and Castillo (2015) and Medve-Bálint and Boda (2014), who all find that the sentiment of feeling precarious or "at the bottom" is linked to less trust (see section 2 of this chapter). Compared to past findings, the models in this chapter explore the relationship between subjective relative living situation and trust in a more differentiated and nuanced way. For example, Zmerli and Castillo (2015) – for 18 Latin American countries – found that where people place themselves on a poor–rich scale is significantly correlated with political trust. This finding appears to suggest a linear relationship between the two variables. In my models, I demonstrate – particularly in regard to trust in state institutions – that the relationship between relative self-placement and trust appears not to be linear, once important control variables such as incumbent partisanship and economic performance evaluations are considered. In regard to trust in state institutions, the models suggest that feeling relatively deprived is significantly correlated with less trust above and beyond the effect of other control variables. Conversely, feeling relatively better off than others is not significantly correlated with trust once other explanations of trust are considered in the models. The results

Table 5.5: Modelling trust in representative government institutions. 33 countries. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)

	M1a: relative living situation	M1b: controls	M1c: objective relative poverty (LPI)	M1c: objective relative poverty (Assets)	M1d: country inequality	M2a: poverty	M2b: country poverty	M3a: Complete economic model 1	M3b: Complete economic model 2
<i>Intercept</i>	5.92(0.267)	5.594(0.266)	5.61(0.265)	5.638(0.269)	4.88(1.31)	6.652(0.273)	8.59(1.227)	8.675(1.547)	7.744(1.578)
Much Worse= 1	-0.563*** (0.073)	-0.779*** (0.072)	-0.607*** (0.073)	-0.813*** (0.073)	-0.779*** (0.072)	-0.638*** (0.074)	-0.779*** (0.072)	-0.638*** (0.074)	-0.639*** (0.074)
Worse= 1	-0.423*** (0.048)	-0.59*** (0.047)	-0.491*** (0.048)	-0.618*** (0.048)	-0.59*** (0.047)	-0.518*** (0.048)	-0.59*** (0.047)	-0.518*** (0.048)	-0.519*** (0.048)
Better= 1	0.341*** (0.046)	0.388*** (0.046)	0.342*** (0.046)	0.408*** (0.046)	0.387*** (0.046)	0.362*** (0.046)	0.387*** (0.046)	0.361*** (0.046)	0.361*** (0.046)
Much Better= 1	0.793*** (0.108)	0.877*** (0.107)	0.817*** (0.107)	0.907*** (0.108)	0.876*** (0.107)	0.848*** (0.109)	0.877*** (0.107)	0.847*** (0.109)	0.847*** (0.109)
Relative to national LPI mean			-0.347*** (0.023)						-0.373*** (0.023)
Relative to national Asset Index mean				-0.056*** (0.008)				-0.072*** (0.008)	
Lived Poverty Index						-0.373*** (0.023)		-0.374*** (0.023)	
Asset Index						-0.072*** (0.008)			-0.071*** (0.008)
Age		0.003*** (0.001)	0.003*** (0.001)	0.003*** (0.001)	0.003*** (0.001)	0.003*** (0.001)	0.003*** (0.001)	0.003*** (0.001)	0.003*** (0.001)
Female= 1		-0.074* (0.036)	-0.088* (0.036)	-0.115** (0.037)	-0.074* (0.036)	-0.139*** (0.037)	-0.074* (0.036)	-0.138*** (0.037)	-0.138*** (0.037)
Rural= 1		0.709*** (0.039)	0.751*** (0.039)	0.651*** (0.041)	0.709*** (0.039)	0.677*** (0.041)	0.708*** (0.039)	0.676*** (0.041)	0.676*** (0.041)
Level of education		-0.208*** (0.009)	-0.231*** (0.009)	-0.176*** (0.01)	-0.208*** (0.009)	-0.191*** (0.01)	-0.207*** (0.009)	-0.191*** (0.01)	-0.191*** (0.01)
Income inequality (Gini)					0.017(0.03)			0.032(0.028)	0.027(0.028)
Human Development Index							-5.463* (2.191)	-6.932** (2.194)	-5.136* (2.239)
<i>Within country R²</i>	0.013	0.041	0.048	0.042	0.041	0.050	0.041	0.050	0.050
<i>Between country R²</i>	-0.007	0.148	0.155	0.130	0.129	0.156	0.268	0.290	0.260

Note: Cell entries are linear mixed model coefficients and standard errors in parentheses. Some effect-sizes may be displayed as zero in the table as they have been rounded off. *p <= 0.05, **p <= 0.01, ***p <= 0.001.

Table 5.6: Modelling trust in state institutions. 34 countries. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)

	M1a: relative living situation	M1b: controls	M1c: objective relative poverty (LPI)	M1c: objective relative poverty (Assets)	M1d: country inequality	M2a: poverty	M2b: country poverty	M3a: Complete economic model 1	M3b: Complete economic model 2
<i>Intercept</i>	5.221(0.166)	5.212(0.175)	5.217(0.175)	5.255(0.177)	5.139(0.853)	5.868(0.18)	5.517(0.879)	6.066(1.113)	5.548(1.14)
Much Worse= 1	-0.252*** (0.053)	-0.383*** (0.053)	-0.29*** (0.053)	-0.416*** (0.053)	-0.383*** (0.053)	-0.317*** (0.054)	-0.383*** (0.053)	-0.317*** (0.054)	-0.318*** (0.054)
Worse= 1	-0.223*** (0.034)	-0.318*** (0.034)	-0.261*** (0.035)	-0.34*** (0.035)	-0.318*** (0.034)	-0.281*** (0.035)	-0.318*** (0.034)	-0.281*** (0.035)	-0.281*** (0.035)
Better= 1	0.086** (0.033)	0.116*** (0.033)	0.094** (0.033)	0.126*** (0.034)	0.116*** (0.033)	0.103** (0.034)	0.116*** (0.033)	0.103** (0.034)	0.103** (0.034)
Much Better= 1	0.151(0.079)	0.199* (0.078)	0.163* (0.079)	0.214** (0.079)	0.199* (0.078)	0.176* (0.079)	0.199* (0.078)	0.176* (0.079)	0.176* (0.079)
Relative to national LPI mean			-0.191*** (0.016)						-0.211*** (0.017)
Relative to national Asset Index mean				-0.039*** (0.006)				-0.048*** (0.006)	
Lived Poverty Index						-0.211*** (0.017)		-0.211*** (0.017)	
Asset Index						-0.048*** (0.006)			-0.048*** (0.006)
Age		0(0)	0(0)	0.001(0)	0(0)	0.001(0)	0(0)	0.001(0)	0.001(0)
Female= 1		-0.116*** (0.026)	-0.122*** (0.026)	-0.146*** (0.026)	-0.116*** (0.026)	-0.158*** (0.027)	-0.116*** (0.026)	-0.158*** (0.027)	-0.158*** (0.027)
Rural= 1		0.402*** (0.029)	0.427*** (0.029)	0.359*** (0.03)	0.402*** (0.029)	0.377*** (0.03)	0.402*** (0.029)	0.377*** (0.03)	0.377*** (0.03)
Level of education		-0.124*** (0.007)	-0.138*** (0.007)	-0.103*** (0.007)	-0.124*** (0.007)	-0.113*** (0.008)	-0.124*** (0.007)	-0.113*** (0.008)	-0.113*** (0.008)
Income inequality (Gini)					0.002(0.02)			0.005(0.02)	0.001(0.02)
Human Development Index							-0.556(1.566)	-1.217(1.592)	-0.118(1.631)
<i>Within country R²</i>	0.006	0.024	0.027	0.026	0.024	0.029	0.024	0.029	0.029
<i>Between country R²</i>	-0.005	0.084	0.090	0.069	0.055	0.111	0.059	0.062	0.014

Note: Cell entries are linear mixed model coefficients and standard errors in parentheses. Some effect-sizes may be displayed as zero in the table as they have been rounded off. *p <= 0.05, **p <= 0.01, ***p <= 0.001.

thus suggest that the relationship is non-linear: feeling relatively better off than others does not simply have the opposite effect of feeling relatively worse off than others.

4.2 Testing competing explanations

The results thus far show that how people feel their living situation compares to other people is significantly correlated to how much they trust representative government and state institutions, respectively. In this section, I put these findings in context, by running my main predictor variables concurrently with widely held explanations of political trust found in the literature.²⁹⁶ Table 5.7, below, displays the results for trust in representative government institutions and table 5.8, below, displays the results for trust in state institutions.

4.2.1 Covariates of political trust

The results emphasize the importance of the president in shaping people's trust with both representative government institutions and state institutions. Across all models, both forms of trust are most strongly correlated with the perceived performance of the president (see models 7). In both cases, more positive performance evaluations of the president are significantly correlated with more trust in representative government and state institutions, respectively. Further, perceived corruption in the presidency is strongly associated with less trust in representative government institutions, which is in line with findings for earlier rounds of Afrobarometer data by Moehler (2009) and Uslaner (2017). I also find a significant, moderate correlation of perceived corruption in the executive and the legislative with trust in state institutions. For both forms of trust, perceptions that levels of corruption have been decreasing over time is significantly correlated with more trust. For both forms of trust, the results also suggest a significant, strong and positive effect of partisanship, meaning that respondents who feel close to the incumbent party are significantly more trusting of both government and state institutions than respondents who do not. As would be expected partisanship has a greater

²⁹⁶ Following the recommendation by Lee Ray (2003), I run separate models for separate explanatory variable-groups so as not to include intervening variables in a single model. I include incumbent partisanship in a separate model as partisanship is probably highly correlated with performance evaluations (model 5) and perceptions of corruption (6). Including partisanship in such models would cause issue of multicollinearity in the computation and interpretation of results. More generally, there exists an issue with cause and effect in the study of political trust (see: Newton et al., 2017:41- 42). Here, the use of path analysis or panel data could provide a method by which the independent contributions of predictor variables and causal directions could be better unpacked.

effect on trust in representative government institutions, than state institutions in which the ruling party (to which people feel close) will have only limited reach.²⁹⁷

Table 5.7: Modelling trust in representative government institutions. 33 countries. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)

	M4: Partisanship	M5: Performance	M6: Corruption	M7: Full model	(Sans President)
<i>Intercept</i>	7.756(1.328)	-0.57(1.138)	12.366(1.701)	3.735(1.322)	5.422(1.522)
Much Worse= 1	-0.638*** (0.073)	0.082(0.07)	-0.331*** (0.073)	0.02(0.072)	-0.029(0.074)
Worse= 1	-0.501*** (0.048)	-0.131** (0.046)	-0.353*** (0.048)	-0.116* (0.047)	-0.138** (0.047)
Better= 1	0.324*** (0.046)	0.112** (0.044)	0.248*** (0.046)	0.07(0.045)	0.123** (0.046)
Much Better= 1	0.774*** (0.107)	0.429*** (0.106)	0.717*** (0.104)	0.447*** (0.107)	0.372*** (0.103)
Rel. to nat. Asset Index mean	-0.074*** (0.008)	-0.023** (0.007)	-0.037*** (0.008)	-0.014(0.008)	-0.022** (0.008)
Lived Poverty Index	-0.391*** (0.023)	-0.106*** (0.022)	-0.197*** (0.023)	-0.089*** (0.023)	-0.074** (0.023)
Incumbent partisanship	0.94*** (0.023)			0.473*** (0.023)	0.579*** (0.023)
Free elections		0.634*** (0.018)		0.492*** (0.019)	0.645*** (0.019)
Economic performance index		0.2*** (0.009)		0.162*** (0.01)	0.23*** (0.009)
Service delivery index		0.076*** (0.007)		0.051*** (0.007)	0.09*** (0.007)
Government handling income gaps		0.029(0.027)		0.019(0.028)	0.002(0.028)
Performance of President		1.276*** (0.02)		1.04*** (0.022)	
Perceived corruption in the presidency			-0.926*** (0.028)	-0.432*** (0.028)	-0.599*** (0.028)
Perceived corruption among MPs			-0.374*** (0.029)	-0.329*** (0.028)	-0.32*** (0.029)
Change in levels of corruption			-0.574*** (0.015)	-0.213*** (0.016)	-0.295*** (0.016)
Age	0.003*** (0.001)	0.003*** (0.001)	0.002*** (0.001)	0.002* (0.001)	0.002** (0.001)
Female = 1	-0.053(0.036)	-0.047(0.035)	-0.184*** (0.036)	-0.052(0.036)	-0.104** (0.036)
Rural = 1	0.53*** (0.041)	0.426*** (0.039)	0.539*** (0.04)	0.339*** (0.041)	0.348*** (0.041)
Level of Education	-0.183*** (0.01)	-0.112*** (0.01)	-0.131*** (0.01)	-0.094*** (0.01)	-0.097*** (0.01)
Majoritarian electoral system	0.652(0.384)			0.261(0.237)	0.368(0.267)
Economic growth (mean: 2011- 2017)		0.128(0.091)		0.127(0.092)	0.191(0.102)
Rule of Law index		-0.371(0.587)		-1.671(0.957)	-1.733(1.055)
Political corruption index (V-Dem)			-0.419(0.903)	-1.353(0.989)	-1.617(1.08)
Income inequality (Gini)	0.031(0.024)	0.01(0.015)	0.024(0.023)	0.011(0.014)	0.01(0.016)
Human Development Index	-6.728*** (1.874)	-3.932** (1.411)	-6.016** (1.936)	-3.525* (1.38)	-3.638* (1.49)
<i>Within country R²</i>	0.092	0.345	0.215	0.396	0.332
<i>Between country R²</i>	0.490	0.809	0.527	0.833	0.774

Note: Cell entries are linear mixed model coefficients and standard errors in parentheses. Some effect-sizes may be displayed as zero in the table as they have been rounded off. *p <= 0.05, **p <= 0.01, ***p <= 0.001.

²⁹⁷ This difference is further underlined by the model performance for either form of trust. While model 4 accounts for approximately 9.2% of variance within countries for trust in representative government institutions, the model accounts for only half that in regard to trust in state institutions. What is more, model 4 accounts for approximately 49% of trust in representative government institutions between countries, but only 3% for state institutions. Interestingly, the electoral system is however not significantly associated with more or less trust in neither representative nor state institutions.

4.2.2 Trust in representative government institutions

Despite the strong effect of incumbency and perceived performance of the president on political trust, I find that perceived living situation maintains a significant association with trust in representative government institutions. Both perceived relative deprivation and advantage are significantly correlated with trust in representative government institutions when controlling for whether someone feels close to the president's party (model 4), people's evaluations of governmental and presidential performance (model 5) as well as perceptions of corruption (model 6). In all three models, the results suggest egocentric motivations, as feelings of relative deprivation are significantly associated with less trust and feelings of relative advantage are significantly associated with more trust. The significant association of perceptions of relative

Table 5.8: Modelling trust in state institutions. 34 countries. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)

	M4: Partisanship	M5: Performance	M6: Corruption	M7: Full model
<i>Intercept</i>	5.905(1.154)	2.855(1.526)	10.013(1.262)	5.407(1.964)
Much Worse= 1	-0.309*** (0.055)	0.039(0.058)	-0.171** (0.057)	0.013(0.062)
Worse= 1	-0.275*** (0.036)	-0.085* (0.037)	-0.22*** (0.037)	-0.109* (0.04)
Better= 1	0.091** (0.034)	0.029(0.036)	0.049(0.035)	0.004(0.039)
Much Better= 1	0.185* (0.081)	-0.099(0.087)	0.087(0.08)	-0.053(0.092)
Rel. to nat. Asset Index mean	-0.047*** (0.006)	-0.029*** (0.006)	-0.025*** (0.006)	-0.017** (0.006)
Lived Poverty Index	-0.218*** (0.017)	-0.043* (0.018)	-0.12*** (0.017)	-0.02(0.019)
Incumbent partisanship	0.375*** (0.017)			0.154*** (0.02)
Free elections		0.348*** (0.015)		0.267*** (0.016)
Economic performance index		0.097*** (0.008)		0.072*** (0.008)
Service delivery index		0.1*** (0.005)		0.086*** (0.006)
Government handling income gaps		-0.042(0.022)		-0.05* (0.024)
Performance of President		0.529*** (0.017)		0.395*** (0.018)
Perceived corruption in the presidency			-0.455*** (0.021)	-0.228*** (0.024)
Perceived corruption among MPs			-0.327*** (0.022)	-0.287*** (0.024)
Change in levels of corruption			-0.321*** (0.012)	-0.15*** (0.013)
Age	0(0)	0.001* (0.001)	0(0)	0.001(0.001)
Female = 1	-0.109*** (0.027)	-0.097** (0.028)	-0.193*** (0.028)	-0.099** (0.03)
Rural = 1	0.323*** (0.03)	0.216*** (0.032)	0.281*** (0.031)	0.169*** (0.035)
Level of Education	-0.103*** (0.008)	-0.071*** (0.008)	-0.078*** (0.008)	-0.057*** (0.009)
Majoritarian electoral system	-0.085(0.334)			-0.142(0.354)
Economic growth (mean: 2011- 2017)		-0.095(0.121)		-0.057(0.137)
Rule of Law index		1.116(0.762)		0.219(1.427)
Political corruption index (V-Dem)			-1.665* (0.675)	-0.897(1.475)
Income inequality (Gini)	0(0.021)	-0.016(0.02)	-0.006(0.017)	-0.017(0.021)
Human Development Index	-0.998(1.629)	-2.38(1.896)	-1.998(1.448)	-1.583(2.056)
<i>Within country R²</i>	0.042	0.170	0.124	0.200
<i>Between country R²</i>	0.031	0.122	0.335	0.050

Note: Cell entries are linear mixed model coefficients and standard errors in parentheses. Some effect-sizes may be displayed as zero in the table as they have been rounded off. *p <= 0.05, **p <= 0.01, ***p <= 0.001.

deprivation and advantage, above and beyond incumbent partisanship, is important as it suggests that trust, even for partisans of the incumbent, is not 'blind' and that individual feelings of relative deprivation or advantaged are linked to political trust, regardless of who one feels close to. Although significant, I find only a weak correlation between perceptions of how government is handling narrowing income gaps and trust in state institutions, and I find no significant correlation for trust in representative government institutions.

The results show that once all competing explanations are taken into account (model 7), perceptions of severe relative deprivation ('feeling much worse off') are no longer significantly associated with levels of trust in government institutions but only feeling moderately deprived compared to others is. This is an important finding in the context of the discourse around people's weakening bonds with politicians and the state as a result of feeling 'left behind' or 'left out'. The results suggest that feeling severely deprived compared to others is not significantly associated with more or less trust in politicians and the state, when one considers how people evaluate the government on economic matters, how free and fair they think past elections were or whether they think that politicians are corrupt, but that feelings of moderate relative deprivation are. Likewise, I find that when all other tested explanations are entered, only feeling severely advantaged is significantly associated with (more) trust in government institutions, but not feeling moderately advantaged. Again, the results emphasize the importance of how the chief executive is perceived to be performing. When the perceived performance of the president is dropped from model 7, the effect of feeling moderately advantaged compared to others turns significant (see far right column in table 5.8).

4.2.3 Trust in state institutions

How people feel their living situation compares to other people, is not consistently and significantly correlated with trust in state institutions, once you consider other explanations of such trust. For example, controlling for incumbent partisanship, both feelings of relative deprivation and feelings of relative advantage are significantly correlated with trust in state institutions. This suggests that regardless of whether someone feels close to the incumbent's party or not, people who feel worse off than others are less trusting of such institutions, and people who feel better off than others are more trusting. However, in the context of performance evaluations and perceptions of corruption, people who feel worse off (both moderately and severely) are less trusting of state institutions, but people who feel better off than others (both moderately and severely) are no different in their levels of trust than people who feel equal to others. Further, in the context of performance evaluations, feeling severely deprived compared to others is not significantly correlated with trust in state institutions, while feeling moderately deprived is. Unlike trust in representative government institutions, I find no consistent significant correlation between trust in state institutions and feelings of relative

advantage. People feeling relatively better off than others (both moderately and severely) is not significantly correlated with trust in state institutions when people's performance evaluation of government and the president or their perceptions of corruption are taken into account. Only in the context of partisanship is feeling better off (both moderately and severely) significantly associated with more trust in state institutions.

The results in this section show that trust in representative government institutions and trust in state institutions are both tied to perceptions of good conduct (free and fair elections, lack of corruption) and to economic and social performance evaluations. These findings echo the conclusion by Mattes and Moreno in that "trust and distrust are not reflexive or unreasoned" (2018: 27), but rather tied to evaluations, such as economic, social and political performance by the government. In addition to the existing literature, the models in this chapter demonstrate that how people feel compared to others at the individual level matters too and ought to be included in future research on political trust in Africa. The findings in this section moreover make clear that feeling relatively deprived and feeling relatively advantaged are not merely opposites in how they relate to political trust. Rather the results demonstrate that the two feelings are associated with political trust in different ways, especially when alternative explanations of trust are considered.

4.2.4 Country level explanations

Unlike much previous research on political trust in Africa, I test the influence of individual- and country-level factors by using a multi-level modelling approach. The results at country level suggest that country levels of income inequality (as per Gini) are not significantly associated with trust in government institutions. I find a negative and significant effect for V-Dem's political corruption index in model 6 for trust in state institutions only, suggesting that people in countries with higher levels of political corruption (on said index) are less trusting of state institutions. This finding is in line with past research which notes that "corruption is *the* major explanation of cross-national differences in political trust" (Van der Meer, 2017: 14).²⁹⁸ However, this effect turns non-significant when other country level factors are controlled for (see model 7). I find no evidence to suggest that people in majoritarian electoral system being more trusting of representative government institutions.

Among level 2 predictors of trust in government institutions, the level of human development stands out as the strongest effect. Given the positive linkage between perceived government performance and trust at individual-level, I find a strong and negative effect for level of human development (using the Human Development Index), suggesting that people in more

²⁹⁸ Italics in the original.

developed countries are less trusting of government institutions. This country-level effect is significant across models 4- 6 for trust in representative government institutions, suggesting that the effect is robust even in the context of other country-level variables. I find no significant effect of HDI on trust in state institutions. Past research – outside of Africa – has found both similar and contrasting results regarding objective and subjective economic development (see McAllister, 1999; Mishler & Rose, 2001).²⁹⁹

4.2.5 Discussing model performance

Analogous to findings by Mattes and Moreno (2018), the models discussed in this chapter have considerably higher explanatory power for trust in government institutions than trust in state institutions. Using multi-level models, I am able to distinguish between variance accounted for within countries and between countries. The most comprehensive models (models 7) account for approximately 40% (government institutions) and 20% (state institutions) of within country variance and 83% and 5% of between country variance, respectively.³⁰⁰ This difference in explanatory power is plausible as, if we assume a functionalist explanation of trust, it is rational that people associate their perceived relative deprivation or economic and social performance evaluations with *government* institutions, rather than with the police or courts of law. The share of explained variance moreover suggests that other, unobserved variables shape differences in political trust both within and between country. One explanation of the large share of unaccounted variance within countries is that most of independent variables entered in the models of this chapter are likely short- to mid-term evaluations or attitudes. However, trust in government and especially state institutions is likely much more long-term. Here factors linked to socialization, political education and long-term experiences with the government and the state are likely important and ought to be probed in future research.

4.3 Section conclusion

In this section, I explored whether feeling relatively deprived compared to other people is associated with less trust in representative government and state institutions. I hypothesized that people who feel relatively deprived compared to other people in their country are less trusting of both representative government and state institutions. Indeed, the results presented in this chapter suggest that feeling relatively deprived is significantly associated with less trust in

²⁹⁹ Past evidence for Africa can be found in Hutchison and Johnson (2011), who – in a study of 16 African countries using Afrobarometer rounds 1 to 3 – find a negative coefficient for economic development using GDP (per capita).

³⁰⁰ In terms of accounting for variance in trust in state institutions between countries, the models looking at only performance evaluations (model 5~ 12%) or only corruption (model 6~ 34%) perform better than model 7.

both government and state institution. These associations are significant even when controlling for experiences of poverty or how poor people are objectively, relative to other people in their country. In the literature, several sources of political trust have been repeatedly identified. To test whether perceptions of relative deprivation could be linked to political trust above and beyond such established sources, I ran a series of models in which I controlled for competing predictors of trust, as per the existing literature. The models in this section suggest that the effect of perceptions of relative deprivation is significant and negative, above and beyond the effect of perceptions of government and presidential performance, perceived corruption, and partisanship. These findings underline the importance of perceptions of relative deprivation and suggest that such measures should find more recognition in future research in this field. People who feel worse off or much worse off do in fact have less trust in government and state institutions, even when we consider whether they feel close to the ruling party or how they evaluate government performance. Of course, the results show that other issues appear to form trust even more strongly, but the significant results for perceptions of relative deprivation provide evidence that the narrative of weakening ties between those who feel 'left behind' or 'losing out' and those who hold office is not without merit.

In particular in regard to trust in representative government institutions, I find feelings of relative advantage (both moderately and severely) to be strongly and significantly correlated with more trust. These correlations are moreover consistently stronger than the correlations between feelings of relative deprivation and trust in representative government institutions. The results suggest that people are not only less trusting of those in office when they feel 'left behind' but that people are more trusting when they feel relatively advantaged. As much of the literature and broader discourse focusses on the 'have-nots' I am not aware of previous research in Africa, which explore how feeling relatively advantaged impacts people's trust. The results here clearly suggest that there exists a strong tie between the two.

5. Conclusion

In this chapter, I explored the sources of two forms of political trust using representative survey data from 34 African countries. I paid particular attention to whether perceptions of relative deprivation or advantage shaped such trust. While researchers are becoming increasingly sensitive to the importance of perceptions, past research has thus far failed to account for perceptions of relative deprivation and advantage in the study of political trust in Africa.

Much ambiguity exists in the literature in regard to how political trust is conceptualized and measured. Here, I follow past research and I construct two indices of political trust. First, trust in government institutions – constituted of trust in the president, parliament, elected local council and the ruling party – and second, trust in state institutions – constituted of trust in the police, army and courts of law.

I have demonstrated that perceptions of individual relative deprivation and advantage are significantly associated with levels of political trust. Past research has emphasized that macroeconomic performance evaluations play a central role in generating political trust but 'conventional wisdom' has awarded little importance to individual-level economic factors. The findings in this chapter challenge such wisdom and support past research that has pointed to the significant linkages between individual-level economic considerations and political trust (see Catterberg & Moreno, 2006; Zmerli & Castillo 2015; Wroe, 2016). I have demonstrated that subjective perceptions of relative deprivation are significant, when controlling for macroeconomic predictors, government performance evaluations, as well as perceptions of corruption and partisanship. Furthermore, the results suggest that the effect of perceptions of relative deprivation is significant when controlling for absolute individual-level considerations of well-being. Given the importance of political trust within the political system, this finding should have important bearings on policy making, as it indicates that simply addressing absolute poverty does not alleviate low levels of trust. Rather, the perceived relative situation of individuals must be addressed. What is more, the results suggest that individual-level economic considerations follow a functionalist logic, with perceptions of relative deprivation being more closely tied to trust in government institutions, and less so to state institutions, perhaps because people look to the former (rather than the latter) institutions to address inequality (see for example Simpson & Loveless (2017)). This moreover underlines that political trust in government institutions and political trust in state institutions – in this context at least – are not simply one and the same, but that differentiation between different recipients of trust takes place in the minds of ordinary people.

The results moreover strongly emphasize the role of individual egocentric evaluations. In all models, feeling relatively advantaged was more strongly associated with more trust in government institutions than feeling relatively deprived was associated with less trust in

government institutions. Feeling relatively better off than others matters, above and beyond more general performance evaluations and partisanship. This suggests that, regardless of how government is seen to be doing or conducting itself in general, people who (individually) feel better off than others have significantly more trust in government institutions, than people who don't.

Besides the main predictor variables, the models in this chapter provide an updated view on covariates of political trust in the context of Africa. People's trust appears to be associated with positive performance – both economically and politically, but also with conduct (lack of corruption, free and fair elections). Whether or not someone is a partisan of the ruling party, matters too. This suggests that, while sociotropic considerations are associated with trust, clear clientelist expectations are also present.

This chapter has shortcomings and limitations.

As discussed in section 2.1 of this chapter, there are multiple explanations as to how economic inequality shapes political trust. While this chapter suggests that perceptions of individual inequality are significantly associated with less political trust, future research would be well advised to unpack this finding further through in-depth interviews targeted at understanding why people say they feel relatively deprived or advantaged. Likewise, the results in this chapter – while statistically significant – suggest that other, unobserved factors are important to understand within-country variation of political trust. As noted in the discussion of the statistical models in the previous sections, most independent variables entered in the models are probably short- to mid-term evaluations and attitudes. Past research has pointed to the role of early socialization and political education, as well as long-term experiences with government and state institutions (Niemi & Sobieszek, 1977; Merelman & King, 1986; Mishler & Rose, 2002; Dalton, 2005; Job, 2005; Kroh & Selb, 2009; Schoon & Cheng, 2011).³⁰¹ Here qualitative studies, or specific and localized case studies, should explore the effect of such factors on political trust in the African context.

As noted in the introduction, Africans report among the highest levels of political trust in the world, when viewed by region and among the highest levels of economic inequality. This seems a paradox given what previous research (for cases outside of Africa) has suggested regarding the linkages between economic inequality and political trust. Following the analysis in this chapter, Africa may appear less paradoxical as the results suggest that, at country level, no significant association exists between levels of economic inequality and levels of trust in political institutions among African countries. This means that country-level inequality does not significantly help account for levels of political trust among the African countries in this chapter. It should be stressed that the results in this chapter must be understood and interpreted within

³⁰¹ For evidence on African cases, see for example: Finkel & Ernst, 2005; Esau et al., 2019.

this context. As such, people who feel relatively deprived in Africa may report less trust in government institutions, compared to Africans who feel relatively equal or better off, but may still be more trusting than people elsewhere – regardless of their perceived relative living situation.

Although not the focus of this chapter, the question therefore remains why Africa, as a region, displays such high levels of trust in political institutions compared to other regions. Previous research on the empirical covariates and predictors of political trust (see, for example, Mattes & Moreno, 2018) fail to suggest plausible reasons. A comparative empirical study across world regions could explore the roots of such different levels of trust. One explanation for high levels of trust in political institutions in Africa may be the role of political patrons in the distribution of material resources through networks of patronage. According to theorists of statehood, such as Charles Tilly and Douglas North, providing material well-being to its citizenry is one of the core functions of the state (Hutchison, 2011). Of course, the argument could be made that states of wealthier countries do a better job at this, and citizens should be more trusting in these countries. However, in neopatrimonial systems, this function of the state (to ensure material well-being) is localized and more heavily focused on personal patron-client relations. While material benefits of the state are 'received' by citizens in the impersonal sense in wealthier countries outside of Africa (a software controls the department of labour making monthly payments of unemployment benefits to someone), often the nature and extent of personal patron-client relations may more strongly determine the sum of material benefit someone derives in neopatrimonial systems in Africa. Rather material benefits can flow through multiple formal and informal avenues, which require more trusting relations between the state and clients. In other words, it may be that Africans are not more trusting of institutions per se, but need to be more trusting of institutions to 'enjoy' the material benefits of the state.

This chapter contributes to the literature by using a novel measure of individual-level perceptions and experiences of inequality, and by examining a region largely under-scrutinized in the empirical literature to date. The findings suggest that perceptions of relative deprivation are significantly associated with less trust in government and state institutions. Despite conventional wisdom, which places little importance on individual-level economic conditions as a source of political trust, I demonstrate that individual-level factors are important, even when controlling for country-level performance and evaluation. This chapter thus contributes to a growing literature which calls into question conventional wisdom and points to individual-level conditions being relevant too. Moreover, this chapter contributes to the literature by showing that feeling relatively advantaged is significantly associated with more trust in political and state institutions. In the past, research has almost exclusively focused on feelings of relative deprivation, but not on feelings of relative advantage. The results suggest that feelings of relative advantage are in fact more strongly associated with more trust than feelings of relative deprivation are with less trust. This finding may reflect the effects of

neopatrimonial networks between citizens (clients) and political actors (patrons). How people see their situation in comparison to others matters in how much they appear to trust political and state institutions. Against past wisdom, individual relative judgements – both positive and negative – matter. These findings should be accounted for in future research.

References - Chapter 5

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Chapter 6

‘What could someone like me do?’

Exploring individual economic covariates of participation in Africa

Abstract - Chapter 6

This chapter explores relative and absolute individual-level economic covariates of participation in Africa. Specifically, I explore whether individual poverty and perceived relative living situation are associated with different forms of participation: voting, protesting, contacting representatives and engaging in community-based activities. Given that participation plays an important role in democratic stability and consolidation, understanding whether economic factors are linked to levels of participation is an important contribution to research on democracy.

Using multilevel modelling and Afrobarometer survey data collected between 2016 and 2018 for over 45,000 individuals in 34 countries, I find that – counter to the socio-economic status model of participation – poorer respondents are more likely to engage in communal activities, contact representatives and authorities, and protest. Individual absolute poverty is, however, not significantly correlated with voting behaviour. Relative comparisons are also linked to levels of participation, albeit not consistently across different modal forms. I find that feeling relatively deprived is significantly correlated with more frequent communal activity, but not with voting, contacting and protesting. Moreover, my models suggest that feeling relatively advantaged compared to others is significantly correlated with more contacting of elected represented authorities. I find no significant correlation for income inequality (Gini coefficient) once human development and electoral democracy is held constant at country level.

More broadly, this chapter updates our empirical understanding of covariates and determinants of citizen participation in Africa. The results suggest that being 'poor' or feeling relatively deprived is not consistently associated with less participation, but also that such economic factors are not as important as cognitive engagement and mobilization. Moreover, the results emphasize that gender and location appear far more important to understanding the individual variance in participation, than economic covariates.

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1. Introduction

Many countries in Africa remain among the poorest and most unequal countries in the world (Beegle et al., 2016). At the same time, many countries are characterized by non-consolidated democratic regimes (Erdman, 2011; Solomon & Liebenberg, 2017; Cheeseman, 2018; Mattes, 2019; Temin, 2020). Past research suggests that an active and participatory citizenry can foster democratic consolidation and prevent democratic 'breakdown' or 'erosion' (Schedler, 1998). In this chapter I explore whether experiences of deprivation and perceptions of individual relative deprivation are linked to levels of participation. Following Verba et al. (1971) and Verba and Nie (1972), I distinguish between four modal forms of participation: voting, communing, contacting and protesting.³⁰² In the literature, past research has suggested that both individual- and country-level economic factors are linked to levels of participation, however little comparative empirical research is available for cases in Africa.

Since the 1970s, income and wealth inequality have risen in many developed countries of the global north and continue to rise today (Alderson & Nielsen, 2002; Smeeding, 2005; Piketty, 2014). High and rising levels of economic and social inequality have captured increasing attention in the economic and wider social sciences and have been linked to a number of negative outcomes such as decreased public health, increased crime, lessened social trust, less life satisfaction, less support for democracy – and rising corruption (Aneshensel, 1992; Soobader & LeClere, 1999; Wilkinson, 1999; Diener, 2000; Stolle, 2003; Rothstein & Uslaner, 2005; Uslaner & Brown, 2005; Solt, 2008, 2010; Kaltenthaler et al., 2008; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009, 2010, 2017; Elgar & Aitken, 2011; Anderson, 2012; Layte, 2011; Stiglitz, 2012; Van de Werfhorst & Salverda, 2012; Loveless, 2013).

Absolute material poverty and economic inequality have also been linked to political engagement and participation. Early survey research, such as Verba and Nie's (1972) standard SES model and Verba et al.'s (1995) 'civic voluntarism model' (CVM) noted that, among other demographic characteristics, income and class were important differentiators of political participation (Brady et al., 1995). Given this association between resources and participation, economic and social science research has questioned whether economic inequality may lead

³⁰² In this chapter I expressly look at everyday forms of participation and do not focus on the role of inequality or deprivation in the context of revolutionary participation. For a discussion of revolutionary participation, see Gurr (1970), Starr (1978) or Siroky et al. (2020). For a full discussion of the participation variables used in this section, please see section 2.1.

to participatory inequality as the resources required to do so become increasingly unequally distributed. Both the theoretical and empirical literature to date has not produced consistent insights as to the effect of economic inequality and participation. For example, the power theory argues that high country-level economic inequality should depress participation among people. On the other hand, the conflict theory suggest that high levels of inequality increase participation. In a different example, the resource theory argues that high levels of inequality reduce participation among the poor and increase participation among the rich. Analogous to the theoretical debate, the empirical evidence is far from conclusive (Solt, 2008; Kurer et al. 2019).

1.1 Economic deprivation and participation in Africa

Despite many countries in Africa – especially southern Africa – being characterized by high levels of income and wealth inequality (Beegle et al., 2016), limited research on the linkages between economic inequality and participation has examined cases in Africa.³⁰³ Past research has largely focused on a small set of cases – predominantly countries of the global north, in particular in regard to theory building work (Engels, 2015).

Rather, the discourse and narrative for cases in Africa have been shaped largely by arguments related to (absolute) poverty.³⁰⁴ In a series of books on poverty – ‘Voices of the Poor’ – the World Bank used a mixed-methods approach – such as participatory poverty assessments (PPA) – in up to 60 countries (n<60000) (from the 1990s), to provide a comprehensive analysis of causes and immediate consequences of poverty, a discourse of how poverty can be defined and measured in context as well as a series of country-case studies.³⁰⁵ The books noted that, for many respondents, poverty and notions of powerlessness or voicelessness were connected in both economic and political terms (Narayan, Patel et al., 2000: 32f, 190ff). Respondents frequently felt a sense of dependency or inferiority, such as being subjected to (more) powerful employers, producers, traders, landlords or money lenders. Politically, the report notes that poverty was connected to having little influence on political representation and being

³⁰³ I am here referring to the study of civil engagement and participation. There exists a rich literature that explores incidents and causes of violence and unrest in Africa. This literature is largely based in conflict studies. I discuss this literature briefly in section 1.2.

³⁰⁴ For a discussion about why this focus on, and the categorization of ‘the poor’ may be problematic, see for example: Rademacher & Patel, 2002; Pithouse, 2003; Cornwall & Fujita, 2007.

³⁰⁵ In this section, I am largely referring to the first book in the World Bank series, titled: “*Can Anyone Hear Us? Voices From 47 Countries*” (2000). The World Bank reports examined PPAs from the following African countries: Bénin (1994), Burkina Faso (1994), Cameroon (1995), Ethiopia (1998), Gabon (1997), Ghana (1995), Guinea-Bissau (1994), Kenya (1996 & 1997), Madagascar (1994 & 1996), Mali (1992 & 1993), Niger (1995), Nigeria (1995, 1996 & 1997), Rwanda (1998), Senegal (1995), South Africa (1998), Swaziland (1997), Tanzania (1997), Togo (1996), Uganda (1998 & 1999), Zambia (1994 & 1997).

dependent on (corrupt) state officials and political patrons, as well as being excluded from access to state services. For example, the report speaks of the experiences of the poor (women) in Cameroon who are politically alienated as poverty and “inflexible” institutions create barriers to entry through documentation requirements (Narayan, Patel et al., 2000: 190). These sustained experiences ultimately lead to a sense of inefficacy and resignation. As the World Bank report (Narayan, Patel et al., 2000: 34) – concludes:

“[t]he voices of the poor in developing countries differ from those who have experienced sudden poverty [...] All reflect insecurity and material deprivation, yet the experience of long-term poverty is often accompanied by its almost fatalistic acceptance, even if people have not given up the struggle.”

In addition, the World Bank (in a subsequent book in the series) notes that such economic and political deprivation or exclusion often overlaps and mutually reinforces with social stigma, illbeing or exclusion (Narayan, Chambers et al., 2000). The book provides several examples of such excluded groups in Africa – for example the ‘ohiabrubro’ (the miserably poor) in Ghana, the ‘balandana sana’ or ‘bapina’ in Zambia or the ‘osaukitsitsa’ in Malawi. While economic and political deprivation may cause social stigma or even exclusion, the World Bank also reports experiences in which respondents describe how hardship can produce individual and communal coping mechanisms and networks. These mechanisms and networks are typically highly localized and informal (Narayan, Chambers et al., 2000: 149).

Despite the somewhat pessimistic outlook provided by the World Bank in regard to ‘the poor’, many cases of citizen action across Africa appear to have been driven by notions of economic grievances and disenfranchisement (Bratton & van der Walle, 1992; Smith, 2014; Buhaug et al., 2015; Hendrix & Haggard, 2015; Mueller, 2018; Abbs, 2020). For example, following an increase in food staple prices between 2005 and 2007, urban protests erupted in Cameroon, Cote d’Ivoire and Mozambique (Adam, 2008). More recently, Ugandans and Malawians took to the streets in April and July of 2011, respectively, to protest high prices and low wages.³⁰⁶

Often, the origins and the driving motivations or aims of protests and collective action are multidimensional and interact with other salient social, economic and political issues. What drives protest and collective action may also change over time. For example, in 2009 to 2010, protests erupted in Niger after President Tandja attempted to change the constitution to

³⁰⁶ Indeed, Sánchez and Namhata (2019) – using the Food and Agriculture Organization Corporate Statistical Database (FAOSTAT) for cereals prices and production, and four waves of Afrobarometer survey data for 31 sub-Saharan African countries from 2005 and 2015 – find that greater domestic food price variability is significantly associated with more (self-reported) protest behaviour, while improved availability of cereals is significantly associated with less (self-reported) protest participation.

prolong his presidency in what became to be known in Niger as ‘tazartché’ or ‘continuity’ in the widely spoken Hausa language in Niger. Nigeriens took to the streets in what appeared to represent strong support for adherence to term limits, rule of law and democracy more generally (Mueller, 2013). In fact, Mueller (2013) – using original survey data collected in Niger’s capital of Niamey – suggests that perceived low prospectus upward mobility motivated many participants of protests, reflecting how economic and political issues can intersect.³⁰⁷

Protests in Burkina Faso in 2008 also highlight the fluid origins and motivations of collective action. Following price increases for foods in 2007 and 2008, Burkinabe took to the streets in March 2008 in several cities across the country. Quickly a broad alliance of trade unions, consumer and professional associations, student and youth movements and human right organisations was formed, and demonstrations were organized in the capital city of Ouagadougou in March, April and May of 2008. This alliance is an example of how fluid causes, motivations and drivers of collective actions and social movements can be. For example, the alliance – formally the ‘Coalition against the high cost of living, corruption, fraud, impunity and for freedoms’³⁰⁸ – quickly harnessed the widespread grievances and topicality of food prices to push for tax cuts and wage and pension increases for state employees and private sector workers (Engels, 2019). What is more, the earliest protests in Burkina Faso in late February 2008, were not actually focused on food prices. Rather, the early protests – largely attended by informal urban traders and artisans – called for access to gainful employment (Engels, 2019). Other protests in February 2008 saw market shopkeepers in protest of the implementation of a duty on means of transportation which had been approved years prior. From these diverse grievances emerged a unifying ‘catch-all’ call to protest against the high cost of living – ‘la vie chère’. Trade unions and other social movements – who have historically been powerful in Burkina Faso – were able to quickly mobilize as the issue of high cost of living had been on their agenda for some time pre-2008 (Engels, 2019). As Engels (2015) notes, ‘la vie chère’ allowed for a sufficiently encompassing and inclusive discursive framing of the various grievance to enable the continued mobilization of different groups of Burkinabe in 2008. The discursive frame of ‘la vie chère’ allowed for the trade unions to protest the increasing wage-price gap, students to protest rising costs of basic services such as education, and human rights groups to protest “corruption, fraud [and] impunity from political and economic crimes” (Engels, 2015:115). Why protests start, why people join and what protesters end up calling for may thus not be one and the same thing.

³⁰⁷ As Mueller (2013: 401) notes: “While political and economic grievances are not mutually exclusive, economic grievances are sometimes more politically salient than dissatisfaction with autocracy, even in the most repressive autocratic regimes”.

³⁰⁸ Translated from the original French, “Coalition nationale de lutte Contre la Vie Chère, la corruption, la fraude, l’impunité et pour les libertés”.

Frequently, there exists different motivations between those who formally organize and steer protests and groups, and those who participate. Elischer and Mueller (2019: 399) note in this regard that there exists a tendency for “social movement leaders to initiate protests for political reasons, such as to defend the constitution, whereas ordinary people often join protests for different reasons, such as economic anxiety.” Likewise, numerous examples exist where economic grievances appear to be a primary motivation of action, but it is not the poor who are out on the streets. In 2005, several thousand Malawian civil servants blocked the access roads to government offices in the capital city – Lilongwe – in demand for pension benefits. In 1998, Ivorian telecommunications workers went on strike to protest their relatively lower wages compared to expatriates. And in 1996, over 120,000 Zambian civil servants went on strike over the government’s refusal to raise salaries.

These events so far reflect large, mediatized events, often in big cities or the capitals. The events are organized to culminate at locations that symbolize the existing structures of power, such as the presidential residence, parliament, or historic monuments. But economic grievances can shape low-intensity forms of action too. South Africa, for example, has seen a long series of protests over poor service delivery and lack of accountability of political leaders. These ‘protests’ – or as Alexander (2010) argues the “rebellion of the poor” – are driven by deeper grievances associated with the perceived injustice of persistent inequality. Importantly, the protests are largely locally organized and geographically dispersed (Alexander & Pfaffe, 2014). Courses of action are not limited to protesting only, but also entail a variety of different actions such as mass meetings, petitions, stay-aways and election boycotts (Alexander, 2010). Further, as Booysen (2007) notes, the South African protests highlight how aware the participants are of the role of different forms of action. Based on national survey data and case studies conducted in 5 municipalities, Booysen (2007: 31) argues that “[t]he South African local electorate [...] appears to believe that ‘voting helps and protest works’ when it comes to deciding on a repertoire of action to optimise service delivery in communities”.

1.2 Research question and hypotheses

I next turn to formulating a set of hypotheses. I test the role of individual-level grievances using people’s evaluation of how their living situation compares to others.³⁰⁹ Past research – outside of Africa – has typically used objective measures of country level inequality, such as the Gini coefficient to analyze the relationship between economic inequality and participation (see for example Solt, 2008). Recent research has, however, suggested that individuals’ perceptions of

³⁰⁹ See chapter 2 for detailed discussion of this variable.

levels of inequality may not align with objective measures of inequality (Loveless & Whitefield, 2011; Norton & Ariely, 2011; Chambers et al., 2014; Gimpelson & Treisman, 2018). Objective poverty or inequity data may therefore not accurately capture the motivators of participation.³¹⁰ For example, research has shown that subjective perceptions of inequality predict support for redistributive policies, while objective measures of inequality do not (Engelhardt & Wagener, 2014; Niehues, 2014; Fatke, 2018).

Given these concerns, I use *perceptions* of inequality, rather than *objective* measures of inequality at the individual-level. Specifically, using Afrobarometer survey data (Round 7)³¹¹, I test a survey question which asks respondents how they feel their living situation compares to others in their respective country (see section 3.2). I refer to this item as '*perceived relative living situation*' throughout this chapter. From this item, am able to gauge '*perceived relative deprivation*' – respondents who say they are 'much worse off' or 'worse off' than others – and '*perceived relative advantage*' – respondents who say that they are 'much better off' or 'better off' than others.

From the SES literature – which posits that people with less resources are less participatory – it could be assumed that people who feel relatively deprived are also less participatory. However, evidence in the social movement literature suggests that relative deprivation can form a motivation to participate. In line with the social movement literature, I expect:

H1: People who relatively deprived will be more participatory than people who do not feel relatively deprived.

Second, I test the role of absolute poverty experiences at the individual level. Past research on the determinants of participation suggests that socioeconomic status model (SES) is a strong predictor of participation, as people require resources to participate. Consequently, people with greater poverty should be less participatory.

In line with the existent literature and the narrative outlined by the World Bank, I expect that:

³¹⁰ Tunisia (and the wider Middle East and North Africa region (MENA)) is an example where (objective) economic data is unable to explain political participation and events of the past decade. Rather, subjective perceptions of economic marginalization and relative deprivation help understand how a relatively stable economy with low income inequality became the seed for widespread protests and demands for regime change (Moore, 2015; Devarajan & Ianchovichina, 2018; Gjevori, 2018; Gordon, 2018). At face value, the economic data for Tunisia would suggest a successful and stable country, especially in comparison to its MENA neighbors. As Ianchovichina et al. (2015) report, Tunisia had made strides in the decades prior to 2011 in eliminating extreme poverty and hunger, raising school enrolment and access to infrastructure services, as well as reducing child and maternal mortality (see also: Ianchovichina, 2018). Further, income and expenditure inequality were low in Tunisia prior to the uprising of the Arab Spring in 2011 (Hassine, 2014). Rather, the underlying grievances – especially among the middle class – were informed by perceptions of lack of opportunity (especially in the formal employment sector), the closed-off economy surrounding state owned enterprises monopolized by a small (urban) elite, low general life satisfaction and historic regional inequalities and patterns of marginalization between urban and coastal areas on the one hand, and rural areas on the other hand (Iqbal & Kiendrebeogo, 2015; Ianchovichina et al., 2015; Aboueldahab, 2018; Meddeb, 2020).

³¹¹ Round 7 was collected in nationally representative surveys for 34 African countries between 2016 and 2018, comprised of over 45000 respondents in total.

H2a: Poorer people will be less participatory than people who experience no or little lived poverty

However, in contrast to the standard SES hypothesis, past empirical research in Africa has found that poorer respondents participate more frequently (Mattes, 2008; Brass et al., 2019). In line with this research, I expect that:

H2b: Poorer people will be more participatory than people who experience low or no lived poverty

This chapter is structured as follows. I begin by outlining the existing literature in regard to the theoretical expectations of both country- and individual-level economic covariates of participation. At country level I explore the three prominent theories linking country-level inequality and participation – the relative power theory, the resource and the conflict theory. At individual level, I focus on past research linking individual grievances to participation. In section 3, I discuss the data and variables used in this chapter and formulate a series of hypotheses (which are tested in section 4). Using survey data from 34 African countries surveyed between 2016 and 2018, I first discuss bivariate results (section 3.1) before constructing multivariate regression models using multi-level modelling (section 4).

2.Literature review

Despite widespread attention, the literature today remains inconclusive in both theoretical expectations and empirical findings on the linkage between economic inequality and participation and behavior (Kurer et al., 2019; Griffin et al. 2021). In order to provide an overview of the existing literature, the literature can fundamentally be grouped by those who focus on inequality at the country-level and those who focus on the individual, micro-level, socio-economic status. While the former is concerned with unequal distributions of economic resources at aggregate level, the latter is concerned with the socioeconomic status of individuals such as income and wealth. Of course, the two are linked.³¹² At country-level, past research has found that economic inequality reduces political participation and may lead to resignation and acceptance of the economic and political status quo (which in turn is linked to less cognitive engagement) (Goodin & Dryzek, 1980; Bollen & Jackman 1985; Jost et al., 2003; Benabou & Tirole, 2006; Loveless, 2016). However, as discussed earlier in this thesis, people are widely not aware of levels of economic equality. I therefore choose to study the economic covariates of participation at the individual level.

In this section I first overview the literature examining relation between absolute and relative economic means and participation (section 2.1), before turning to three theories linking country-level economic inequality to participation (section 2.2).

2.1 Economic covariates at individual-level

Given participations' fundamental role in democratic regimes, academic interest has long focused on what informs citizens' level and form of participation.

2.1.1 Absolute poverty

One of the earliest of such studies was the 'political action study' by Barnes et al. (1979). The 'political action study' suggested that high levels of education and young age were strongly related to protest behavior.³¹³ This supported Verba and Nie's (1972) theoretical SES model,

³¹² As Kurer et al (2019: 869), note: "Economic inequality is always rooted in the differential distribution of economic hardship, so the two debates are inevitably coupled".

³¹³ The relevance of education to participation was corroborated in a second wave of the political action study by Jennings and van Deth (2014). Other work noted that education was a strong predictor of non-electoral participation, but not of election participation (Roller & Rudi, 2008).

which highlighted the role of education, income and social status in explaining political participation. Verba et al. (1995) expanded upon the SES model and analyzed the explanatory links between SES and participation. The new, civic voluntarism model (CVM) included education and languages, income and time, civic skills and political engagement. As the authors conclude, “political participation [...] is the result of political engagement and resources”.³¹⁴ Or in simpler terms, people participate politically because they want to, and they can afford to do so. Rather, as suggested by seminal work by Piven and Cloward (1977) in regard to protesting, those with no or only limited resources engage in circumstances of extreme social, political or economic change.

2.1.2 Relative deprivation

Given the linkage between material means and participation, the question arose whether material inequality would lead to participatory inequality. Amid rising inequity from the 1970s in most western democracies, many feared that a growing group of people who felt ‘left behind’ by the growing gap between ‘haves’ and ‘have-nots’ could result in many refraining from participating. As a consequence, economic and social science research increasingly asked whether economic and social inequalities could affect levels of participation.

At individual level, such inequalities are commonly conceptualized as relative deprivation. Relative deprivation, it is argued, can form ‘grievances’ in people, which – along with motivations and capacity or opportunity – form a strong driver of participation, in particular protest and violent rebellion (Gurr, 1970; Starr, 1978; Siroky et al., 2020). Indeed, grievance theory and social movement research widely acknowledges a sense of relative deprivation as a powerful grievance which can move people to participate in social movements³¹⁵ (Pettigrew, 1967; Gurr, 1970; Crosby, 1976; Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996; Klandermans, 1997; Walker & Smith, 2002; Siroky et al., 2020). In fact, Gurney and Tierney (1982: 33) note, “[t]he concept of relative deprivation in the study of social movements is practically as old as sociology itself”.³¹⁶ Relative deprivation – in a nutshell – describes the subjective judgments regarding the

³¹⁴ Verba et al. (1995: 345). See also: McCarthy & Zald (1977).

³¹⁵ Kerbo (1982) makes an important distinction as to the motivations of social movement participation. Kerbo (1982) distinguishes between movements of affluence and movements of crisis. While the former is driven by people who see their basic needs met and can divert resources to engage in movements, the latter are motivated by those who engage as a result of or perception of worsening individual conditions. For a general discussion of the importance of movement in regard to participation (especially protests), see for example Kriesi (1989, 2004).

³¹⁶ Simply because a concept or construct is old, does not mean it is not controversial or has been questioned at times. Relative deprivation – articulated as such first by Stouffer et al. (1949) – rose in popularity in post-World War 2 social science as an intuitive post-hoc explanation for observed phenomena and paradoxes. However, despite its wide use at the time, relative deprivation saw a decline in popularity in the 1980s. Since then, the construct has been integrated into related theories and other fields of research, in particular social psychology. For a historical overview of the concept and use of the concept since Stouffer et al.’s seminal work, see Walker and Smith (2002).

discrepancy between what someone believes they are entitled to ('value expectations') and what they actually have in regard to perceived personal capabilities ('value capabilities') to realize such expectations given the social means available to them. Importantly, judgements about entitlements are made relative to others (groups or individuals), meaning that the perceived relative conditions of others directly fuel what someone believes they are entitled to and are therefore also linked to the subjective relative deprivation that someone may feel (Crosby, 1976). In fact, research has suggested that how people feel they fare compared to others is probably more important to people than their absolute situation (Tversky & Kahneman, 1991; Solnick & Hemenway, 1998).

Participation is multi-faceted, and evidence that relative deprivation drives protest may be of little importance when looking at other forms of participation. Indeed, previous research has linked grievances to both increases and decreases in participation. For example, research has suggested that grievance is associated with less interest in politics and less willingness to engage in conventional forms of participation – for instance voting (see Schlozman & Verba, 1979; Rosenstone, 1982; Dalton, 2004; Booth & Seligson, 2009; Griffin et al., 2021). From this perspective, economic adversity and grievances cause a 'withdrawal' of people from political competition and discourse. However, others have suggested that such duress should increase political participation – a 'mobilization' effect takes place. As Rosenstone (1982: 25) notes: "[t]he argument here is that people under economic strain blame the government for their situation and vote, organize, lobby, protest, and so on to redress their grievances". For example, a study by Killian et al. (2008) using American National Elections Study data from 1978 to 2004 finds that people who perceived their financial situation is comparatively worse than the national average are more likely to vote. Conversely, those who perceive that their individual situation is more positive than the national economic, are less likely to vote. Although not the focus of this chapter, it should be noted that the literature also suggests that country-level economic inequality can both increase and decrease participation.³¹⁷

³¹⁷ Past research has proposed that country-level inequality has both mobilizing and demobilizing effects on people (Solt, 2008; Kurer et al., 2019). The conflict theory argues that, as inequality increases, political engagement will increase among all people (regardless of relative economy means). Conflict theory presupposes that inequality is inherently an issue of policy. As such, it argues that as inequality increases both the rich and the poor have increased incentives to engage in the formation of policy pertaining to issues of distribution and redistribution (Meltzer & Richard, 1981; Brady, 2004; Solt, 2008; Loveless, 2013). As inequality increases, the prospect of redistributive policies become potentially more valuable to the poor, and engagement therefore becomes more rewarding. Simultaneously, for the rich, such redistributive policies become potentially more expensive, as the cost of redistribution increases as the poor become increasingly poorer and grow in numbers. Both the rich and the poor, thus have heightened incentives to engage, facing increased costs if inactive and increased rewards if active.

The relative power theory argues that rising economic inequality depresses overall political participation and activity, although the effect is stronger for lower income groups than for higher income groups (Loveless, 2013). The theory argues that economic resources can be used to influence others and thus translate into political power. As economic inequality increases so too does political inequality (Goodin & Dryzek, 1980). Growing political inequality allows the rich to continuously exert their political power and pursue political outcomes in their favor,

2.2 Evidence from Africa

Empirical research in Africa on the relation between economic factors and participation is limited, especially at individual level. Empirical studies of participation in Africa have been largely located at the group or country level, such as understanding the emergence of conflict and war in security studies (Herbst, 1990; Scarritt & McMillan, 1995) or the emergence and functioning of social movements in contemporary and historical perspective (Mamdani & Wamba-dia-Wamba, 1995; Ellis & van Kessel, 2009; Larmer, 2010). Recently, Asingo (2018) and Mueller (2018) have presented evidence that relative economic factors are linked to participation at individual and country level. Asingo (2018) – in a study of Afrobarometer Round 3 data (2005) for Kenya – finds that the perception of relative deprivation is significantly

especially in regard to redistributive matters which could be used to address economic inequality (Goodin & Dryzek, 1980). Over time, this political inequality allows the rich to “drown out the voices of poorer citizens and so keep the issues they would raise from being discussed” (Solt, 2008: 49). As a result of repeated policy defeat the poor increasingly perceive themselves as “unable to prevail in political contests or even to gain a hearing for their positions that their interests cannot be pursued through the political process; they therefore abandon preferences that have no chance of being enacted” (Lukes, 2005: 27). Faced with an increasingly impossible challenge to voice and pursue policy preferences, participation among the poor decreases as they begin to view participation as a futile expense. Over time they internalize this perceived fate and accept a system that benefits the few and starkly disfavors themselves. They fully retreat from political contest and from challenging the status quo. Eventually, through repeated failure, the poor begin to perceive their situation as natural and detach from the political realm all together, accepting their relative position as politically mute citizens (Schattschneider, 1960; Pateman, 1971; Solt, 2008).

But the relative power theory also argues that inequality (over time) reduces participation and engagement among the rich, too (Loveless, 2013). Over time, the rich lose the incentive to engage politically as the poor pose little opposition. As the poorer citizens’ ability to contend in political competition of interests is diminished, the engagement of the richer citizens is expected to decrease too. As the rich, however, also compete among each other, their decrease in engagement is expected to be less dramatic as the decrease for poor people (Loveless, 2013).

In a number of empirical studies, the relative power theory has been supported. Solt (2008) – using a dozen cross-national surveys of the world’s richest democracies – finds that the relative power theory is most successful at explaining the effect of income inequality. Controlling for economic and political factors at individual and national level, Solt (2008: 48) finds that greater national inequality depresses participation (interest, discussing politics and voting) for all but the most affluent, thus supporting the relative power theory. Although Solt (2008) explicitly links his findings to the relative power theory, he does not elaborate whether his findings also suggest (less pronounced) decreases in participation among the relatively rich as the theory would have it. Past research has moreover connected income inequality to lower levels of political and civic participation (Lancee & Van de Werfhorst, 2012; Solt 2015).

The relative power theory strongly builds on earlier work by Schattschneider (1960). The author hypothesizes (in the eponymous Schattschneider hypothesis) that abstention rates in voting and the differences in voting patterns between richer and poorer citizens, are explained by economic inequality. The author argues that economic resources can be used to set the political agenda. As inequality increases, the poor’s views are drowned out of political debate and electoral competition, resulting in the rich’s interest dominating the political and electoral agenda and the poor withdrawing from electoral competition as their interests are not represented anymore. Solt (2010) empirically tests Schattschneider’s hypothesis using 144 gubernatorial elections in the USA between 1978 and 2000. He finds strong support for the hypothesis, concluding that “income inequality powerfully affects both the likelihood that a potential voter actually goes to the polls and the degree of income bias found in the electorate” (Solt, 2010: 297-298).

associated with more protesting and less voting.³¹⁸ Mueller (2018) – using income inequality data for 38 African countries (1998-2008) – finds a significant positive effect of income inequality on protest frequency at country level, controlling for absolute income, population and regime type.

However, qualitative research is available, for example on the linkage between inequality and protesting behaviour. From studies in the 1970s through the 1990s in the African politics and development literatures, several theories and arguments have emerged – such as the urban bias (Bates, 2014) or the tunnel effect (Hirschman & Rothschild, 1973). These theories point to the role of location (urban bias) and perceptions of economic and social mobility (tunnel effect) in understanding protest behaviour and social upheaval.

2.3 Section summary

In this section I have overviewed the literature concerning the linkage between economic inequality and participation. Despite considerable attention in the literature, both theoretical expectations and empirical findings are not clear cut. In the past it has been argued that economic inequality has both a mobilizing and a demobilizing effect. Further, it has been argued that absolute material well-being is important in understanding levels of participation as participation requires resources. How people feel they compare to others matters too, but past research has produced juxtaposing arguments. While grievance theory and the social movement literature point to the mobilizing effect of grievances, others have found demobilizing effects.

From this overviewing of the literature, I have formulated a set of hypotheses which I test in section 4 of this chapter. In the following section, I introduce the data, variables and methodology in detail.

³¹⁸ Asingo (2018) controls for interest in politics, age, gender, employment and patriotism. Asingo uses the same variable that I use, but does not recode into a binary variable as I do. As such, Asingo assumes that the effect of perceived relative living situation on participation is linear, i.e. that feeling worse off has the opposite effect of feeling better off than others, and vice versa. From previous research by the author, this however does not appear to be the case in regard to trust in political and state institutions, as well as attitudes and evaluations towards democracy (Isbell 2020a, 2020b).

3. Data, methodology and variables

For my analysis I employ nationally representative Afrobarometer survey data (Round 7), which were collected between September 2016 and September 2018 in 34 African countries (N=45811).³¹⁹ The survey was conducted face-to-face, in the respondent's choice of language and in a nationally representative sample. Due to the sampling framework, I use multilevel modeling (MLM), as a single level analysis would not account for variation in the slopes and intercepts of the predictor variables across clusters (country-units) within the data. My level 1 analysis is at the individual level, while my level 2 analysis is at the national level.³²⁰ Given the data-structure (small case number at level two), I run random intercept models and select to use a restricted maximum likelihood (REML) estimation method.³²¹

3.1 Dependent variables³²²

Following the classification by Verba et al. (1971) and Verba and Nie (1972), I focus on four modes of participation in this chapter.³²³ I have provided an overview of the question texts,

³¹⁹ I apply national weights to ensure gender parity in each country. Importantly, I do not weight the data by population size. While countries with larger populations tend to have a larger sample size of N=2400, and countries with smaller populations tend to have national samples of N=1200, these sample size differences do not reflect the differences in actual populations. The incongruence in sample-to-population ratios may affect the reliability of comparisons of within country results. My dataset includes the following countries: Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, eSwatini, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe. Country samples range from 1193 (Guinea) to 2400 (Tanzania, Ghana), yielding an error rate of 2% (N=2400) and 3% (N=1200), respectively. To access data used in this chapter see: Afrobarometer (2019). For the survey codebook see Afrobarometer (2020a). For information on the sampling methodology, see: Afrobarometer (2020b).

³²⁰ To confirm whether clustering at the country level is significant, I first run a null-model with no predictor variable. The estimates of covariance parameters are significant at the 1% level. To further confirm the necessity for an MLM analysis, I calculate the interclass correlation coefficient (ICC) for the dependent variable. Indeed (using REML estimation), the ICC meets the minimum threshold of 0.05. The results suggest that the ICC for voting (0.06) and communing (0.15) meet the minimum threshold, while contacting (0.04) and protesting (0.03) do not. Given the use of pooled samples at the country level, I nonetheless decide to model contacting and voting using multi-level analysis.

³²¹ One of the possible issues with my data is that my n at level 2 (country) is relatively small (N=34), compared to the n (>39000) at level 1 (individual). Ideally, data used in an MLM analysis is structured with a large n at level 2 and a small n at level 1 (Albright & Marinova, 2010). A possible problem arising from my data could be the overestimation of effect size due to the limited case number at level 2. Data with low case numbers at level 2 tend to yield overly small effect sizes when using a random slope model. As such I test only random intercept models.

³²² Detailed descriptions of all variables used in this chapter can be found in the appendix 1 of chapter 6.

³²³ Verba et al. (1971) argue that different forms of participation can be differentiated according to the type of influence, scope of outcome, conflict potential, required initiative, and cooperation associated with different forms of participation. Beyond voting, communing, contacting and protesting (which I included in this chapter), the authors also conceptualize 'campaigning' as a modal form of participation.

responses and scales in table 6.1, below. First, I include voting and protesting, which are routinely used in the study of political participation in the literature and reflect the distinction between conventional and unconventional participation. Voting is measured using self-reported voting behaviour and is specific to the past national election.³²⁴ I recode the variables into a dichotomous variable, which takes the value of 1, if someone said they voted in the election, and 0 for all other responses. Respondents who said they were too young to vote are excluded.

Table 6.1 : Overview of dependent variables. Dependent variables measuring different modal-types of participation. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)³²⁵

Variable	Operationalization	Scale (score)
Voting	Computed from a question asking respondents if they voted in the past national election. Recoded into a dichotomous variable. Respondents who were too young to vote in the past national election, those who said they didn't know or who refused to answer were coded as missing.	No' (0), 'Yes' (1)
Protesting	Computed from question asking respondents whether they had or would participate in a demonstration or protest march. Coded as 'no' if the respondents said they hadn't and never would, or they hadn't but would if given the chance. Coded as 'yes' if the respondent said they had at least 'once or twice'.	No' (0), 'Yes' (1)
Communing	Index reflecting whether, and if so how frequently, someone has: joined others to request government action; joined others to raise an issue; attended a community meeting. The index takes the highest score across the three forms of communal activity. Coded as 'never' if the respondents said they hadn't and never would, or they hadn't but would if given the chance.	Never' (0), 'Only once or twice' (1), 'a few times' (2), 'often' (3)
Contacting	Index reflecting whether, and if so how frequently, someone has contacted: MP, local government councillor, official of a government agency, political party officials, official for help. The index takes the highest score across the five recipients of contacting. Coded as 'never' if the respondents said they hadn't and never would, or they hadn't but would if given the chance.	Never' (0), 'Only once or twice' (1), 'a few times' (2), 'often' (3)

³²⁴ Respondents were asked: *Understanding that some people were unable to vote in the most recent national election in [year], which of the following statements is true for you?*

³²⁵ To confirm that the found modes of participation are sufficiently independent I run a factor analysis (principal axis factoring extraction and direct oblimin rotation). The analysis produces a non-satisfactory KMO measure (0.510) and although 2 factors with an Eigenvalue of greater than 1 are extracted, factor loadings do not support the use of an index. Additionally, I run a reliability analysis, which further corroborates the independence of the four modes (Cronbach's alpha = 0.028).

Protesting is measured using a survey question asking respondents whether they had demonstrated or attended a protest-march in the past year.³²⁶ I dichotomize the variable to take a value of 1, if someone says they had demonstrated or attended a protest-march at least 'once or twice', and 0, if they said they had not.³²⁷ Second, I compute two indices which reflect what Verba et al. (1971) refer to as 'communing' and 'contacting'.

'Communing' entails collective activities and is reflected by an index comprised of attending community meetings, or joining others to raise an issue or request government action.³²⁸ I refer to this index as the 'communal activity index'. 'Contacting' reflects how often someone has contacted one or several of the following: members of parliament, local government councillor, official of a government agency, political party officials, as well as contacted a government official to make a complaint or ask for help.³²⁹ I refer to this as the 'contacting index'. In both cases, the questions specify that behaviour in the past year is being queried. Rather than being computed by addition, the indices take the highest score across the respective composite items. For example, if someone says that they 'often' contacted local councillors, they are scored as 'often' (the highest category) on the 'contacting index', regardless of how often they contacted MPs or officials. Likewise, if someone says they attended a community meeting 'a few times', but 'never' joined others to raise an issue or request government action, they are scored as 'a few times' on the 'communal activity index'.

Across the 34 countries, approximately seven in ten respondents report to have voted in the past national election (68%), compared to 25% who said they had not (see Figure 6.1, below).³³⁰

³²⁶ Respondents were asked: *Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens when they are dissatisfied with government performance. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year. If not, would you do this if you had the chance: Participated in a demonstration or protest march.*

³²⁷ This operationalization is in line with past research which employs the same variable to measure participation in protests. See most recently: Sánchez & Namhata (2019).

³²⁸ Respondents were asked:

- *Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year. If not, would you do this if you had the chance: Attended a community meeting? Got together with others to raise an issue?*
- *Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens when they are dissatisfied with government performance. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year. If not, would you do this if you had the chance: Joined others in your community to request action from government*

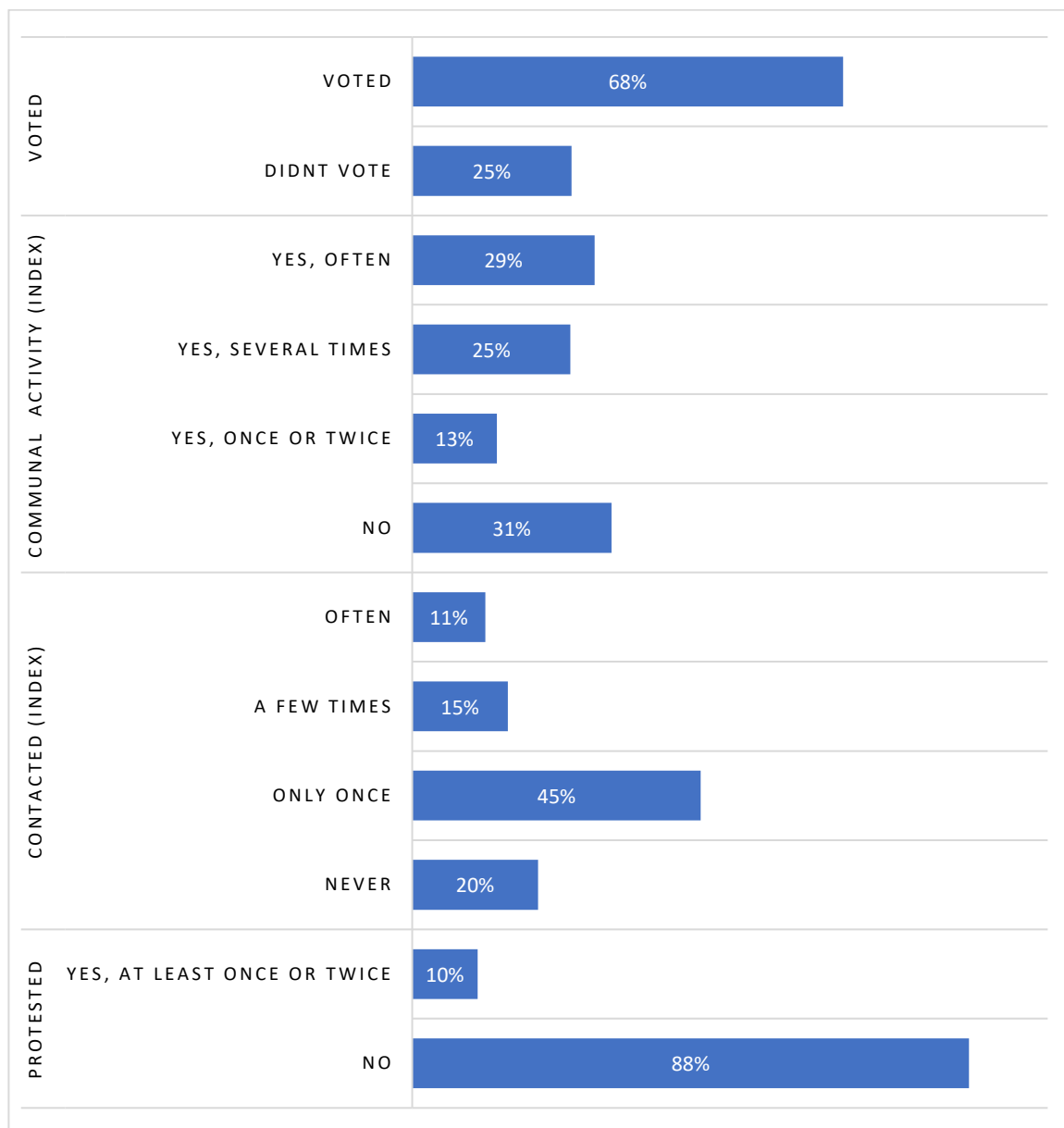
³²⁹ Respondents were asked:

- *Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens when they are dissatisfied with government performance. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year. If not, would you do this if you had the chance: Contacted a government official to ask for help or make a complaint?*
- *During the past year, how often have you contacted any of the following persons about some important problem or to give them your views: A local government councillor? A Member of Parliament? An official of a government agency? A political party official?*

³³⁰ I use the term 'to be reported' as there is probably some overreporting. Especially voting can be easily tested for overreporting by comparing reports of voting behavior using survey data to official voter turnout. For example,

Respondents also widely reported to have engaged in communal activity, with over half saying they had at least 'several times' (25%) or 'often' (29%) in the past year. Around one in three said they had not (31%). Respondents were less common to contact representatives, with 45% saying they did so once in the past year, and around one in four saying they had done so at least 'a few times'. Twenty per cent meanwhile reported to have 'never' contacted a representative. Lastly, only a few respondents said that they had attended a protest march or demonstration in the past year (10%), while 88% said that they had not.

Figure 6.1: Frequencies of the four participation variables. N=45811. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)³³¹



Lockwood et al. (2021) find for African cases that while voting is overreported by respondents in the Afrobarometer, it is overreported consistently across countries.

³³¹ The percentage displayed in the figure do not add up to 100 as I do not display the percentage of respondents who said they 'didn't know', who 'refused to answer' or for whom there was no data.

3.2 Independent variables

In this section I discuss the independent variables of my models.

3.2.1 Perceived relative living situation

As with previous chapters in this thesis I use an Afrobarometer survey question which asks respondents how they feel their living conditions compared to other people in their country.³³² I refer to this variable as both '*perceived* relative living situation' or '*subjective* relative living situation' (see chapter 2 for reliability and validity tests). Substantive responses to this item are 'much worse (coded as '1'), worse, same, better and much better' (5). From this variable, I compute four dummy variables from the survey item, which are coded '1' for much better, better, worse, much worse, respectively, and all other categories as '0'. As discussed in previous chapters, 35% of respondents say they feel 'the same', 34% say they feel relatively deprived ('worse off' or 'much worse off') and 32% say they feel relatively advantaged ('better off' or 'much better off').

Comparing levels of contacting and communing between people who feel relatively deprived, equal or relatively advantaged, suggests that different constituents appear to engage in different modal forms of behaviour. As displayed in figures 6.2 and 6.3 below, respondents who feel relatively deprived (worse or much worse off than others) appear less likely to engage in contacting behaviour, but more likely to engage in communing behaviour, relative to those who feel relatively advantaged. Using Anova analysis confirms that these differences are indeed significant (at $p < 0.001$). In regard to voting and protesting, no clear trend is apparent in terms of people feeling relatively deprived participating any more or less than people who feel equal or relatively advantaged to others. Regardless of perceived relative living situation, people appear to vote significantly more than they protest.

³³² Respondents were asked: *In general, how do you rate your living conditions compared to those of other South Africans (e.g.)?* Throughout this thesis I use the terms 'living conditions' (as it reads in the question) and 'living situation' interchangeably.

Figure 6.2: Mean participation scores by perceived relative living situation. N=45811. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)

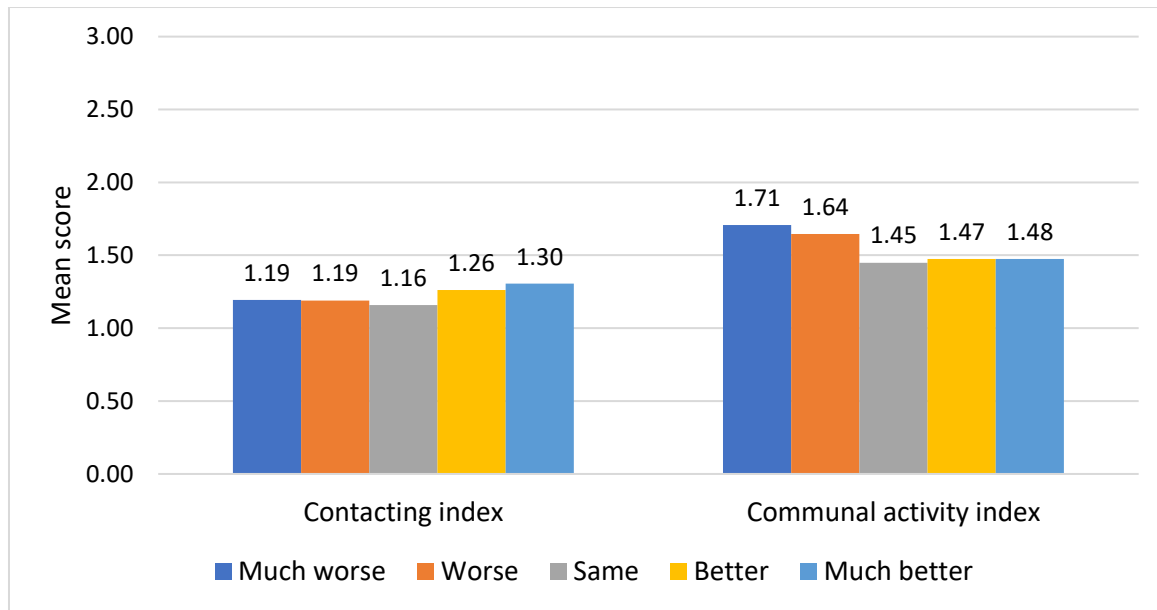
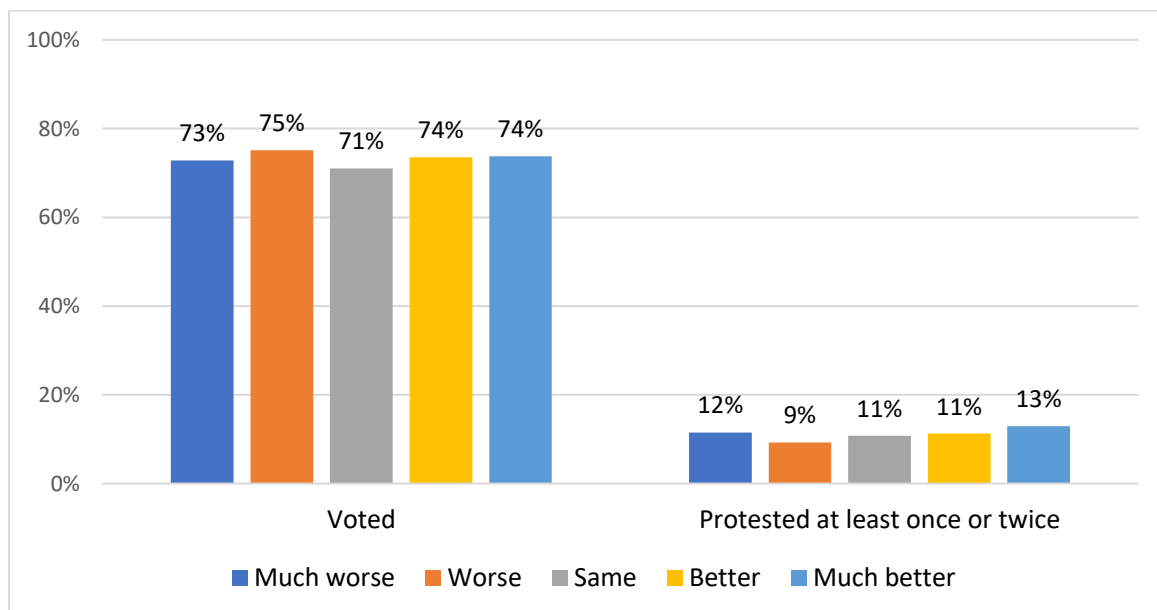


Figure 6.3: Voting and protesting by perceived relative living situation. N=45811. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018)



3.2.2 Absolute individual poverty

Much of the literature – both in Africa and beyond – relies on the SES model to explain levels of participation. The SES model argues that more socioeconomic status is positively associated with greater political participation – either because participation is linked to costs (time, efforts, material costs) or because economic status leads to more engagement in social networks (which leads to political participation) (Verba et al., 1995). To gauge SES, I include the Lived

Poverty Index (LPI). The LPI is an additive index of 5 variables which query how often in the past year a respondent has gone without basic commodities (enough food, water for personal consumption, medical services, cooking fuel and cash income). Response options range from 'never' having gone without a commodity to 'always'.³³³ The five questions are added, and categories created running from 'no lived poverty' to 'high lived poverty'.³³⁴ Moreover, I construct an index measuring the respondent's access to or ownership of material non-essential goods. This Asset Index reflects how many non-elemental goods a respondent has access to or owns personally. The index reflects whether respondents say they have access to, or personally own: a radio, television, mobile phone, computer, motor vehicle and bank account.³³⁵ The scores for the six items were added without any weighting and the resulting scale was not recoded. The scale runs from 0 (no access or personal ownership to any item) to 12 (personal ownership of all six items).³³⁶

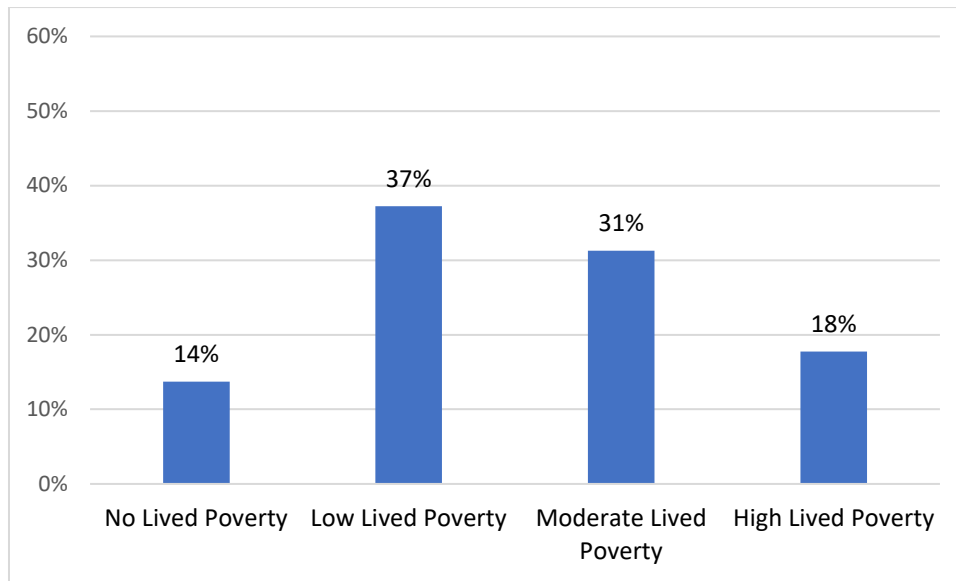
Across the 34-country sample (see figure 6.4), respondents most commonly experience low lived poverty levels (37%), while just under one in three experience moderate lived poverty levels (31%). Eighteen per cent score as experiencing high lived poverty, while around one in seven experience no lived poverty (14%). These results hide considerable variance between countries in the sample (34 country mean= 0.174). For example, Mauritians (mean= 0.31), Moroccans (0.85) and Ghanaians (0.9) score lowest on the lived poverty index on average, while Gabonese (2.28), Guineans (2.28) and Togolese (2.18) score highest.

³³³ I acknowledge that the argument can be made that both measures of 'absolute' situation are in fact also relative assessments. For example, it is plausible to argue that people assess their absolute situation compared to others, even though the question does not ask them to.

³³⁴ The Lived Poverty Index was developed by Afrobarometer as a measure of poverty which would allow the interviewer to capture the "experiential core of poverty" (Mattes, 2008: 1). Importantly, the questions underpinning the LPI could be captured as part of the broader attitudinal interview, without having to spend too much time and effort on capturing economic conditions, behaviors and habits as studies on poverty do in economic research. On the validity and reliability of the LPI as a measure of core poverty, see: Bratton & Mattes, 2003; Bratton et al., 2005; Mattes, 2008. For a discussion of the meaning and measurement of economic and non-economic measures of poverty, see for example: Chambers, 2007; Sumner, 2007; Camfield et al., 2009. I used factor analysis to test whether the variables reflected a connected concept. A factor analysis (extraction method: maximum likelihood) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.816). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.611 (5 items) and accounted for 52.22% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha of 0.768.

³³⁵ A factor analysis (extraction method: maximum likelihood) was performed, and a single factor extracted (direct oblimin rotation). The items were found to be suitable for a factor analysis with a significant Bartlett's Test of Sphericity ($p < 0.001$) and a KMO above the threshold (0.803). The factor produced an eigenvalue of 2.659 (6 items) and accounted for 44.32% of variance. A reliability analysis produced a satisfactory Cronbach's alpha of 0.744.

³³⁶ In a study of perceived horizontal inequalities in Ghana, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Nigeria and Kenya, Langer and Mikami (2013) used the same set of variables and a similar approach to recoding. Langer and Mikami dichotomized the six items and computed an Asset Index ranging from 0 to 6.

Figure 6.4: Lived Poverty Index. (N=45337). Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016-2018).³³⁷

Next, I turn to absolute individual poverty experiences. Table 6.2, below, displays the correlation coefficient of the lived poverty index and the four modal forms of participation. The results suggest that lived poverty is significantly associated with more contacting (Pearson's $r=0.057^{**}$), communing ($r=0.171^{**}$) and protesting ($r=0.025^{**}$). Conversely, voting behaviour appears unrelated to individual absolute poverty experiences. These significant associations are in line with past empirical research in Africa, which finds that – in contrast to what would be expected in the SES literature – that poorer people participate more frequently than less poor people.

Table 6.2: Correlation coefficients of lived poverty and 4 modal forms of participation

	Voted	Contacting index	Communal activity index	Protesting
Pearson Correlation	-0.003	0.057**	0.171**	0.025**
N	42135	41663	44606	44450
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

³³⁷ In computing the Lived Poverty Index, I encountered 474 missing cases. These have been excluded from the analysis and are not reflected in the percentages shown here.

3.3 Control Variables

To understand the role of economic factors in the context of known covariates of participation, I include control variables at both the individual level (level 1) and the country level (level 2). An overview of variables included is provided in table 6.3, below.

3.3.1 Level 1

Demography

Following the early seminal work of the political action study³³⁸ by Barnes et al. (1979) as well as Verba and Nie's (1972) standard socioeconomic status model (SES), past research has commonly tested the role of socioeconomic factors in explaining variation in participation.

Education levels are widely viewed as one of the, if not the, most important predictor of participation.³³⁸ Stemming from the ordinal SES model, it is widely held that more educated citizens are more engaged, interested and participatory (Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980; Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993; Putnam, 1995; Verba et al., 1995; La Due Lake & Huckfeldt, 1998; Hillygus, 2005). Indeed, studies in Africa have commonly found more educated respondents to be more participatory in a wide range of forms of participation (see e.g., Bratton et al., 2005; Mattes & Mughogho, 2009; Mattes & Luescher-Mamashela, 2012; Brass et al., 2019), although some suggest that this effect may be moderated by the regime type (Croke et al. 2016). I control for education using a survey item which captures the respondents self-reported highest educational attainment.³³⁹ Further, past research has consistently found significant effects for age in models of participation; however, the results do not suggest a consistent effect across forms of participation. For example, studies for cases in Africa have reported that younger people are more likely to protest (see e.g., Bratton et al., 2005; Resnick & Casale, 2011) but less likely to vote (Resnick & Casale, 2011; Dionne et al., 2014) or contact representatives or officials (Dionne et al., 2014; Brass et al., 2019). To control for age, I use a survey question which asks respondents how old they are.³⁴⁰

Participation in Africa remains highly gendered (see e.g., Barnes & Burchard, 2013) and past research in both cross-national and national studies has consistently found that men are more

³³⁸ I control for location using a dichotomous variable which takes the value of 0 for urban areas and 1 for rural areas.

³³⁹ Respondents were asked: *What is your highest level of education?* Response options were: 0=No formal schooling, 1=Informal schooling only (including Koranic schooling), 2=Some primary schooling, 3=Primary school completed, 4=Intermediate school or some secondary school/high school, 5=Secondary school/high school completed, 6=Post-secondary qualifications, other than university, 7=Some university, 8=University completed, 9=Post-graduate.

³⁴⁰ Respondents who said they *don't know* their age or *refused* are dropped from the analysis (n=46).

likely to vote, attend community meetings, protest and contact representatives and officials (Karreth, 2018; Brass et al., 2019). I also control for location (urban vs rural). Past research is somewhat divided on how location shapes participation. Dionne et al. (2014) for example, argue that urbanites should be more participatory as more densely populated areas are easier to mobilize. Others, such as Brass et al. (2019) argue that people in urban areas are less participatory as urban areas provide “apolitical opportunities for social interaction and recreation” (Brass et al. 2019: 16) causing people to disengage from political life. Indeed, empirical studies on participation in Africa widely find that people in urban areas participate less, compared to their rural compatriots (see for example: Isaksson, 2010; Resnick & Casale, 2011; Dionne et al., 2014; Brass et al., 2019). Past studies in Africa have also found that being employed is significantly associated with more frequent participation. For example, Bratton et al. (2005) find that being employed – independent of class – increases propensity to vote. Likewise, Dionne et al. (2014) find that being employed – independent of poverty and education – increases likelihood of contacting officials and representatives to control for employment status. To gauge this, I include a survey item which ask respondents whether they have a job that pays cash income.³⁴¹

Cognitive engagement

In the literature it is commonly held that interest forms a precondition to active participation (Verba & Almond, 1963; Gamson, 1968; Bratton, 1999; Bratton et al., 2005). Unfortunately, the most recent round of Afrobarometer surveys does not specifically ask respondents about their interest in politics. Rather, I use two proxy variables for interest. First, I use discussing politics with friends and family as a proxy for interest. The item is measured on a three-point scale running ‘never’ (0), ‘sometimes’ (1) and ‘frequently’ (2). Second, I use media consumption which in the past has also been used as a measure of informational resources (Isaksson, 2010). Isaksson (2010) – in a study of 20 African countries using Afrobarometer Round 4 data – finds that respondents who more frequently consumed news media were more likely to report to have voted and to have attended a community meeting.³⁴² Rather than constructing an additive index, I compute respondents' awareness by their highest score across 5 forms of media consumption (radio, television, newspaper, internet, social media).³⁴³ This is because it is plausible that respondents chose one or a select few forms of media which they consume rather than consuming all forms.

³⁴¹ Responses to this question are coded 0=No, not looking, 1=No, looking, 2=Yes, part time, 3=Yes, full time. I recode the responses to run as 0= no work, 1= part-time work, 2= full-time work.

³⁴² Isaksson (2010) constructed an index called ‘information’ which reflects media consumption (radio, television, newspaper, internet, social media).

³⁴³ Respondents were asked: *How often do you get news from the following sources: Radio, Television, Newspaper, Internet, Social Media?* Response options to this question are: 0=Never, 1=Less than once a month, 2=A few times a month, 3=A few times a week, 4=Every day.

Table 6.3: Descriptive statistics of variables in this chapter. 34 countries. Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)³⁴⁴

Descriptive Statistics				
Name	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lived Poverty Index	0	3	1.53	0.94
Asset Index	0	12	5.75	3.24
Age	18	106	37.11	14.90
Female= 1	49.9% Men, 50.1% Women			
Level of education	0	9	3.45	2.24
Rural= 1	44.5% Urban, 55.5% Rural			
Employment status	0	2	0.59	0.85
Media use index	0	4	3.17	1.33
Interest in politics	0	2	0.79	0.71
Fear intimidation during elections	0	3	2.00	1.18
Fear violence during protests	0	2	0.34	0.61
Member of communal group= 1	75.% non-members or inactive members. 24.8% active members			
Partisan to a political party= 1	54.7% non-partisans, 45.3% partisans			
Income inequality (Gini)	30.8	63	42.53	8.30
Human Development Index	0.35	0.79	0.55	0.10
Polyarchy index	0.15	0.84	0.54	0.16

Mobilization

Past research has demonstrated how mobilization is important to whether people participate or not. To control for mobilization, I use a survey question which asks respondents whether they are a member of a voluntary association or community group.³⁴⁵ In the past, studies in Africa have also consistently found a mobilizing effect of partisanship.³⁴⁶ The results suggest that respondents who feel close to a party are more likely to attend community meetings, raise issues with others, contact representatives and officials, protest and vote (Dionne et al., 2014; Karreth, 2018; Brass et al., 2019). I compute a dichotomous variable which takes the value of 1 if someone reports to feeling close to a political party and 0 if someone doesn't.

³⁴⁴ Throughout this chapter (and thesis as a whole) I apply within country weight to ensure gender parity within countries. The % displayed in the table represent valid responses. I exclude respondents who said *don't know*, refused or for whom data are missing.

³⁴⁵ Respondents were asked: *Let's turn to your role in the community. Now I am going to read out a list of groups that people join or attend. For each one, could you tell me whether you are an official leader, an active member, an inactive member, or not a member: Some other voluntary association or community group?* Response option were: 0=Not a Member, 1=Inactive member, 2=Active member, 3=Official leader. As I am interested in the mobilizing effect of membership, I collapse respondents who say they are inactive members with respondents who are not members on the one hand, and collapse respondents who are active members or official leaders, on the other hand, into a dichotomous variable (taking a score of '0' for non-members and '1' for members).

³⁴⁶ It is completely plausible to assume that the causal direction runs in the opposite direction— i.e., that people who are more trusting of government (for whatever reason) thus become supporters of the ruling party or parties. Through the data and the tests used in this chapter, it is impossible to ascertain a definitive causal direction between the two variables. Rather, I follow previous research (as referenced in the discussion) which uses partisanship as an independent and trust as the dependent variable.

Fear and experience of violence

It is plausible that people are more likely to participate if they perceive themselves to be free and safe to do so. Conversely, people are likely to be demobilized if they feel that participating might entail personal physical harm to them. For example, Tilly (1978) and Kitschelt (1986) – in respect to mobilization in public protests – contend that political-structural conditions (or 'opportunities') such as institutional openness and willingness to use repression by the state, help explain the occurrence of protests.³⁴⁷ I control for the perceived threat of political violence. Specifically, I use a question which asks respondents whether they had feared or experienced violence occurring during a public protest or march.³⁴⁸ In addition, I include a question which asks respondents whether they feared becoming a victim of violence or intimidation specifically during election campaigns.³⁴⁹

3.3.2 Level 2

Income inequality

At country level, an extensive literature links economic inequality to participation, with conflicting predictions. Past research has found economic inequality to be both mobilizing and demobilizing. Little research in this regard, however, has tested African cases.³⁵⁰ To gauge country-level inequality, I use the Gini coefficient to test the effect of income inequality. The Gini coefficient remains the most widely used measure of inequality as seen in the literature review. As such, I include the Gini coefficient to allow for direct comparison of results obtained for the cases of this analysis with past research, elsewhere.

³⁴⁷ On the role of opportunities, see also: Kriesi et al. (1992), Rucht (1996), and Grasso & Giugni (2016).

³⁴⁸ Respondents were asked: *In any society, people will sometimes disagree with one another. These disagreements occasionally escalate into physical violence. Please tell me whether, in the past two years, you have ever personally feared any of the following types of violence? [If yes] Have you actually personally experienced this type of violence in the past two years? Violence occurring during a public protest or march?* Response option are 0= No, didn't experience, 1=Yes, feared but didn't experience, 2=Yes, feared and experienced.

³⁴⁹ Respondents were asked: *During election campaigns in this country, how much do you personally fear becoming a victim of political intimidation or violence?* Response option are 0= a lot, 1= somewhat, 2= a little bit, 3= not at all. Respondents who refused to answer, or who said they didn't know were treated as missing.

³⁵⁰ One of the impediments to the quantitative study of African cases – as well as the wider developing world – is the poor quality of, or unavailable administrative data on, income or wealth (Ianchovichina et al., 2015; Beegle, 2016; Hoogeveen & Nguyen, 2019). Likewise, indicators of country-level inequality based on income or expenditure household surveys are only infrequently developed and thus prove less insightful for cross-country comparisons. Research also suggests that such measures are commonly not understood by ordinary people and people's perceptions of levels of inequality rarely align with arithmetic inequality scores (Pettigrew, 2016; Bartels, 2018; Gimpelson & Treisman, 2018). Rather, perception-based measures have seen growing interest in the field.

Development

A body of theoretical and empirical work points to the effect of development reducing social and communal interaction with others (see e.g., Putnam, 2000). To control for this, I use the Human Development Index (HDI) as a measure of country-level development.³⁵¹

Polyarchy

As noted by Solt (2008), the regime type can have fundamental implications for how people participate and how participation of people can be interpreted. Instead of excluding non-democracies (as Solt (2008) does), or including a threshold 'above' which a country can be deemed acceptable or not, I chose to control for the extent to which the ideal of electoral democracy is achieved in a country, using the Varieties of Democracy polyarchy index (Coppedge et al., 2019). The polyarchy index measures five components of polyarchy (as per Dahl, 1973), namely elected officials, clean elections, associational autonomy, inclusive citizenship and freedom of expression, and alternative sources of information.³⁵² Each component is comprised of a series of indicators. The index is constructed by averaging a (weighted) multiplicative and an additive index, with low scores representing low levels of polyarchy and high scores representing high level of polyarchy.

³⁵¹ The HDI is a multi-item index comprised of dimension-indexes scores for life expectancy, education and per capita gross national income.

³⁵² The description here is based on Teorell et al. (2019).

4. Analysis: Untangling absolute and relative economic covariates of participation

In this section I explore absolute and relative economic covariates of four modal forms of participation. On the one hand, we know from the SES literature that people require resources to participate, but previous quantitative research in Africa has found that poorer people tend to be more participatory than less poor. On the other hand, the social movement literature argues that individual grievances – especially a sense of being relatively deprived – can be a strong driver of participation. To the best of my knowledge, no research has studied both explanations concurrently for cases in Africa at the individual level.

Tables 6.4 and 6.5 (below) display the results of a series of regression models for each of the four dependent variables, which reflect different modal forms of participation. For both perceptions of individual economic inequality (models 1 and 2) and individual experience of poverty (models 3 and 4) I first test the effect of only the main predictor variables and then include control variables, respectively. In models 5, I include both perceptions of individual economic inequality and individual experience of poverty as well as control variables.³⁵³

The results first and foremost emphasize the varied association between both objective and subjective economic covariates and different forms of participation. This suggests that different modal forms of participation covary with different economic factors. How people feel they compare to others in terms of their individual living situation appears to matter for some modes of participation, but not for all and not consistently for those where it does matter. From the social movement literature and grievance theory, we know that feelings of relative deprivation can form strong motivations for participation – in particular protesting. My results show that people who feel relatively deprived are more likely to engage in communing behaviour, but that feeling relatively deprived is unrelated to voting, contacting and protesting in and of itself. These results suggest that H1 can be accepted in regard to communing but must be rejected for the three other modal forms of participation. Conversely, I find that feeling relatively advantaged is significant associated with more contacting behaviour (but no other form of participation). This further suggests that the association between subjective relative living situation and participation appears not to be linear in the sense that feeling relatively deprived affects participation in the opposite way than feeling relatively advantaged. How people feel relative to others appears unrelated to voting and protesting behaviour, when viewed alone.

³⁵³ Throughout this section I uses asterixis to indicate significant results: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

Furthermore, the significant correlations described in the previous paragraph are influenced in different ways once other variables are considered. Feeling relatively advantaged is associated with significantly more contacting behaviour, above and beyond the effect of socio-economic status, sociodemographic characteristics, cognitive engagement, and fear. This suggests that feeling relatively advantaged is an important covariate of contacting behaviour and should be considered in future research along with SES and demographic variables. Conversely, while people who feel worse off than others appear significantly more likely to engage in communal activities, this significant effect disappears once the absolute poverty experience of the individual is taken into account.³⁵⁴ Then, the results suggest that those who experienced more poverty are more likely to engage in communal activity, while their relative living situation is unrelated to communal engagement. The effect of Lived Poverty is significant above and beyond the role of other alternative explanations of participation, such as socio-demographic characteristics or mobilization.

Across the four modal forms of participation, absolute poverty experiences appear to be more important than perceptions of relative individual inequality and the models underline the importance of absolute poverty experiences. People who experience more poverty individually are also significantly more likely to contact representatives or officials, engage in communal activity or protest. In all three cases, the results suggest a significant, albeit weak, correlation. These results also appear to go against the SES model of participation, but are in line with past research on African cases which also find that people with greater poverty experiences are more participatory than people with lesser poverty experiences (see: Mattes et al., 2002; Bratton, 2006; Mattes, 2008). While I find no significant correlation between individual lived poverty and voting behaviour, I can accept hypothesis 2b and reject hypothesis 2a in regard to communing, contacting and protesting. These results echo previous empirical research for African cases which also find that people with higher lived poverty experiences are more participatory. Importantly, I demonstrate that the effect of absolute poverty experiences is significant even when controlling for perceptions of individual relative deprivation and advantage – something that past research has missed.

³⁵⁴ I find a similar result in regard to voting. Subjective relative living situation appears unrelated to voting when viewed alone. However, when other explanations are controlled for, having feelings of severe relative deprivation is significantly correlated with non-voting, although the significant effect turns non-significant when the respondent's absolute poverty experiences are considered.

Table 6.4: Modelling voting and contacting. 34 countries. Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)

Voting						Contacting				
	M1: Perceived relative situation	M2: M1+ controls	M3: Poverty experiences	M4: M3+ controls	M5: Complete model	M1: Perceived relative situation	M2: M1+ controls	M3: Poverty experiences	M4: M3+ controls	M5: Complete model
<i>Intercept</i>	0.72(0.02)	0.39(0.11)	0.71(0.02)	0.4**(0.11)	0.4**(0.11)	1.17(0.03)	0.41(0.17)	0.76(0.04)	0.2(0.18)	0.18(0.18)
Much Worse= 1	0(0.01)	-0.02*(0.01)			-0.01(0.01)	0.01(0.02)	0.01(0.02)			-0.02(0.02)
Worse= 1	0.01(0.01)	0(0.01)			0(0.01)	-0.01(0.01)	0(0.01)			-0.01(0.01)
Better= 1	0(0.01)	0(0.01)			-0.01(0.01)	0.05*** (0.01)	0.03** (0.01)			0.04*** (0.01)
Much Better= 1	0(0.01)	-0.01(0.01)			-0.01(0.01)	0.09** (0.03)	0.06* (0.03)			0.06* (0.03)
Lived Poverty Index			0(0)	-0.004(0)	-0.004(0)			0.11*** (0.01)	0.08*** (0.01)	0.08*** (0.01)
Asset Index			0.002*(0)	0.003*** (0)	0.004*** (0)			0.05*** (0)	0.02*** (0)	0.02*** (0)
Age		0.005*** (0)		0.005*** (0)	0.005*** (0)		0.004*** (0)		0.003*** (0)	0.003*** (0)
Female= 1		0(0)		0.003(0)	0.002(0)		-0.15*** (0.01)		-0.14*** (0.01)	-0.14*** (0.01)
Rural= 1		0.06*** (0)		0.06*** (0)	0.06*** (0)		0.13*** (0.01)		0.15*** (0.01)	0.15*** (0.01)
Level of education		-0.003*** (0)		-0.01*** (0)	-0.01*** (0)		0.02*** (0)		0.02*** (0)	0.01*** (0)
Employment status		0.02*** (0)		0.02*** (0)	0.02*** (0)		0.01* (0.01)		0.01(0.01)	0.01(0.01)
Media use		0.004* (0)		0(0)	0.002(0)		0.03*** (0)		0.01*** (0)	0.02*** (0)
Interest in politics		0.03*** (0)		0.03*** (0)	0.03*** (0)		0.18*** (0.01)		0.17*** (0.01)	0.17*** (0.01)
Member of communal group= 1		0.05*** (0.01)		0.05*** (0.01)	0.05*** (0.01)		0.34*** (0.01)		0.34*** (0.01)	0.34*** (0.01)
Partisan to a political party= 1		0.11*** (0)		0.11*** (0)	0.11*** (0)		0.19*** (0.01)		0.19*** (0.01)	0.19*** (0.01)
Fear intimidation during elections		0.01*** (0)		0.01*** (0)	0.01*** (0)		-0.01** (0)		-0.01(0)	-0.01(0)
Fear violence during protests		-0.02*** (0)		-0.02*** (0)	-0.02*** (0)		0.11*** (0.01)		0.1*** (0.01)	0.1*** (0.01)
Income inequality (Gini)		0(0)		0(0)	0(0)		0.005(0)		0.005(0)	0.005(0)
Human Development Index		-0.33(0.17)		-0.35* (0.17)	-0.35* (0.17)		-0.29(0.25)		-0.24(0.27)	-0.24(0.27)
Polyarchy index		0.23* (0.1)		0.22* (0.1)	0.23* (0.1)		0.21(0.17)		0.19(0.19)	0.21(0.19)
<i>Within country</i>										
<i>R²</i>	0.00	0.08	0.01	0.08	0.08	0.00	0.10	0.02	0.10	0.10
<i>Between country</i>										
<i>country R²</i>	-0.01	0.27	-0.03	0.27	0.26	0.01	0.41	-0.29	0.30	0.31

Note: Cell entries are linear mixed model coefficients and standard errors in parentheses. Some effect-sizes may be displayed as zero in the table as they have been rounded off.

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Table 6.5: Modelling communing and protesting. 34 countries. Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016-2018)

	Communing					Protesting				
	M1: Perceived relative situation	M2: M1 + controls	M3: Poverty experiences	M4: M3 + controls	Model 5: Complete model	M1: Perceived relative situation	M2: M1+ controls	M3: Poverty experiences	M4: M3+ controls	M5: Complete model
<i>Intercept</i>	1.49(0.08)	1.25(0.4)	1.17(0.08)	1.03(0.39)	1.04(0.39)	0.1(0.01)	-0.02(0.07)	0.01(0.01)	-0.06(0.06)	-0.07(0.06)
Much Worse= 1	0.09*** (0.02)	0.06** (0.02)			0.03(0.02)	0.01(0.01)	0.02** (0.01)			0.01(0.01)
Worse= 1	0.05*** (0.01)	0.03* (0.01)			0.02(0.01)	-0.01(0)	0.001(0)			-0.002(0)
Better= 1	-0.02(0.01)	-0.02(0.01)			-0.02(0.01)	0.01(0)	0.003(0)			0.004(0)
Much Better= 1	0.02(0.03)	-0.01(0.03)			0(0.03)	0.02(0.01)	0.01(0.01)			0.01(0.01)
Lived Poverty Index			0.13*** (0.01)	0.08*** (0.01)	0.08*** (0.01)			0.02*** (0)	0.01*** (0)	0.01*** (0)
Asset Index			0.02*** (0)	0.01*** (0)	0.01*** (0)			0.01*** (0)	0.004*** (0)	0.004*** (0)
Age		0.01*** (0)		0.01*** (0)	0.01*** (0)		-0.001*** (0)		-0.001*** (0)	-0.001*** (0)
Female= 1		-0.18*** (0.01)		-0.17*** (0.01)	-0.17*** (0.01)		-0.02*** (0)		-0.02*** (0)	-0.02*** (0)
Rural= 1		0.31*** (0.01)		0.32*** (0.01)	0.31*** (0.01)		-0.01** (0)		-0.01(0)	-0.01* (0)
Level of education		-0.004(0)		-0.003(0)	0(0)		0.01*** (0)		0.01*** (0)	0.01*** (0)
Employment status		0.02** (0.01)		0.02** (0.01)	0.02** (0.01)		-0.001(0)		-0.002(0)	-0.002(0)
Media use		0.03*** (0)		0.03*** (0)	0.03*** (0)		0.002(0)		0(0)	0(0)
Interest in politics		0.17*** (0.01)		0.16*** (0.01)	0.16*** (0.01)		0.03*** (0)		0.03*** (0)	0.03*** (0)
Member of communal group= 1		0.69*** (0.01)		0.69*** (0.01)	0.68*** (0.01)		0.06*** (0)		0.05*** (0)	0.06*** (0)
Partisan to a political party= 1		0.19*** (0.01)		0.19*** (0.01)	0.19*** (0.01)		0.03*** (0)		0.03*** (0)	0.03*** (0)
Fear intimidation during elections		-0.01(0)		-0.004(0)	-0.004(0)		-0.003* (0)		-0.002(0)	-0.002(0)
Fear violence during protests		0.07*** (0.01)		0.06*** (0.01)	0.06*** (0.01)		0.07*** (0)		0.07*** (0)	0.07*** (0)
Income inequality (Gini)		0.01(0.01)		0.01(0.01)	0.01(0.01)		0(0)		0(0)	0(0)
Human Development Index		-1.84** (0.6)		-1.73** (0.59)	-1.77** (0.59)		0.11(0.1)		0.12(0.09)	0.12(0.09)
Polyarchy index		-0.43(0.37)		-0.39(0.36)	-0.39(0.36)		0.06(0.06)		0.07(0.06)	0.07(0.06)
<i>Within cou. R²</i>	0.00	0.15	0.01	0.16	0.16	-0.01	0.03	0.01	0.04	0.03
<i>Between cou. R²</i>	0.02	0.43	0.06	0.46	0.46	0.02	-0.02	0.20	0.04	0.05

Note: Cell entries are linear mixed model coefficients and standard errors in parentheses. Some effect-sizes may be displayed as zero in the table as they have been rounded off .

* p<0.05; ** p<0.01; *** p<0.001

Although the models produce significant effects, the model performance of individual objective and subjective covariates alone is very weak. This suggests that while economic covariates are significantly correlated with some forms of participation, other, unobserved factors are more important in accounting for variance in participation both within and between countries.

Generally, the models strongly emphasize the role of mobilization and opportunity. People who are active members in a voluntary association or community group are significantly more likely to engage in all four modal forms of participation. In particular the models produce a medium to large sized effect of membership for contacting ($\beta = 0.34^{***}$, model 5) and communal behaviour ($\beta = 0.69^{***}$, model 5), while the effect (albeit significant) was weaker for voting and protesting.

Besides mobilization, having the opportunity to participate is important. For example, I find that being rural is significantly associated with more communal ($\beta = 0.31^{***}$, model 5) and contacting behaviour ($\beta = 0.15^{***}$, model 5), and voting ($\beta = 0.06^{***}$, model 5), when holding constant the alternative explanations of participation. This is in line with past empirical studies in Africa which find that rural dwellers are more participatory (Isaksson, 2010; Resnick & Casale, 2011; Dionne et al., 2014; Brass et al., 2019).³⁵⁵ I also find that men are significant more likely to engage in contacting behaviour ($\beta = 0.14^{***}$, model 5), communal activity ($\beta = 0.17^{***}$, model 5) and protesting behaviour ($\beta = 0.02^{***}$, model 5), but I find no significant effect for voting (in the context of the other control variables). These results are in line with previous research which links gender and participation (Karreth, 2018; Brass et al., 2019).

At the country level, past empirical research (outside of Africa) has found both mobilizing and demobilizing effects of country-level economic inequality. However, I find no significant correlation for income inequality (Gini coefficient) and any of the four modal forms of participation when human development and electoral democracy is controlled for. At country level I find that people in countries with higher HDI scores appear less likely to vote and to engage in communal activities. These results are in line with past research elsewhere, which suggests that societies in more developed countries are characterized by less social and communal engagement (Putnam, 2000). Further, the results suggest that people are more likely to vote in countries with higher polyarchy scores. This is probably a result of better functioning elections which will motivate people to turn out on elections day if they think their vote will be heard and make a difference.

³⁵⁵ For complementary findings outside of Africa, see Tilly (1978), Kitschelt (1986), McAdam (1996), Goodwin and Jasper (1999) and Tarrow (2011).

While some caution is warranted in interpreting the within- and between-group variances, the results demonstrate that the models (except for protesting) perform better at accounting for variance between countries, than within countries. All four complete models perform well in accounting for variance between countries (voting~26%; contacting ~31%; communing~46%; protesting ~5%). Moreover, the complete models perform better at accounting for within-country variance in regard to protesting (~8%), contacting (~10%) and communal activity (~16%), compared to voting (~3%).

Section conclusion

In this section I explored both absolute and relative subjective individual economic covariates of participation. I focused on four modal forms of participation: voting, contacting, communing and protesting. The results suggest that perceptions of individual relative deprivation are not consistently associated with patterns of participation. In fact, I find that feelings of relative deprivation are only significantly associated with communal participation, but this association turns non-significant once the respondents' experience of absolute poverty is considered. I find no significant correlation between feelings of relative deprivation and voting, contacting, and protesting. Conversely, I do find that people who feel relatively advantaged are more likely to contact elected officials. Further, this significant correlation holds, even when controlling for the respondent's absolute poverty experience. In line with past research – and contrary to the discourse of the voiceless poor – the results show that people with greater poverty experience are more participatory in regard to communing, contacting and protesting.

5. Conclusion

Citizen engagement and participation form an integral part in holding government accountable in democratic or even semi democratic regimes (Della Porta, 2008, 2013, 2014). At the very least, a sufficiently large share of the population is required to cast their vote during elections and legitimize government. But what happens between election days is important too. A rich literature tells us that citizen participation is an integral part of democratic political culture which can foster democratic consolidation and stability over time.

Past research (outside of Africa) has extensively scrutinized the linkage between socioeconomic status and relative deprivation and participation, respectively. Little evidence has been produced in regard to cases in Africa, or the wider developing world. Africa reflects an interesting case and an important omission in the literature. Africa – as a region – is characterized by a comparatively large number of unconsolidated democratic and semi-democratic regimes and – in parts – comparative poverty and high levels of inequality. Understanding the linkage between economic factors and participation in this world region appears to be an important gap in the literature.

In this chapter I explored both absolute and relative subjective individual economic covariates of participation in Africa, using perception-based measures of individual inequality and individual poverty experiences.³⁵⁶ I tested a series of hypotheses, which are derived from the existing literature, using multilevel modelling to account for the clustered nature of my dataset. My results point to several findings (an overview of the results of the main predictor variables is provided in table 6.6, below).³⁵⁷

First, experiencing absolute deprivation and feeling relatively deprived are not to consistently linked to being 'voiceless' or 'resigned' across different modal forms of participation. The results

³⁵⁶ As briefly noted in the introduction (and in much more detail in chapter 2) perception-based measures were used for two reasons. First, objective econometric data for African countries are not available on a regular basis. One of the reasons why Africa, to date, has not received much attention is that past research – especially from a political economy perspective – has largely focused on testing the linkage between economic inequality and participation at the country level (as noted by Kurer et al., 2019). This requires regular and reliable data, which are, however, only available for a small number of cases in Africa and researchers have raised questions over official data-quality (Beegle et al., 2016). Second, past research suggests that people are not aware of actual levels of inequality or their location within income or wealth distributions. If inequality is linked to participation, it must be because people somehow experience inequality in the first place, grievances grow from their evaluation of given perceptions and they then decide to take action. However, if people's perception of inequality is not significantly linked to actual levels of inequality, it is causally unclear how objective levels of inequality shape participation. Using a perception-based measure of inequality based on survey-data is thus a promising avenue for generating regular information about levels of inequality that people are actually aware of. In light of limited econometric data for African cases, using such survey-based perceptual data may provide promising avenues of investigation for research linking material and immaterial lived realities to behavior.

³⁵⁷ Significant positive results (without competing variables included) are reflected by a '+' and significant negative results by a '-'. Non-significant results are marked using 'ns'.

in this chapter suggest that people who feel relatively deprived are more likely to engage in communing activities, but perceptions of relative deprivation conversely appear unrelated to voting behaviour, contacting, and protesting. The models moreover suggest that people who have experienced more lived poverty are more engaged in communal activities, more likely to contact elected representatives and more likely to protest. Individual experience of poverty appears unrelated to voting. Overall, we must conclude that feelings of relative deprivation alone represent a weak and not very useful explanation of why Africans engage in various forms of participation.

Table 6.6: Summary table of results

	<i>Objective absolute individual poverty</i>	<i>Perceived individual relative deprivation</i>	<i>Perceived individual relative advantage</i>	<i>Strongest predictors of more participation</i>
Voting	ns	ns	ns	Partisanship, rural location
Contacting	+	ns	+	Membership in community group, partisanship, interest in politics
Communing	ns	+	ns	Membership in community group, partisanship, interest in politics
Protesting	ns	ns	ns	No fear of violence during protests, Membership in community group

Unlike past research – which tests only sentiments of relative deprivation – I also test the effect of perceived relative advantage. The models demonstrate that feeling relatively advantaged – without controlling for absolute individual poverty – does not relate to participation in the opposite way as feeling relatively deprived. Feeling relatively deprived and relatively advantaged should thus not be thought of as points on a continuous linear scale, but rather as two distinct effects. Once absolute individual poverty is held constant, the results suggest a linear effect for contacting and protesting, but not for voting or communing.

Overall, the models strongly point to the importance of opportunity and mobilization. As noted above, the results suggest that perceived relative deprivation by itself is not a powerful predictor of participation. Indeed, this echoes extensive research (outside of Africa) which holds that grievances alone are of little predictive power and that such grievances must be politicized by ‘collective actors’ who are able to provide opportunities and translate grievances into organized action (Kitschelt, 1986; Kriesi, 1995; Della Porta, 2014; Kurer et al., 2019). The results of this chapter clearly demonstrate that membership in a community group

and partisanship, as well as location, are significantly (and in some cases strongly) associated with more participation.

Lastly, the results suggest that individual sociodemographic characteristics matter, but not in the way that I had laid out in the introduction. Indeed, the discourse (described in the introduction of this chapter) of the 'voiceless and resigned' suggests that one's sociodemographic characteristics matters in terms of whether you will participate or not. However, the results in this chapter underline that poverty and deprivation are not as important as gender and location. While 'being poor' is significantly associated with being more active in communal, contacting and protesting forms of participation, the models suggest that gender and location are more strongly correlated with participation, respectively, compared to absolute poverty. Being a woman is statistically significantly associated with less participation in regard to contacting, communing and protesting. What is more, this effect is significant even while holding constant poverty, relative deprivation, location and mobilization. Likewise, being a rural dweller is significantly correlated with more voting, contacting and communing (but less protesting). The results suggest that 'the poor and deprived' in Africa are not only far from being voiceless, but that the 'fault-line' of who participates and who doesn't, runs through two other cleavages: gender and location. These findings are important for both the academic literature on participation in Africa, as well as for policy makers and the broader development community who may have an interest in understanding how to increase participation in Africa.

References - Chapter 6

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Chapter 7

Conclusion, limitations, and future research (or: All models are wrong, but some are useful)³⁵⁸

³⁵⁸ This expression is a common aphorism attributed to the statistician George Box.

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1. Introduction

Three decades since Africa's democratic decade, much of the early lustre has faded. After some progress (at least on paper) in the number of elections being held and political and constitutional commitment to democratic norms, the past decade has been defined by democratic stagnation or, as some even argue, decline and backsliding (De Walle & Butler, 1999; Ake, 2000; Gyimah-Boadi, 2004; Lindberg, 2006; Bratton & Mattes, 2009; Bratton, 2010; Diamond & Plattner, 2010; Lynch & Crawford, 2011; Cheeseman, 2015; Gyimah-Boadi, 2015).

In this thesis I asked whether this development could be tied to stagnantly high levels of economic inequality in many African countries. Democracy in Africa was expected to offer regular elections, political representation, and rule of law, but also to address people's material conditions (Ake, 1993; Kapstein & Converse, 2008; Lewis, 2008). Democratization in Africa did not occur exclusively in pursuit of an abstract or normative ideals of human self-expression and fulfilment, but also as a response to economic deprivation and acute material grievances which were directed towards the political regimes that had come into power post-independence. However, since the advent of democracy in Africa three decades ago material conditions for many Africans have not improved, or at least not as rapidly as had been expected. In particular, regarding economic inequality, the newly democratic regimes have widely not markedly addressed the problems and where economic growth at country level has taken place it has frequently not reached ordinary citizens equitably. Despite advances in terms of absolute poverty, many remain relatively as poor or even poorer (both within countries and compared within a global income distribution) as they did three decades ago (Kapstein & Converse, 2008; Lewis, 2008).

In this thesis, I have explored whether this (perceived) failure of addressing material and lived equality weakens democracy in Africa. Specifically, I have studied this question through a framework of political legitimacy. This research is motivated by both the context specific expectations of what democracy could achieve in Africa, but also empirical research conducted for cases outside of Africa. Past empirical research outside of Africa has pointed to a number of negative consequences of economic inequality. For example, high levels of economic inequality have been linked to decreasing support for democracy, decreasing political interest, decreasing social trust and tolerance, less political participation and less participation in voluntary associations (Uslaner 2002; Uslaner & Brown, 2005; Andersen & Fetner, 2008; Solt, 2008; 2010; Andersen & Milligan, 2011; Andersen, 2012; Krieckhaus et al., 2014). This

indirect effect could over time weaken the legitimacy of democracy among ordinary Africans. Indeed, as Klingemann (1999: 32) summarizes:

“[m]ost scholars agree that the survival of democracies rests on a broad and deep foundation of support among the citizenry. Democracies lacking such a foundation of legitimacy are at risk. Political systems, and in particular democracies, that are ineffective in meeting public expectations over long periods of time can lose their legitimacy, with consequent danger to the regime.”

1.1 Measurement problems hinder comparative analysis in the Global South

Past research has commonly measured inequality³⁵⁹ using objective income or wealth data from national accounts or household surveys. Based on these data, inequality scores are aggregated at country level (or sometimes global level if global inequality is discussed). This practice is problematic for several reasons, some of which weigh especially heavy for African cases. First, lack of good quality, comparable data has hindered the comparative study of consequences of inequality in a more varied set of cases, especially the developing global south. In order to build valid and reliable quantitative models, researchers require valid and reliable data. While such data are widely available from statistics bureaus in the developed world (where most research has been conducted), some researchers have questioned the quality of such data in the developing world (Jerven, 2013). Beyond the quality of data, the availability and comparability of data (both across countries and within countries over time) have made larger comparative studies impossible. As seen in chapter 2, household consumption or expenditure surveys in many African countries may only be available every five or ten years. In some cases studies are not even available that often. Moreover, different surveys apply different statistical assumptions and data harmonization (Cornia & Martorano, 2017). Given this limited data, very little quantitative research has studied the political and social consequences of economic inequality in Africa in a comparative way.³⁶⁰

Moreover, recent research suggests that commonly employed country-level measures of inequality may not be useful predictors of individual attitudes and behaviour. As discussed in chapters 1 and 2, studies suggest that people are widely unaware of levels of economic

³⁵⁹ Throughout this chapter and indeed this thesis I have focused exclusively on inequality of outcome, such as income or wealth opportunity. I do my best to clearly indicate what form of inequality I am referring to, whenever I use the term. However, I suspect that I not always succeed.

³⁶⁰ Of course, country studies exist. South Africa in particular has seen a very large interest in studying both causes and consequences of economic inequality (both using qualitative and quantitative data). See for example: Seekings & Nattrass, 2008; Leibbrandt et al., 2010; Nattrass & Seekings, 2010; Marais, 2013; Bond, 2014.

inequality within a country, of changes of country-level inequality over time or of where they fall within income or wealth distributions. These findings suggest that objective measures of material inequality are only weakly associated with how people think about and perceive levels of inequality. If people's attitudes, values or behaviour are to be shaped by levels of inequality, it can plausibly only be through how they perceived inequality. Indeed, research has shown that objective levels of inequality are unrelated to preference for redistribution, for example, while perceptions of material inequality significantly correlate with support for more redistribution. Indeed, as Loveless (2013: 472) concludes, "individuals' perceptions of inequality are better indicators of how individuals experience—and thus respond to—inequality (regardless of the accuracy of these perceptions)".

Rather, I used perception-based measures of individual-level inequality using Afrobarometer survey data collected between September 2016 and September 2018 in 34 African countries (N=45812).³⁶¹ To measure people's perceptions of individual inequality I employed a survey item which asks respondents to assess their living situation in comparison to other people in their country.³⁶² From this, I computed four dummy variables which differentiate between people who feel relatively deprived (meaning they say they are 'much worse' or 'worse' off than others) or relatively advantaged (meaning they say they feel 'much better' or 'better' off than others), respectively. I did not include a dummy variable for 'feeling the same', thereby making it my reference category for the comparisons.

1.2 Inequality and democratic legitimacy

As set out in the introduction chapter, this thesis did not intend to trace the trends of democratization and inequality over time and from that test any causal argument. Rather, I have looked at providing evidence on whether perceptions of economic inequality may influence the health of democracy. But how do we measure the 'health of democracy'? Of course, a plethora of measures of the 'health of democracy' exist today, each with their own

³⁶¹ My data set includes the following countries: Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe. Although surveyed in the Afrobarometer project, eSwatini - an absolute monarchy - is not included in the analyses of this thesis as many questions included in the analyses are not asked in the country.

³⁶² Respondents were asked: *In general, how do you rate your living conditions compared to those of other South Africans/ Batswana/ Kenyans (e.g.)?* This variable makes no reference to what 'living situation' refers to (see section 5 for further discussion). Substantive responses to this question were: *much worse* (coded as '1'), *worse* (2), *same* (3), *better* (4), *much better* (5). Responses were read out to respondents. Respondents who said they *did not know* were coded as '9' and those who *refused* to answer as '8'.

advantages and limitations. Given the methodological and validity problems associated with aggregation of individual data to country level, discussed above, I produced a comparative study at the individual level.³⁶³ To conceptually ground the 'health of democracy' I employed the concept of political legitimacy following the work of Verba and Almond (1963) and Pippa Norris (1999, 2004, 2011). In particular, I adapt Norris' framework of political support to structure my analysis. Norris proposes five dimensions of political support which range from diffuse support, such as support for the political community or regime, to specific support such as support for incumbents. Following Norris' (2011) conceptualization of political support, my thesis focused on support for democracy as a regime type, satisfaction with how democracy is working in practice, and trust in elected representatives and state institutions. In addition, I included a chapter on political participation which is important as it reflects how people view themselves within the political system.

2. Methodological limitations

Of course, no research is without limitations. As discussed in chapters 1 and 2, much previous research on the consequences of inequality of outcome have focused on country-level data, such as the Gini coefficient or the Palma ratio. In the context of developing countries this can be particularly problematic. Rather, I have employed value-survey data to capture people's perceptions and experiences of individual relative deprivation and advantage. This strategy comes with its own problems. In this section, I want to overview several methodological limitations which should be considered when evaluating my findings.

2.1 Measurement error

In my research I rely on a single measure of perceived relative living situation. This is problematic as relying on a single item can introduce considerable statistical error into the analysis. Here, a multi-item measure of perceived relative situation would be more advisable. As I am using

³⁶³ Due to the clustered structure of the data, I employed multi-level modelling to account for clustering of data within country-units. Of course, other factors at individual and country level may shape peoples' attitudes towards democracy, office holders and state institutions, and whether people participate or not. In each chapter I therefore included competing explanations of the dependent variables which I ran against the main explanatory variables of interest - perceived relative deprivation and advantage. I also included both individual-level and country-level control variables.

existing data (rather than collecting original data myself) I was not able to include additional survey items which would have assisted in this thesis.

Another limitation of using perceptual measures of inequality is that the perceptions must be taken at face value. Notions of inequality are increasingly becoming monikers for all sorts of other 'wrongs' that exist in the world. While using a perceptual measure of material inequality helps ensure the 'human perspective' is included, it also invites responses representing people's broader niggles, nuisances, and bothers. In my thesis I had initially intended to conduct a qualitative study in the Cape Town area to collect data on how people understand the perceived relative situation question I use, what they are specifically reporting on when prompted to assess their relative 'living situation' and what comparisons they might be using to do so. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, conducting such research was impossible.

2.2 Sampling issues

As discussed in chapter 2 of this thesis, surveys typically under-sample the extremely wealthy and the extremely poor. There is little reason to assume that the data I use in this thesis do not suffer from such under-sampling too. This is because, in the Afrobarometer, enumeration areas (EA) are sampled randomly (stratified by urban/ rural and region) and not by economic consideration. Especially in highly unequal countries (e.g., South Africa, Namibia or Zambia) it is less likely to 'randomly' sample EAs reflecting the highest income and wealth brackets. Moreover, even if high income areas are sampled, many such neighbourhoods are gated, and access is restricted. Likewise, the poorest are typically under-sampled as they are not recorded in sampling frameworks, are not registered at a constant address or live in neighbourhoods where survey work is difficult.

2.3 Interviewer effects

Because I rely on survey data, my data might be biased due to interviewer effects. Indeed, a recent study by Lau (2018) suggests that such interviewer effects bias responses to questions regarding attitudes towards democracy and reported participation. Others – such as Tannenbergs (2021) – find that perceptions of who is conducting the interviews shape responses about citizen-state relations in more autocratic states. These biases might shape in particular the models on trust in elected officials and leaders, but also on support for democracy. Further, Adida et al. (2016) suggest that interviewer-respondent co-ethnicity may play a role in how

respondents answer questions pertaining to preference for democracy, trust in the ruling party and reported voting. Here, future research should include interviewer characteristics as control variables and re-test my main explanatory variables. Given the exploratory nature of the models presented in this thesis and the focus on understanding the main explanatory variables in the context of competing explanations, I did not include such control variables to avoid overfitting the model.

2.4 Data-structure and MLM analyses

Further limitations may result from the structure of the data I use in this thesis. In the data, there exists a high number of respondents ($n > 45000$) who are grouped in a fairly small number of country-clusters ($N = 34$). Ideally, data used in a multilevel model (MLM) analysis are structured with a large n at level 2 and a small n at level 1. Data with low case numbers at level 2 tend to yield overly small effect sizes when using the random slope model. As such, I test only random intercept models. Further, I employ only restricted maximum likelihood (REML) estimation, which is recommended for when the case number at level two is relatively small. To be clear, the number of clusters in my data is sufficient to warrant using an MLM. As McNeish and Stapleton (2016) note in a review article of the literature regarding required sample sizes in MLM, exact recommendations differ, ranging from a minimum of 10 clusters, 20 clusters, 30 clusters or 50 clusters (for cross-level interactions – which I don't run). Although not ideal, the data I employ do meet these recommendations. However, future research may address the issue of the data-structure in several ways. First, the hypotheses and models in this thesis could be tested using data that includes a larger number of level 2 clusters (and ideally a greater balance between the number of clusters and cases per cluster). Such data may be more granular and test differences across and within sub-national units (which are much more numerous than countries). Second, statistical techniques could be applied to the data used in this thesis to address the data-structure issue. McNeish and Stapleton (2016) suggest using the Kenward-Roger adjustment or bootstrapping techniques as possible strategies to safeguard against over- and underestimation of estimates and error as a result of the data-structure.

2.5 Causality, confounders, and modifiers

In my models I entered variables under the assumption that they simultaneously estimate the outcome variable and are largely independent of one another. However, this assumption is problematic. It is likely that the variables that I have entered as independent variables actually

represent confounding variables. This causes problems as total effects are mistaken for direct effects and vice versa (Westreich & Greenland, 2013). It is plausible that the direct effects reported in the various tables are not in fact total effects, and instead that the 'independent' variables are causally linked in a sequence. Here path analysis or the use of panel data could help trace a causal path and locate the exact position of relative living situation within a bigger causal explanation. In this thesis I have acknowledged this issue by refraining from language that would suggest any causal effect. Rather, I have always spoken in terms of associations between variables.

2.6 Robustness checks

Typically, quantitative researchers will engage in a series of post-hoc robustness checks in order to validate the results of a model or computation more generally. The primary aim of such robustness checks is to ensure that the (significant) relation between the explanatory variable/s and the outcome variable is not contingent upon specific assumptions evident in the model. These assumptions can be the way that both the explanatory and dependent variable are measured and coded, the control variables used in the respective models, or the cases being explored (such as outliers). Robustness checks typically take the form of the analyses being re-run using different measures or variables (representing the same concepts and constructs) as the independent and dependent variables and of control variables being dropped from the model in a step-wise way or specific cases being excluded from the analyses, to ensure that the found effects are not being caused or overly determined by how variables are measured, and by what variables are present in the models or specific cases. If the main results remain in place throughout these checks, the original model is deemed robust. In this thesis I refrain from post-hoc robustness checks for several reasons. First, the MLM analysis holds constant the effect of country-level variables which ensures that within-country variance and between-country variances are estimated separately. This means that the model results cannot be contingent upon any one single country-case. Second, I ensure that the main findings are not contingent upon other variables being present in the models by 'building up' my models in a step-wise process. Rather than presenting and interpreting a 'full model' only and then dropping variables in robustness checks, I start by testing only the effects of my main explanatory variables and then gradually include additional variables in separate models. Another form of robustness-check is to run models using an alternative measure of the same concept. As discussed above, I had no alternative measure, so this option was not available to me.

In the following section I briefly summarize each chapter before turning to a discussion of these findings in the broader context of this thesis (see section 3).

3. Chapter summaries

In chapter 3, I explored how perceptions of individual relative living conditions shape support for democracy among ordinary Africans. Support for democracy (as a regime type) is a fundamental prerequisite for sustainable democracy. While elected governments and parties may fall out of favour with voters and be pushed out of office, a reservoir of diffuse support in the principal regime form ensures that people explore options and alternatives in the context of the regime, not outside it. Past research has argued that macro-level inequality should both increase and decrease support for democracy. However, the empirical evidence is far from conclusive, and little is known for cases in Africa.

My research suggests that perceived individual equality significantly increases support for democracy as a regime type, while feeling relatively deprived and – perhaps more surprisingly – relatively advantaged significantly reduces support for democracy. Especially people who feel severely deprived or very advantaged report much less support for democracy as a regime type. These effects are largely significant above and beyond the effect of absolute poverty and known predictors of support for democracy, such as free and fair elections, and level of education.

But talk can be cheap, and some have argued that given democracy's near unchallenged universal normative appeal, people's 'support' for democracy is not much more than a lip service (Inglehart, 2003:51). Arguably a more rigorous measure of support for democracy is what Afrobarometer calls 'demand for democracy'. This measure captures not only whether people say they support democracy as a regime type, but also whether they reject non-democratic regime forms such as one-man, one-party or military rule. Indeed, the results are similar but the negative effect of feeling very advantaged is stronger for demand for democracy, than for support for democracy. Importantly, these results are obtained while holding experienced absolute poverty and objective relative poverty constant. This suggests that, regardless of how people are doing in absolute terms and how they are objectively doing in relative terms, people who feel that they are equal to others are significantly more supportive of democracy and less likely to endorse non-democratic forms of government or say that to them the regime form doesn't matter. Likewise, irrespective of people's actual material conditions, people who feel that they are relatively deprived or advantaged are less supportive of democracy and more open to alternative regime forms. For both dependent variables, I found no significant effect of country-level inequality using the Gini coefficient. This means that country-level inequality does not significantly predict aggregate national support or demand for democracy when we control for individual conditions, assessment and perceptions of material conditions. The results in this chapter therefore suggest that the

relationship between people's perceived relative living situation and how much they want democracy, even over other alternatives, is not a linear relationship. Rather the results suggest that the relationship is curvilinear.

While the survey items of 'support of and demand for democracy' query attitudes towards democracy *in principle*, chapter 4 looked at how perceptions of individual relative deprivation and advantage shaped satisfaction with democracy (SWD), i.e., evaluations of how democracy is working *in practice* in the respondent's country. Of course, much uncertainty exists as to how democratic the countries in Africa are, and different measures of democracy arrive at different categorizations for the same country. For my study I excluded people who said that their country was not a democracy, and I controlled for rule of law at country level using Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem)'s rule of law index.

Unlike attitudes towards democracy in principle, my research in chapter 4 suggests that evaluations of the functioning of democracy in practice are shaped by egocentric evaluations, rather than sociotropic ones. Controlling for both individual and country-level effects I show that feeling better off than other people increases satisfaction and feeling worse off than other people decreases satisfaction with how democracy is functioning in the respondent's country. Unlike the results in Chapter 2 with regard to support and demand for democracy, the relationship between perceived relative living situation and satisfaction with democracy appears to be a linear relation. Moreover, I demonstrate that these relative assessments are significant and are comparable in effect size to widely used predictors of satisfaction with democracy found in the literature, such as economic country-level evaluations, partisanship and political interest. Analogous to the findings in chapter 3, I find that objective country-level income inequality (using the Gini coefficient) does not significantly predict satisfaction with democracy. In other words, while individual perceptions of one's relative living significantly predict satisfaction with democracy, the overall income inequality in a country does not. These results therefore should encourage future research to include individual-level comparative assessments as predictors of SWD.

Next, in chapter 5, I turned to testing the linkages between perceived relative deprivation and advantage, and political trust, respectively. What are the implications of economic inequality for political trust (i.e., trust in government and state institutions)? Political trust forms an important function in representative political systems. On the one hand, political trust facilitates the efficient functioning of government by allowing governments to make day-to-day decisions without consulting the electorate or using coercion (Newton et al., 2018). On the other hand, political trust simplifies complex political processes and reduces monitoring costs for ordinary people. The quantitative literature has shown that macroeconomic performance (including levels of inequality) and evaluations shape political trust, but the literature has paid little attention, until recently, to the role of individual perceptions and subjective experiences of

inequality. However, little research has focused on cases in Africa regarding inequality and political trust.

My research in chapter 5 demonstrates that perceptions of relative deprivation are significantly associated with less trust in representative government institutions and, more weakly, with less trust in state institutions. The effect for perceptions of relative deprivation remains significant when controlling for macroeconomic conditions and performance evaluations. For trust in representative government institutions, the effect size of relative deprivation is comparable or larger in size to frequently cited covariates of trust, such as location, level of education, and government economic performance, suggesting that perceived relative deprivation is indeed an important covariate of such trust. Feeling relatively advantaged is also significantly associated with more trust in representative government institutions. These findings point to egocentric motives of trust and may reflect strong neopatrimonial ties between citizens and political agents present in many African countries. In demonstrating that individual level economic considerations affect political trust in Africa, this chapter challenges the conventional wisdom that only macroeconomic factors affect trust. Rather, individual relative judgements are significantly associated with trust above and beyond the effect of widely used explanations of trust.

Lastly, in chapter 6, I turned to relative and absolute individual-level economic covariates of participation in Africa. Participation plays an important role in democratic stability and consolidation, but most research has focused on absolute conditions of individual poverty, but not on relative conditions. In chapter 6, I explored whether individual poverty and perceived relative living situation are associated with different forms of participation: voting, protesting, contacting representatives and engaging in community-based activities.

The results in chapter 6 suggest that – counter to the socio-economic status model of participation – poorer respondents are more likely to engage in communal activities, to contact representatives and authorities and to protest. Individual absolute poverty is, however, not significantly correlated with voting behaviour. Relative comparisons are also linked to levels of participation, albeit not consistently across different modal forms of participation. I found that feeling relatively deprived is significantly correlated with more frequent communal activity, but not with voting, contacting and protesting. Moreover, my models suggest that feeling relatively advantaged compared to others is significantly correlated with more contacting of elected authorities. Chapter 6 updates our empirical understanding of covariates and determinants of citizen participation in Africa. The results suggest that being 'poor' or feeling relatively deprived is not consistently associated with less participation, but also that such economic factors are not as important as engagement and exogenous mobilization.

To summarize, the results in this thesis suggest that across most of Africa in the late 2010s, perceived relative deprivation was significantly correlated with less support and demand for democracy, less satisfaction with democracy and lower trust in elected government and state institutions, respectively. Perceived relative deprivation was also significantly correlated with increased communal participation, but not voting, contacting or protesting. Unlike past research – which focusses on the relatively deprived or poor (in the absolute sense) – I also studied the effect of perceived relative *advantage*. The results in this thesis suggest that feeling relatively better off is significantly correlated with lower support and demand for democracy but greater satisfaction with the functioning of democracy and trust in both elected government and state institutions. I also found that feeling better off was significantly correlated with more contacting, but not with communing, voting, or protesting.

4. Does economic inequality pose a threat to democratic governance in Africa?

In this thesis I have demonstrated that how people feel about their own situation compared to other people's situations, makes a difference to how they feel about or see democracy, political leaders and institutions and (to a lesser degree) whether they participate or not. Where does this leave us? Are perceptions of individual material inequality a threat to democratic legitimacy in Africa? And if so, is that 'threat' coming from the (self-perceived) deprived, or the (self-perceived) advantaged who reject the premise of democracy and possible redistribution that comes with government of all people, by all people and for all people?

To assist in the answering of these questions I have included a summary table (7.1, below) of all main effects.³⁶⁴ As discussed in chapter 2, the explanatory variables are dummy variables with 'feeling equal' chosen as the reference category. As such 'increases' and 'decreases' are in comparison to feeling equal to others. Non-significant results are displayed as 'NS'.

The 'threat' from below comes from what people feel is failing them right now – the system in place, the people in power and the institutions of state. People do not appear cynical or resigned but are rational political actors who feel their expectations haven't been met. Noticeably, even feelings of moderate deprivation (feeling 'worse off') are significantly associated with less demand for democracy, less satisfaction and less trust. Mattes (2019) notes that the future of democracy in Africa will in parts be driven by the values of political leaders

³⁶⁴ The table reflects the main effects without any control variables. In some cases, some of the significant results become non-significant once competing explanations or control variables are included. This is especially the case for satisfaction with democracy and trust in state institutions.

and elites, the functioning of horizontal accountability through institutions, but also by popular demand for democracy. In this context, Mattes notes in particular the seminal role of 'dissatisfied democrats' – people who demand democracy but feel they are not getting it. The results in this thesis suggest that those who feel relatively deprived are not 'dissatisfied democrats' but are dissatisfied with how democracy is working and open to exploring other alternatives.

Table 7.1: Summary of main effects found in the analyses performed in this thesis

Dependent variables	Explanatory variables			
	Feeling much worse off	Feeling worse off	Feeling better off	Feeling much better off
Support for Democracy	decreases	NS	NS	decreases
Demand for Democracy	decreases	decreases	NS	decreases
Satisfaction with Democracy	decreases	decreases	increases	increases
Trust in Representative government institutions	decreases	decreases	increases	increases
Trust in State institutions	decreases	decreases	increases	NS
Voting	NS	NS	NS	NS
Contacting	NS	NS	increases	increases
Communing	increases	increases	NS	NS
Protesting	NS	NS	NS	NS

The threat from above comes from the fact that despite being more trusting of political leaders and state institutions and more satisfied with what is in place, those who feel relatively advantaged are open to alternative regime forms. This leaves us with a somewhat contradictory story. On the one hand, support for democracy as a regime in principle appears to be tied to notions of equality. On the other hand, the functioning of democracy in practice and the 'rewarding' of incumbents and state institutions through trust appear to be guided by egocentric concerns of relative advantage over others. Is the key that people need to 'see' their own advantage as a product of democracy? If those who feel better off are more trusting of elected leaders, more satisfied with how democracy is working but also more willing to explore non-democratic alternatives, could this suggest that the 'better off' are not attributing their situation to the democratic context? Is it possible that they feel that clientelist networks could work even better outside of democratic rules? While those that feel relatively deprived lose faith in democracy (in terms of demand for democracy) but are only marginally more likely to want non-democratic alternatives (once other factors, such as economic performance, are held constant), those who feel relatively better off are open to strong men, dominant parties or military rule regardless of perceived performance of government.

Which countries might be at risk?

Across the sample of 34 countries, there are more than twice as many people who say they feel severely deprived (8%), compared to severely advantaged (3%). There are roughly equal numbers who say they feel moderately deprived (26%) and moderately advantaged (29%). From these numbers alone, it would appear that the larger threat is the detachment of those who feel relatively deprived from the political system, incumbents and state institutions.

What could this tell us about democracy in Africa in the future? As many have pointed out (and has been discussed in Chapter 1 of this thesis), the 'democratic landscape' in Africa is heterogenous and divergent. It is difficult to describe consistent patterns across time and countries or make concrete predictions with any certainty. With 37% of the sample feeling relatively deprived ('worse' or 'much worse') represent – there is considerable potential for 'democratic fatigue' among ordinary Africans. But we can also view this issue from a different perspective: how well or poorly regimes are equipped to deal with the issue.

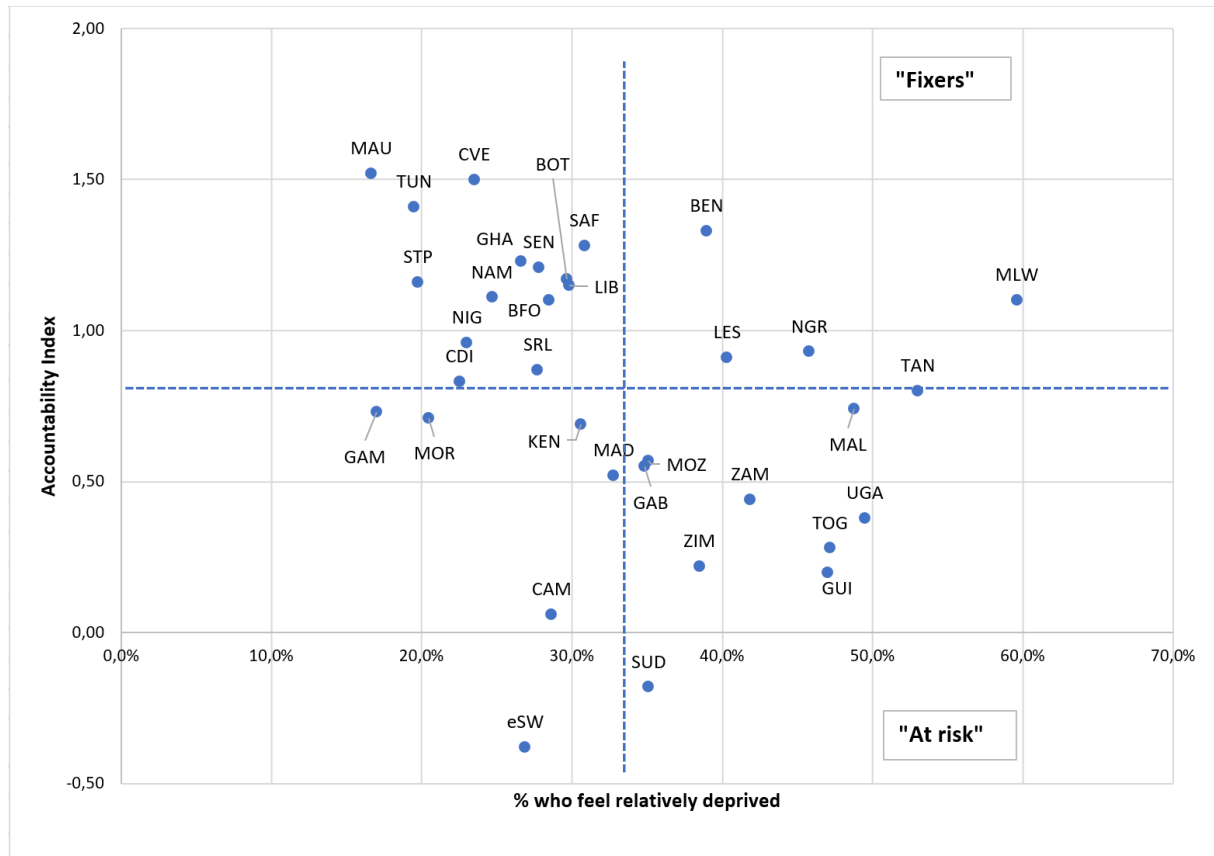
Arguably, countries which are most likely to see political change are countries where on the one hand a large share of people feel relatively deprived and on the other hand there are limited opportunities to resolve this situation through political processes due to a lack of regime accountability. Figure 7.1 displays the share of respondents per country who feel relatively deprived (worse or much worse off than others) and a country's V-Dem accountability-index score. Importantly, the aim here is not to suggest a causal relationship between the two variables, but that the combination of both effects might create stressors which increase the chance of regime transformation. I have lines representing the mean scores of both variables, respectively, creating a four-cell grid. From this grid we can more easily identify countries which fall into low or high groups in terms of both measures.³⁶⁵ Cases 'at risk' fall into the bottom-right quadrant. Importantly, being 'at risk' doesn't mean that either *democratic* consolidation or deconsolidation become more or less likely. Rather, over time the situation may create a growing incongruence between what people need and want on the one hand, and what they are getting on the other hand. Examples of countries which fall into this group are Guinea, Togo and Uganda – each of which have seen protests and violence in recent years.³⁶⁶ Importantly, the protests in these three mentioned countries were not in regard to inequality, specifically. However, I argue that lack of accountability and high levels of deprivation make such events more likely as people feel aggrieved, lack other means to see change happen

³⁶⁵ Of course, it is questionable whether the position of a country relative to the mean is useful in regard to regime change but the use of four quadrants does help us more easily identify high and low cases.

³⁶⁶ Guinea saw a wave of protests in March 2018 in regard to increases in teachers' salaries and the delay of municipal elections results. Togo saw protests in September 2017 in regard to term-limits and government crackdowns against opposition parties. Uganda has seen long running protests in regard to government curtailing of freedoms, opposition parties and electoral term limits and ages.

and also feel less commitment to the current political system (which they perceive is failing them).

Figure 7.1: Perceived relative deprivation and government accountability across 34 African countries (N=45811)³⁶⁷. Afrobarometer data (2016-2018) and Varieties of Democracy data (2017).



³⁶⁷ The data displayed here are from the Afrobarometer round 7 (2016-2018) and the Varieties of Democracies [V-Dem] (2017) accountability index (to avoid confusion: I am referring to the 'new' accountability index which was released by V-Dem in 2017. V-Dem's country-level accountability index consists of three subcomponents which track vertical, horizontal and diagonal accountability. Each form of accountability is measured by a respective index consisting of multiple indicators. According to V-Dem (2017), the accountability index "measures to what extent the ideal of government accountability is achieved. Accountability is here understood as constraints on the government's use of political power through for example elections, checks and balances between institutions, and by civil society organizations and media activity".

5. Future research

In this thesis I focused on understanding the relation between perceptions of economic inequality and democracy through the conceptual framework of democratic legitimacy. Applying Norris's conceptualization of political support, my thesis studied the effect of perceived relative situation on different forms of political support ranging from diffuse, regime support, to specific, incumbent support. But others have proposed different reasons why regimes become more or less democratic or why they survive over time. In this section I discuss these alternative and complementary approaches which I have not emphasized in this thesis, but which future research may wish to consider when exploring my findings further.

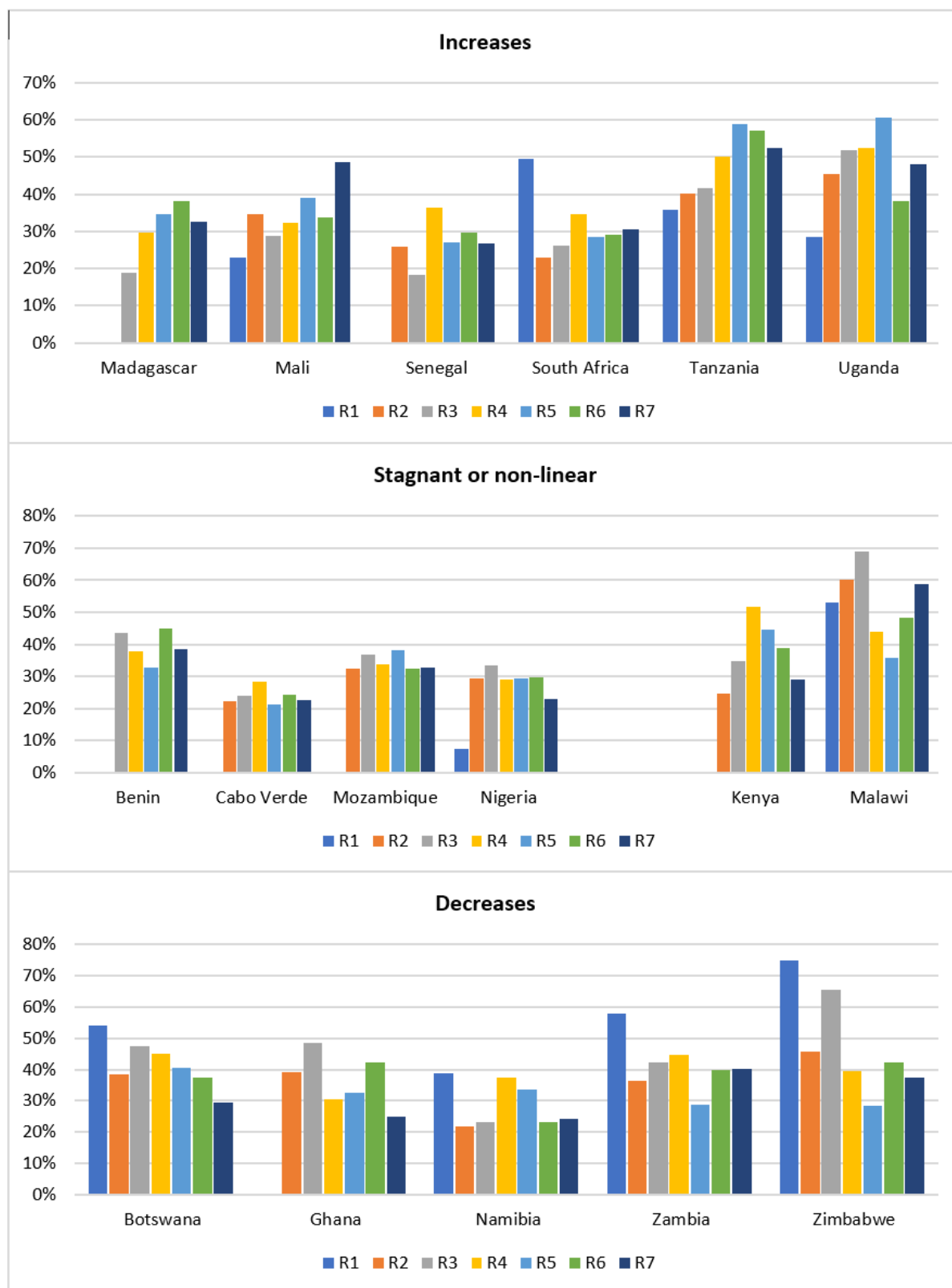
5.1 Changes of inequality over time

One question that is left unanswered from this thesis is how changes in perceived relative deprivation (or relative living situation more generally) across time shapes the legitimacy of democracy. In other words, do we see that changes in how people perceive their relative situation compared to others correspond with changes in support and demand for democracy or trust in government and state institutions? Is it the sudden or short-term onset of feelings of relative deprivation that bring into question the value and performance of democracy, political actors and institutions? Or is it the long-term sense of being relatively deprived – possibly even across generations – which hollows out people's support for democracy or trust its leaders? As discussed in Chapter 6, past research has argued that long-term experiences of poverty are linked more strongly to feelings of resignation and fatalistic acceptance of the status quo, compared to those who have experienced sudden poverty (see Narayan, Chambers et al., 2000; Narayan, Patel et al. 2000). It is plausible, but to the best of my knowledge untested, that such difference also holds for *relative* deprivation. In this thesis, I have focused on the most recent round of Afrobarometer Survey data (round 7). This approach allows for a comparative framework, but it lacks explanatory power regarding changes over time. Acknowledging such overtime trends would help in contextualizing my findings and locating them within broader mechanisms of over-time change.

For example – as displayed in figure 7.2, below – around three in ten respondents in Botswana and Madagascar say they feel relatively deprived in the most recent round of Afrobarometer survey. These numbers, however, do not reflect the trajectories in either country. In Botswana, three in ten represents the lowest percentage of respondents in any of the Afrobarometer survey rounds conducted in the country – the trajectory is downward. In Madagascar, round 7

results are comparable to Botswana in absolute terms, but they represent among the highest percentage of respondents saying they feel relatively deprived in the past two decades.

Figure 7.2: Perceived relative deprivation over time (1999-2018; % per country). 18 countries. Afrobarometer data Round 1- Round 8 (1999-2018)



In fact, countries display different cross-time trajectories, such as the downward trajectory in Botswana, Ghana, and Zimbabwe, or the upward trajectories in Madagascar, Mali and Tanzania. In Cabo Verde, Mozambique or Nigeria, the percentage has remained fairly stable over time. In other countries, the share of respondents who feel relatively deprived over time has followed a nonlinear trajectory over the past two decades. For example, in Kenya the rate sharply increased in the 2000s, reaching over 50% who say they feel relatively deprived in 2008 (round 4), before dropping in the subsequent 3 rounds of surveys. The inverse is the case for Malawi, where reported relative deprivation decreased to a lowest share of around 35% in round 5, before increasing in subsequent rounds.

5.2 Cultural explanations of democratic stability and resilience

Ronal Inglehart (1997, 2015) and proponents of cultural explanations of regimes and regime-changes point towards the importance of dominant values within a society in understanding why some countries are more autocratic and some are more democratic.

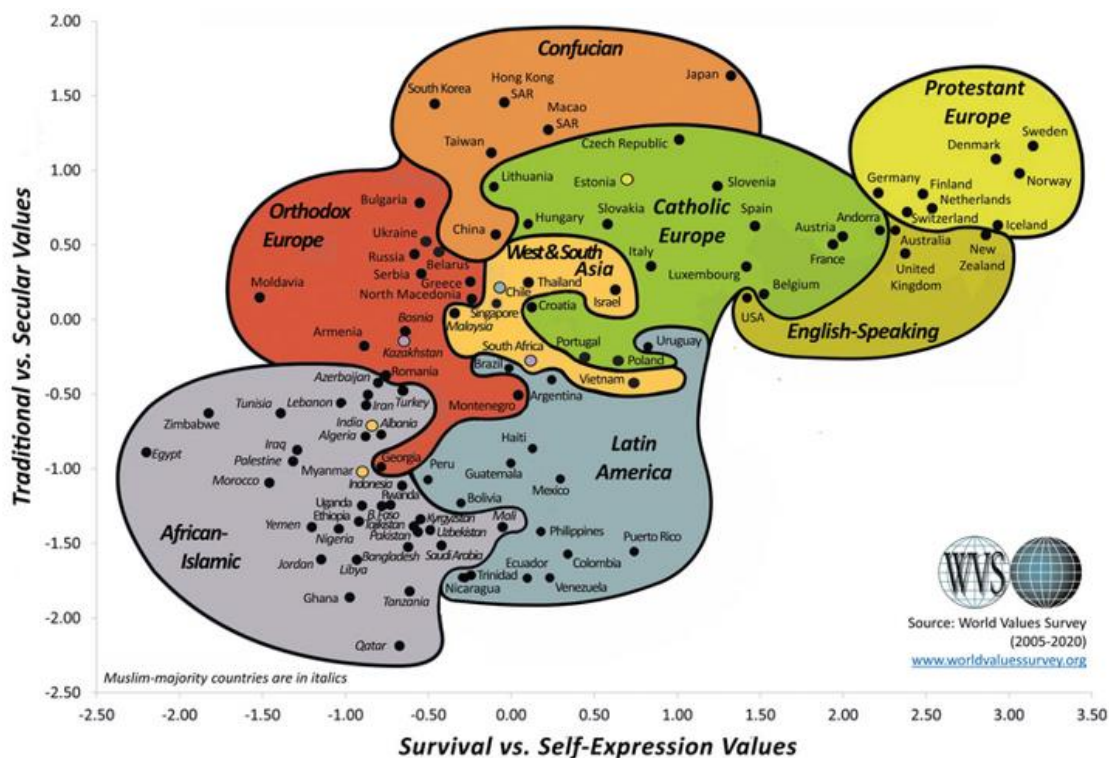
Inglehart and Welzel (2005, 2010) suggest that global cultural zones are delineated by how societies score on two value-axes: survival versus self-expression values and traditional versus secular-rational values. According to Inglehart and Welzel democratic regimes thrive when a large proportion of citizens hold and live by 'enlightenment values' and 'emancipative values'. This 'foundation' of democracy in the dominant values held by people is what determines to a large degree whether antidemocratic or prodemocratic forces prevail in a country (Welzel, 2021). As Welzel (2021: 132) suggests in a recent review article, around 70 percent in between-country variation in "autocracy-versus- democracy" are explained by a country's membership in global cultural zones. According to Inglehart and Welzel' s cultural map (see figure 7.3) African countries (for the limited number for which there are data) score low on emancipative values and appear to largely emphasize survival values over self-expression and emphasize traditional versus secular – rational values (i.e., two dimensions of emancipative values).

This makes democratic consolidation not only more difficult according to the cultural theories of democratization, but also more susceptible to democratic backsliding. As Welzel (2021: 142) notes:

"a country's vulnerability to any democratic downcycle will vary with the prevalence of emancipative values in the national populace. When a democracy does face headwinds and rough seas, the presence in it of a large share of people who are stalwart supporters of emancipative values can help it to endure those challenging conditions."

As such, the question is whether perceptions of relative deprivation or advantage influence the extent to which people emphasize survival versus self-expression values. Drawing from Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs, it is plausible that people who feel relatively deprived emphasize survival over self-expression. Here future research could employ value survey data for Africa (including Afrobarometer) to test whether a significant association exists between people's perception of relative living conditions and their emphasis of survival and traditional values over self-expression and secular-rational values.

Figure 7.3: The Inglehart and Welzel cultural map (2020)³⁶⁸



5.3 Role of elites and qualitative analyses

Of course, changes in levels of democracy are shaped not only by the behaviour and wants of ordinary people but also the behaviours and motivations of elites, and both groups need to be understood in both the domestic and international context of the country. In my thesis I have tried to account for the aspects of the domestic context by using country-level control

³⁶⁸ This map was taken from the World Value Survey website and represents World Survey 7 data (2020). This is a provisional version.

variables. However, little credence is given to the role of elites or the international context. Studying elites is a challenging task but qualitative interviews with political leaders, members of government and important contemporaries would start to unpack the perspective of those who hold political power. More generally, this thesis loses a lot of contextual information by focussing on a comparative perspective. For example, how much inequality people deem to be fair is strongly shaped by a country's history and culture and in turn beliefs about class and mobility (Alesina et al., 2004). Such factors are ignored in my thesis and future research may approach these factors through qualitative country studies or more country-specific and topical survey research.

6. Final reflections

Much debate exists in the literature on the relation between economic inequality and democratization and consolidation. Boix (2003) for example argues that economic inequality harms both democratization and consolidation. Conversely, Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) posit that inequality harms consolidation, but the relation between inequality and democratization follows an inverted U-shape of countries with very low and very high levels of inequality being least likely to democratize. Houle (2009) provides a comprehensive empirical examination of both arguments. He finds that high levels of inequality are significantly linked to backsliding from democratic to non-democratic regimes. Neither of the studies placed particular emphasis on Africa (although Houle's models include a Sub-Saharan dummy control-variable). In this thesis, I unpacked Houle's finding in the context of Africa by examining the individual level processes by which such backsliding may take place. The results in this thesis strongly emphasize that addressing only absolute poverty is not sufficient. I find that feelings of relative deprivation are linked to less support for democracy, greater openness towards non-democratic regime forms, less satisfaction with the way democracy is working and less trust in elected representatives and state institutions. These factors over time may erode the legitimacy of democracy and may contribute to Africa's current democratic stagnation and backsliding.

6.1 Contributions to the literature

My research makes a number of important contributions to both democracy research and economic research for cases that have been understudied in the past.

First, I find that objective relative situation and subjective relative situation are not the same. In line with recent research outside of Africa I confirm that how people feel they compare to others is only weakly associated with how they objectively compare to others. I find a moderate effect for peoples subjective absolute living situation and weak effects for experiences of food and income deprivation as well as unfair treatment by public officials. Using people's objective relative situation as a proxy for their experiences and perceptions of their relative situation seems ill-advised and underlines the value of employing individual value-survey data to provide important, and to date novel perspectives in the study of individual-level behavioural and attitudinal consequences of inequality and relative deprivation.

Second, this thesis provides strong support that feeling relatively deprived compared to others is significantly associated with people's attitudes towards and evaluations of democracy, their trust in political leaders and institutions and their levels of civic and political participation. The results underline that those perceptions of relative deprivation can and do have multiple negative effects on democratic legitimacy. In most cases these effects are significant even when controlling for other explanations suggested by the literature. While recent research has studied the role of perceptions of inequality in the context of the USA, Europe and East Asia, limited research has been conducted in Africa. This thesis provides one of the first attempts to fill that gap using a comparative, cross-country approach. The results of this thesis therefore not only give empirical context to popular arguments regarding the undermining of democracy by inequality in Africa, but also highlight the need for perceptions of relative situation to be included in future empirical research.

Third, the results suggest that perceptions of relative deprivation and perceptions of relative advantage do not consistently work in opposite ways. For example, the results in this thesis demonstrated that feeling relatively deprived is not the opposite of feeling relatively advantaged compared to others, in terms of how it correlates to support for democracy, satisfaction with democracy and trust in elected government and state institutions. In the literature, little emphasis has been placed on feeling better off. The results in this thesis clearly suggest that feeling relatively advantaged is an important predictor of political support and may be important to consider when thinking about democratic sustainability in Africa. In some cases – such as being more trusting of political representatives and state institutions or being more satisfied with how democracy is working – these are positive results in regard to the legitimacy of democracy. To the contrary, however, feeling better off than others is linked to less support for democracy and less demand for democracy. This may suggest that the

legitimacy of democracy is not only undermined by feeling 'left behind' – as popular discourse and media have argued – but that those who feel relatively advantaged compared to others are also less supportive or have less demand for democracy.

Fourth, my thesis suggests that perceived equality matters in increasing democratic legitimacy but not consistently across different dimensions of legitimacy. People who feel equal to others are more supportive of and have greater demand for democracy than people who feel either relatively deprived or advantaged. However, people who feel equal to others are also less satisfied with how democracy is working and have less trust in elected representatives compared to those who feel relatively advantaged. In much of the public discourse and debate regarding the effects of economic inequality on democracy it is implied that more equal societies have a better chance of sustaining democratic rule. This may be the case. However, in regard to how people feel, people are more satisfied with how democracy is working and have more trust in elected representative and state institutions if they feel better off than others, especially if they feel much better off than others. This finding appears weakly reflected in much of the debate and discourse and may pose a contradiction to said debate and discourse.

Fifth, my results demonstrate that feelings of relative deprivation and advantage have a unique effect, above and beyond the effect of absolute poverty experience and objective relative poverty. This is an important finding as much emphasis in regard to democratic stability has been placed on absolute conditions, such as economic growth at country level and poverty eradication. The results here do not suggest that either is unimportant, but rather that equitable distribution of the rewards of economic growth in its own right is important for democratic stability. As Kapstein and Converse (2008: 66) note in this regard:

"The bottom line is that growth alone will not necessarily promote the life chances of all the individuals in a given society, and those who are left by the wayside may lose confidence in democracy."

Sixth, this thesis contributes to the methodological literature by providing a novel approach to the study of the consequences of economic inequality in Africa by focusing on perceptions of individual economic inequality and the use of value-survey data. Especially in the context of Africa (and the wider developing world) where high-quality, comparable data are often limited, the use of value-survey-based experiential and perceptual measures of inequality may open manifold new avenues of enquiry in diverse fields of research. Focusing on country-level analyses would have missed much of the story. In fact, in all chapters I found that country-level inequality (as per the Gini coefficient for income inequality) was a non-significant predictor.

Lastly, this thesis represents an updated comparative analysis of dimensions of legitimacy in Africa, using the most recent round of Afrobarometer data. The data are from 34 countries, representing around three in four Africans. Moreover, the models in this thesis further improve existing explanations in the literature by accounting for the clustering at country-level. As discussed in the respective chapters, past empirical research in Africa has frequently failed to account for such clustering.

6.2 Where do we go from here?

The democratic story in Africa has fizzled. Since early progress was made post-democratization, many countries' democratic consolidation has become stagnant or has even reversed. Over the past decade in particular, some of the democratic achievements of the 1990s have been lost, and momentum suggesting future consolidation has all but ground to a halt. In this thesis I asked whether this stagnation or even backsliding could stem from African democracies' failure to address levels of economic inequality. As Lewis (2008), Møller and Roberts (2021), and others have noted, there was a distinct hope that democratization in Africa would address inequalities, bring prosperity and improved well-being and quality of life. Three decades on, and progress remains mixed.

Over the past decades, economic growth has frequently not translated into more equal living conditions in many African countries, and sentiments of relative deprivation are common as demonstrated by the representative Afrobarometer data. Recent research by Sprong et al. (2019) – using survey data collected for 6112 undergraduate university students from 28 countries – finds that perceptions of levels of inequality in a society are significantly associated with a greater sense of anomie and wish for a strong leader. Amid the continued trend of populist leaders who further emphasize and politicize grievances and inequalities (Resnick 2015, 2017) and neo-patrimonial networks in Africa which benefit from higher inequality, it remains questionable how much meaningful effort governments are making to address economic inequality.

Of course, in conclusion of this thesis the question arises about what policy makers and practitioners may glean from the results of this thesis if they wish to embolden democratic legitimacy in Africa? Here, formulating recommendations is difficult.

Centrally, the difficulty revolves around the fact that the relation between subjective relative living situation and attitudes towards democracy appears to be curvilinear while the relationship between subjective relative living situation and satisfaction with democracy and political trust appears to be linear. For example, people who feel better off than others are more satisfied with democracy and have more political trust. As such, directing policy to raise

peoples' relative living situation may be a good idea.³⁶⁹ However, people who feel relatively advantaged are also less supportive and have less demand for democracy. This – if increasing democratic legitimacy is your aim – makes it a bad idea. Indeed, in Africa, these findings are possibly reflective of strong neopatrimonial systems which continue to exist within (quasi-) democratic regimes. In this context, people's loyalty is not towards the system (although they do voice satisfaction with the system's functioning), but rather 'the hand that feeds them' (which they are open to follow as suggested by the analysis of demand for democracy). Rather than focusing on changes in material outcomes alone (i.e., people's objective or perceived material conditions) alone, the way in which such improvement occurs may be critical. Instead of delivering policy aimed at improving absolute and relative perceptions of one's living conditions being – whether formally or de facto – through neopatrimonial networks, such policy must (in real life but perhaps more importantly in the minds of people) be tied to the democratic regime itself. In other words, while achieving the 'ends' (alleviating poverty and material deprivation) is unquestionably important, the means to achieve such ends is important too, as these means may help in enhancing the value of democracy in the minds of ordinary people. For example, significant government spending in many African countries is drawn from international loans, donors and aid – especially in regard to services and poverty alleviation. Here the international community has an opportunity to attach not only the delegation of such funds to democratic countries (or those who are demonstrably trying), but also insist that the delivery and 'messaging' of such funds and the resulting improvements are being tied to democracy. Of course, this is far easier said than done, especially in strong one-party states where cadre deployment in all levels of government, state owned enterprises and even the private sector may mean that alternatives to established (neopatrimonial) paths of policy implementation are weakly established or face considerable additional political, economic and administrative effort.

Looking *only* at perceptions of relative living situation is also missing much of the story. The results demonstrate that how people perceived their living situation compared to others – whether they feel relatively deprived, equal or advantaged – matters and should be considered in future research. However, the models also clearly suggest that such perceptions alone are of limited explanatory power and other issues play an equally important – if not more important – role. In table 7.2, below, I have listed the strongest predictors of different dimensions of legitimacy. The results consistently point towards several key issues such as quality of elections and lack of corruption. Both issues provide ample opportunities for improvement in many African countries, which would in turn contribute to greater democratic legitimacy. In regard

³⁶⁹ Of course – as the results in chapter 2 demonstrated – we don't exactly know what people mean by relative living situation. It is also unclear how changes in one's perceived relative living situation could affect the various dimensions of legitimacy explored in this thesis.

to participation, the results in this thesis clearly demonstrate the role of mobilization and interest, but also location and gender. People are more participatory if they are part of a group or feel close to a party, live in rural areas or are male. Encouraging inclusive and broad opportunities for people to engage in groups and ensuring pluralistic party landscapes will thus likely foster people's participation and in turn lead to greater legitimacy.

Table 7.2: What enhances legitimacy? Summary of the strongest predictors of different dimensions of legitimacy.³⁷⁰

<i>Dimensions of legitimacy</i>	<i>Strongest predictors of more legitimacy</i>
Support for democracy	Free and fair elections, fair treatment of ethnic group by government; feeling equal to others (compared to feeling much better or much worse off)
Demand for democracy	Experiencing lived poverty less frequently; higher levels of education; feeling equal to others (compared to feeling much better or much worse off)
Satisfaction with democracy	Feeling much better off than others, free and fair elections; positive performance evaluations of the president; perceived decline in levels of corruption
Trust in representative government institutions	Free and fair elections; no perceived corruption in the Presidency, support of the incumbent ruling party; feeling much better off than others
Trust in state institutions	Positive performance evaluations of the president; no perceived corruption among the Presidency and Members of Parliament; free and fair elections
Voting	Feeling close to a political party; being a member in a community group; interest in politics
Contacting	Being a member in a community group; feeling close to a political party; interest in politics; living in a rural area; being male
Communing	Being a member in a community group; feeling close to a political party; interest in politics; living in a rural area; being male
Protesting	Being a member in a community group; feeling close to a political party; interest in politics; living in a rural area; being male

Today, numerous 'high profile' agenda such as the Sustainable development goals (SDG) or the African Union's Vision 2063 are in place to promote a prosperous, peaceful and democratic Africa. Both agenda acknowledge that 'inequality' needs to be addressed. Indeed, the results of my thesis underline that democracy may only be sustainable in Africa *if* inequality is addressed. Paramount to this challenge is not only 'crunching the numbers' but also paying attention to people's subjective perceptions and feelings.

³⁷⁰ The predictors listed in this table represent the strongest predictors found in the respective models. For more details, please see the respective chapters.

Meaningful progress in achieving the goals set out can only be made if such progress is registered by ordinary people. Here a shift in how we think about measuring progress is pivotal. The results in this thesis have demonstrated the benefit of employing good-quality, comparable survey data. Of course, survey data has its limitations and can't speak to all issues, but at the very least it can provide an important perspective that would otherwise be ignored. For a start, this thesis should motivate Afrobarometer to (re)include the question on people's perceived relative living situation again. In the most recent Round 8 of the survey – and to the best of my knowledge going forward in the next round – Afrobarometer has dropped the question from its survey.

The evidence here strongly underlines that many of Afrobarometer's key interests – the state of democracy, state-citizen relations, and civic and political participation – need to be understood within the context of people's relative perceptions. That being said, other survey projects are also well advised to capture subjective notions of relative deprivation, advantage and overall levels of inequality. Although further research is needed to better understand what informs people's responses, it is nonetheless valuable to understand a 'people's perspective'. After all, while poverty likely has an impact on people's lives regardless of whether they perceive poverty, inequality likely has a far larger effect – at least in its consequences for democracy – through how it is perceived.

Amid a growing literature cognizant of the value of perceptual measures of inequality, Africa had largely remained unstudied. This thesis uses a novel measure to provide a first comparative study of how perceived relative living situation relates to democratic legitimacy in Africa. The results should motivate others to explore this approach further.

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Thesis appendix

This is the appendix of my thesis. Each chapter includes a separate appendix which is listed in the order of chapters. References included in the appendix are listed in the reference list of the respective chapters. Variable information is copied from the respective Afrobarometer codebooks without further references.

1. Appendix of Chapter 1

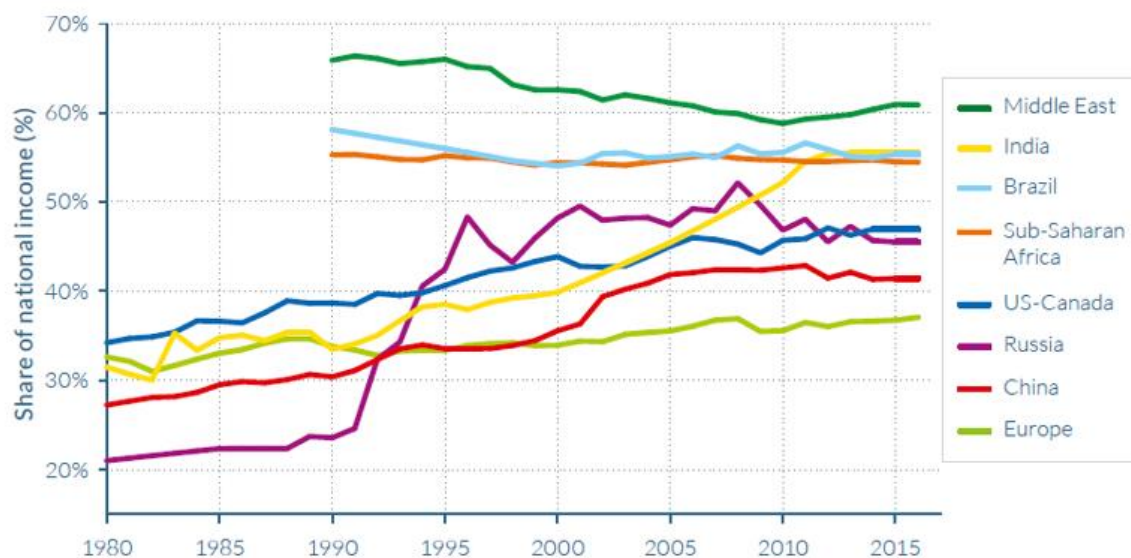
Appendix 1: A brief overview of global and international inequality over time.

Global inequality describes the inequality between all people, without any consideration for countries. In historical perspective global inequality increased with the simultaneous economic growth and technological advancements in Europe and North America associated with the industrial revolution and colonial rule in much of the global South in the second half of the 19th century. The colonialist effort resulted in an immense enrichment of 'the metropolis' (mainly Western Europe) by extracting first labor (in form of slavery) and later natural resources and agricultural produce from the 'periphery'. Global inequality continued to rise until after World War 2, when global inequality remained relatively constant until the end of the Cold War. With the rise of Asian economies in the 1990s and 2000s (especially the Asian Tigers and China) and the emergence of a large middle class, levels of global economic inequality have slightly dropped in the past two decades, but remain comparable to levels at the beginning of the 20th century. In this thesis I am not concerned with global or even continental inequality in Africa.

Inequality between countries has taken a different trajectory over time depending on how we think of country-level inequality. When between-country inequality is considered without the context of population sizes, between-country inequality has strongly increased between the early 18th century and the late 20th century. Industrialization in Europe and Northern America, and advent of the colonial age (excluding Latin America) meant the differences between the richest and the poorest countries strongly widened during the two centuries. (Data on national economies and private assets is only available from the 1820s for European countries. Reliable data on cases outside Europe (with the exception of Northern America and the countries of the British Empire) is only available from the early to mid-20th century.) Since 1990 a decrease in international inequality has taken place, which is attributed to relatively equal countries becoming independent, such as the former Soviet Union states. Bourguignon (2015), however, notes that this trend may be due to the way inequality is measured, arguing that decreasing inequality between countries may actually be a result of increasing inequality within developing states. As such, he suggests, inequality is better understood as global inequality between people. He argues that as the rich in developed and developing countries are growing more and more similar in terms of wealth, this is likely to distort comparisons between developed and developing countries when viewed as singular entities. In fact, Bourguignon continues, decreasing inequality between developed and developing countries is most likely

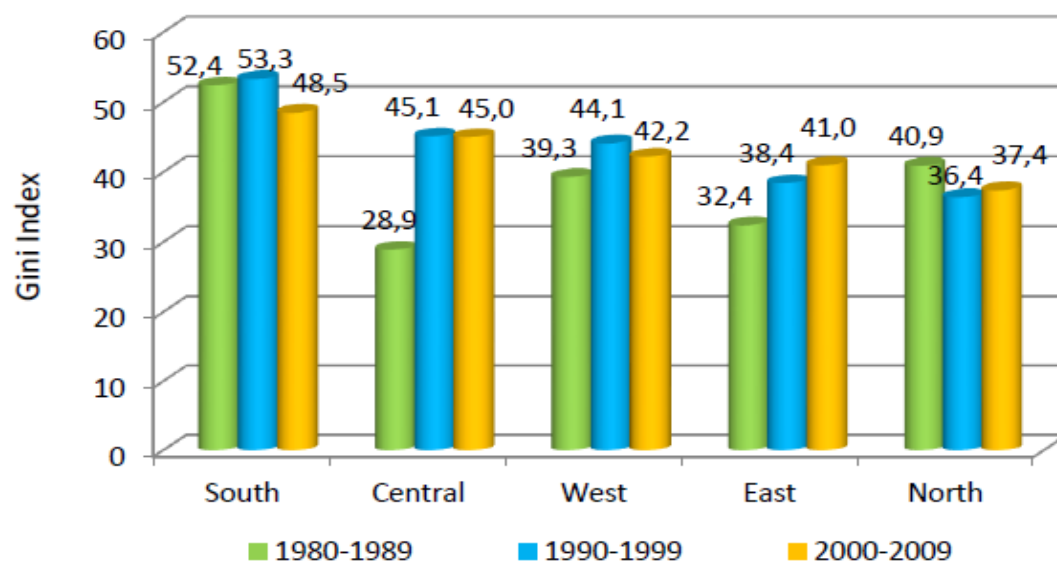
a result of increasing inequality within developing countries, especially in Latin America and Africa, which have the highest rates on inequality by region. Underlying this argument is an established body of literature which addresses the role of post-colonial elites in fostering certain types of economic and political systems, allowing these elites to maintain control and power. Growth in such countries thus is likely to benefit few, leaving the majority in poverty, both in comparison to the national elites and in international comparison. If we consider population-weighted international inequality, levels of between-country inequality have dropped over the past 70 years. This drop is largely due to the growing middle and upper classes in Asia and, to a lesser extent, Latin America. As such, the middle and especially upper classes in different countries have become more alike, which (arithmetically) leads to a drop in the measured inequality between countries. In this thesis I explore country-level differences in economic inequality, largely as control variables.

Appendix 2: Top 10% income shares from 1980 to 2016 (out of the total share of national income).³⁷¹



³⁷¹ Taken from World Inequality Lab (2018)

Appendix 3: Regional Gini co-efficient (per decade) for African regions 1980 – 2009.



Source: World Development Indicators

Appendix 4: Factors explaining between country inequality and change.

It is commonly held today that historical changes of income inequality in developed countries are the result of changing returns of skills, and government responses to these changing returns. By the same logic, inequality between countries reflect differences in the distribution of skills / (Glaeser, 2008). The divergent effects of the industrial revolution in the 19th century and the structural changes in the 1970s and 1980s reshaped how economies function and who benefits how much within the economies (Strange, 1996, 2015) . Such structural economic shifts may explain how developed economies diverged from the rest of the world but fail to account for divergence among the rest.

Many explanations of historical income inequality between countries focus on the dispersion of skills. In this argument, income inequality *within* countries is influenced by how diverse people's skills are within a population. Income inequality *between* countries is informed by varying levels of skills across countries. Culture and religion are often referred to as 'root-factors' in explaining the historic origins of income inequality. Proponents of this approach emphasize the importance of education in stimulating skills.³⁷² Especially *protestant culture*, in which the protestant church encouraged literacy to allow study of the bible, created such skills by establishing schools and providing education across the population. Such low educational inequality allowed protestant cultures to develop earlier and faster than other cultures.

Related to the notion of the protestant culture, is the argument that income inequality between countries is strongly influenced by the "juxtaposition of ethnicities with different educational traditions", especially depending on whether countries were made up of primarily Europeans or mixtures of Europeans and non-Europeans (Glaeser, 2008). In ethnically homogenous countries with small European elites, educational systems favored the European elite, but post-colonial systems were inclusive and inequality is comparatively low today. Asian states with small European elites, such as Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea are examples of such cases. In heterogenous societies, colonial education systems often extended only to chosen groups. After independence, many educational systems upheld such exclusionary systems. Such countries, among which are many African cases, are especially unequal today (Glaeser, 2008).

Beyond arguments of skills dispersion, studies have also emphasized local factors or 'endowments'. Engerman and Sokoloff (2002) find that countries which were conducive to cultivating cash crops were and are more unequal, as cash crops allowed for small (European) elites to pay for labor and slaves to farm crops leading to immense concentration of wealth.

³⁷² The argument of the 'protestant ethic' goes far beyond the points made here. See Weber (2002).

For a critical evaluation of 'the protestant ethic' in economic history, see Becker and Woessmann (2009). For a review of the role of educational attainment in economic development in the European context, see Becker et al. (2011).

Acemoglu et al. (2001, 2002), meanwhile, argue that early settler mortality played an important role, as colonial powers would introduce extractive colonial regimes in countries with high mortality rate and set up stronger, institution-based colonies in countries with low mortality rate. The relevance of institutions in explaining the relation between natural endowments and development (from which between-country inequality is argued to stem) is also stressed by Easterly & Levine (2003) and Rodrick et al. (2004). These studies emphasize that natural endowments affect economic development only *through* their impact on institutions; however, other studies claim to find direct effects, too.³⁷³ Institutional explanations are particularly helpful in understanding the continuation and stability of levels of inequality between countries. This is because institutions are slow to change. Increasingly, economic factors too, such as global prices of staples and commodities, efficiency of domestic firms, and exchange rates, also influence how well or badly countries are doing, relatively.

³⁷³ See: Gallup et al. (1999); McArthur & Sachs (2001); Sachs (2003)

2. Appendix of Chapter 2

Appendix 1: Case numbers and field work dates for Round 7 Afrobarometer surveys.

	N	Start date	End date
Benin	1200	24.12.16	02.01.17
Botswana	1198	21.06.17	05.07.17
Burkina Faso	1200	02.10.17	18.10.17
Cabo Verde	1200	20.11.17	06.12.17
Cameroon	1202	07.05.18	25.05.18
Côte d'Ivoire	1200	30.12.16	11.01.17
eSwatini	1200	13.03.18	28.03.18
Gabon	1199	02.11.17	14.11.17
Gambia	1200	23.07.18	12.08.18
Ghana	2400	09.09.17	25.09.17
Guinea	1193	13.05.17	31.05.17
Kenya	1599	13.09.16	08.10.16
Lesotho	1200	25.11.17	11.12.17
Liberia	1200	19.06.18	16.07.18
Madagascar	1200	20.01.18	26.02.18
Malawi	1200	26.12.16	14.02.17
Mali	1200	08.02.17	24.02.17
Mauritius	1200	30.09.17	01.11.17
Morocco	1200	13.05.18	28.05.18
Mozambique	2392	13.06.18	03.09.18
Namibia	1200	06.11.17	21.12.17
Niger	1200	13.04.18	30.04.18
Nigeria	1600	26.04.17	10.05.17
São Tomé and Príncipe	1200	29.06.18	22.07.18
Senegal	1200	02.12.17	19.12.17
Sierra Leone	1200	06.07.18	28.07.18
South Africa	1829	30.07.18	26.09.18
Sudan	1200	22.07.18	25.08.18
Tanzania	2400	30.04.17	17.06.17
Togo	1200	11.11.17	23.11.17
Tunisia	1199	31.03.18	07.05.18
Uganda	1200	26.12.16	08.01.17
Zambia	1200	08.04.17	25.04.17
Zimbabwe	1200	28.01.17	10.02.17

Appendix 2: Variables used in chapter 2.

2.1 Independent variable – perceived lived inequality (Source: Afrobarometer R7)

Question Number: Q5

Question: In general, how do you rate your living conditions compared to those of other [ENTER NATIONALITY]?

Variable Label: Q5. Your living conditions vs. others

Values: 1-5, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 1=Much worse, 2=Worse, 3=Same, 4=Better, 5=Much better, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

2.2 Variables used in sections 4 and 5 (Source: Afrobarometer R7)

a. Lived Poverty Index

Question Number: Q8A

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough food to eat?

Variable Label: Q8a. How often gone without food

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Question Number: Q8B

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough clean water for home use?

Variable Label: Q8b. How often gone without water

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Question Number: Q8C

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without medicines or medical treatment?

Variable Label: Q8c. How often gone without medical care

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Question Number: Q8D

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough fuel to cook your food?

Variable Label: Q8d. How often gone without cooking fuel

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing
Source: SAB

Question Number: Q8E

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without a cash income?

Variable Label: Q8e. How often gone without cash income

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

b. Asset index

Question Number: Q89A

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Radio?

Variable Label: Q89a. Own radio

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

Question Number: Q89B

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Television?

Variable Label: Q89b. Own television

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

Question Number: Q89C

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Motor vehicle or motorcycle?

Variable Label: Q89c. Own motor vehicle, car, or motorcycle

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

Question Number: Q89D

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Computer?

Variable Label: Q89d. Own computer

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 7

Question Number: Q89E

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Bank account?

Variable Label: Q89e. Own bank account

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 7

Question Number: Q89F

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Mobile phone?

Variable Label: Q89f. Own mobile phone

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

c. General means of income

Question Number: Q9

Question: Considering ALL the activities you engage in to secure a livelihood, how much, if at all, do you depend on receiving money from relatives or friends working in other countries?

Variable Label: Q9. How dependent on receiving remittances

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=Not at all/Does not receive remittances, 1=A little bit, 2=Somewhat, 3=A lot, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 7

Question Number: Q94

Question: Do you have a job that pays a cash income? [If yes, ask] Is it full-time or part-time? [If no, ask:] Are you presently looking for a job?

Variable Label: Q94. Employment status

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=No, not looking, 1=No, looking, 2=Yes, part time, 3=Yes, full time, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 5

d. Political treatment

Question Number: Q85A

Question: How often, if ever, are _____s [R's Ethnic Group] treated unfairly by the government?

Variable Label: Q85a. Ethnic group treated unfairly

Values: 0-3, 7-9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Sometimes, 2=Often, 3=Always, 7=Not applicable, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Note: If respondent did not identify any group on Q84—that is, if they “Refused” (9998), said “Don't know” (9999), or National identity only” (9990)—then the interviewer marked “Not applicable” for questions Q85A-Q85B and continued to question 86.

Question Number: Q42D

Question: In your opinion, how often, in this country: Are people treated unequally under the law?

Variable Label: Q42d. How often people treated unequally

Values: 0-3, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Rarely, 2=Often, 3=Always, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 2

Question Number: Q50

Question: In general, when dealing with public officials, how much do you feel that they treat you with respect?

Variable Label: Q50. Respected by public officials

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=Not at all, 1=A little bit, 2=Somewhat, 3=A lot, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 7

Question Number: Q51

Question: In general, when dealing with public officials, do you think that they treat you better, the same, or worse than other people?

Variable Label: Q51. Treatment by public officials compared to others

Values: 0-4, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=Much Worse, 1=Worse, 2=Same, 3=Better, 4=Much Better, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 7

e. Incumbent supporter

Question Number: Q88A

Question: Do you feel close to any particular political party?

Variable Label: Q88a. Close to political party

Values: 0-1, 8, 9, 99, -1

Value Labels: 0=No, not close to any party, 1=Yes, feels close to a party, 8=Refused to answer, 9=Don't know, 99=Not asked in the country, -1=Missing

Source: Zambia 96

Question Number: Q88B

Question: Which party is that?

Variable Label: Q88b. Which party

Values: 100-106, 140-144, 146, 180-182, 184-185, 187-193, 220-221, 226-227, 261-265, 267, 300-309, 340-349, 352-354, 380-410, 422, 424-425, 428-429, 432-435, 437-438, 440-441, 443, 461-464, 467, 471, 474, 500-503, 505-517, 540-544, 580, 582-585, 587-594, 620-626, 631, 634, 638-640, 642-643, 660-665, 669, 671-672, 674, 677-679, 684-686, 700, 702, 704-705, 708, 711-712, 716, 726, 740-742, 744, 476, 758, 780-782, 784, 788, 790-791, 821, 823, 825-828, 860-864, 866-867, 900-904, 906, 908-909, 930-943, 1100-1111, 1140-1145, 1148-1151, 1220-1224, 1260-1263, 1265-1266, 1268-1269, 1300-1308, 1500-1508, 1540-1546, 1580-1589, 1660-1664, 1700-1704, 1740-1748, 9995, 9997-9999, 9996, -1

Value Labels: 100=Nouveau Départ, 101=Union fait la Nation (UN), 102=Renaissance du Bénin (RB), 103=Parti du Renouveau Démocratique (PRD), 104=Force Cauris pour un Bénin Emergent (FCBE), 105=Alliance ABT, 106=PIK-Nouvelle conscience, 140=Botswana Congress Party (BCP), 141=Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), 142=Botswana Movement For Democracy (BMD), 143=Botswana National Front (BNF), 144=Botswana People's Party (BPP), 146=Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC+), 180=ADF/RDA (Alliance pour la démocratie et la fédération/Rassem, 181=CDP (Congrès pour la démocratie et le progrès) de Achille TA, 182=Le Faso Autrement de Ablassé OUEDRAOGO, 184=MPP (Mouvement du Peuple pour le Progrès) de Roch Marc Chris, 185=NAFA (Nouvelle Alliance du Faso) de Rasmané OUEDRAOGO, 187=ODT (Organisation pour la Démocratie et le Travail) de Maham, 188=PAREN (Parti de la Renaissance Nationale) de Laurent BADO, 189=PDS/Metba (Parti pour la Démocratie et le Socialisme) de Phi, 190=RDS (Rassemblement pour la Démocratie et le Socialisme) de O, 191=UBN (Union pour un Burkina Nouveau) de Djemdjoada Amadou DIC, 192=UNIR/PS (Union pour la renaissance/Parti sankariste) de Me B, 193=UPC (Union pour le Progrès et le Changement) de Zéphirin DIA, 220=Movement for Democracy (MPD), 221=African Party for

Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV), 226=Cape Verdean Union Independent and Democratic (UCID), 227=Popular Party (PP), 260=Convention People's Party (CPP), 261=National Democratic Congress (NDC), 262=New Patriotic Party (NPP), 263=People's National Convention (PNC), 264=Progressive People's Party (PPP), 265=Democratic People's Party (DPP), 267=National Democratic Party (NDP), 300=Kenya Social Congress (KSC), 301=NARC Kenya, 302=Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), 303=Restore and Build Kenya (RBK), 304=SAFINA party, 305=The National Alliance (TNA), 306=United Democratic Front (UDF), 307=United Republican Party (URP), 308=Wiper Democratic Movement (WDM-K), 309=Jubilee Alliance Party (JAP)/Jubilee Party, 340=Democratic Congress (DC), 341=All Basotho Convention (ABC), 342=Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD), 343=Basotho National Party (BNP), 344=Popular Front for Democracy (PFD), 345=National Independent Party (NIP), 346=Lesotho People's Congress (LPC), 348=Marematlou Freedom Party (MFP), 349=Basotho Congress Party (BCP), 352=Alliance of Democrats (AD), 353=Movement for Economic Change (MEC), 354=Reformed Congress of Lesotho (RCL), 382=Alliance of Peace and Democracy (APD) – UPP & LPP, 383=National Democratic Coalition (NDC), 384=Liberty Party (LP), 386=Unity Party (UP), 387=National Democratic Party of Liberia (NDPL), 389=Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC), 393=All Liberia Coalition Party (ALCOP), 394=Liberia Reconstruction Party (LRP), 395=National Union for Democratic Progress (NUDP), 400=Victory for Change (VCP), 408=All Liberian Party (ALP), 409=People Unification Party (PUP), 410=Alternative National Congress (ANC), 422=AME (Antoko Miombon'Ezaka), 424=AREMA (Antokin'ny REvolisiona Malagasy), 425=AVI (Asa Vita no Ifampitsarana), 428=LEADER FANILO (Libéralisme Economique et Action DEMocratique pour la Réconciliation), 429=Mahaleo tena, 432=MDM (Miara Mientana ho an'ny Demokrasia), 433=MONIMA (MOuvement National pour l'Indépendance de Madagascar), 434=MTS (Malagasy Tonga Saina), 435=RPSD-Vaovao (Rassemblement pour la Social Démocratie), 437=TGV (Tanora malaGasy Vonona), 438=TIM (Tiako i Madagasikara), 440=MAPAR (Miaraka Amin'ny Prezida Andry Rajoelina), 441=HVM (Hery Vaovao ho an'i Madagasikara), 443=MMM (Malagasy Miara-Miainga), 461=Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), 462=Malawi Forum for Unity and Development (MAFUNDE), 463=Malawi Congress Party (MCP), 464=National Salvation Front (NSF), 467=People's Party (PP), 471=United Democratic Front (UDF), 474=United Independent Party (UIP), 500=ADEMA – PASJ / Dionkounda Traoré / Tiémoko Sangaré, 501=ADP – Maliba / Boubacar Diallo, 502=ASMA – CFP / Soumeylou Boubèye Maïga, 503=CDS – Mogo Tigiya / Mamadou Blaise Sangaré, 505=CNID – Faso Yiriwa Ton / Mountaga Tall, 506=CODEM / Ousséni Amion Guindo ou Poulô, 507=FARE – An Ka Wuli / Modibo Sidibé, 508=MIRIA / mamdou Kassa Traoré, 509=MPR / Choguel Kokala Maïga, 510=PARENA / Tiébilé Dramé, 511=PDES / ATT, 512=RPM / Ibrahim Boubacar Kéïta ou IBK, 513=SADI / Oumar Mariko / Cheick Oumar Sissoko, 514=UDD / Tiéman Hubert Coulibaly, 515=UM-RDA / Badara Aliou Macalou, 516=URD / Soumaïla Cissé, 517=YELEMA / Moussa Mara, 540=Frelimo (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique), 541=Renamo (Resistência Nacional Moçambicana), 542=MDM (Movimento Democrático Moçambicano), 543=PDD (Partido para Paz, Democracia e Desenvolvimento), 580=APP (All People's Party), 582=COD (Congress of Democrats), 583=DPN (Democratic Party of Namibia), 584=DTA (DTA of Namibia), 585=MAG (Monitor Action Group), 587=NEFF (Namibia Economic Freedom Fighters), 588=NUDO (National Unity Democratic Organisation of Namibia), 589=RDP (Rally for Democracy and Progress), 590=RP (Republican Party of Namibia), 591=SWANU (Swanu of Namibia), 592=SWAPO (SWAPO Party of Namibia), 593=UDF (United Democratic Front of Namibia), 594=UPM (United People's Movement), 620=Advanced Congress of Democrats (ACD), 621=All Progressive Congres (APC), 622=Alliance for Democracy (AD), 623=African Democratic Congress (ADC), 624=All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP), 625=All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), 626=All People's Party (APP), 628=Conscience People's Congress (CPC), 631=Democratic People's Party (DPP), 634=Labour Party (LP), 638=People's Democratic Party (PDP), 639=Progressive People's Alliance (PPA), 640=Peoples Progressive Party (PPP), 642=People's Salvation Party (PSP), 643=Social Democratic Mega Party, 660=Abdoulaye WADE (Parti Démocratique Sénégalais), 661=Ousmane Tanor DIENG (Parti Socialiste), 662=Moustapha NIASSE (Alliance des Forces du Progrès), 663=Macky SALL (Alliance Pour la République), 664=Idrissa SECK (REWMI), 665=Diégane SENE (Union pour le Renouveau Démocratique), 669=JEF JEL, 671=Abdoulaye BALDE (UCS), 672=Malick GAKOU (Grand Parti), 674=Serigne Mansour SY DJAMIL (Beuss du Niak), 677=Abdoul MBAYE (ACT), 678=Ousmane SONKO (Pastef), 679=Macky SALL (Benno Book

Yakaar, 684=Serigne Modou KARA MBACKE (Parti de la vérité pour le dévelo, 685=El Hadji Issa SALL (PUR), 686=Khalifa SALL (Manko Taxawou Sénégal), 700=African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP), 702=African National Congress (ANC), 704=Congress of the People (COPE), 705=Democratic Alliance (DA), 708=Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), 711=New National Party / Nuwe Nasionale Party (NNP), 712=Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), 716=Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), 726=National Freedom Party (NFP), 740=Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM), 741=The Civic United Front (CUF), 742=Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA), 744=National Convention for Construction and Reform (NCCR – MAGEUZI), 746=United People's Democratic Party (UPDP), 758=Alliance for Change and Transparency (ACT-Wazalendo), 780=National Resistance Movement [NRM], 781=Forum for Democratic Change [FDC], 782=Democratic Party [DP], 784=Uganda Peoples Congress [UPC], 788=The Justice Forum (JEEMA), 790=Go Foward, 791=Uganda Farmers Party, 821=Forum for Democracy & Development (FDD), 823=Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), 825=National Restoration Party (NAREP), 826=Patriotic Front (PF), 827=United National Independence Party (UNIP), 828=United Party for National Development (UPND), 860=Movement for Democratic Change- Tsvangirai [MDC-T], 861=Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front [ZANU-PF], 862=Movement for Democratic Change –Mutambara [MDC-M], 863=Mavambo. Kusile. Dawn [MKD] – Simba Makoni, 864=Zimbabwe African People's Union- Dabengwa [ZAPU-Dabengwa], 866=MDC People's Democratic Party [Tendai Biti], 867=Zimbabwe People First [ZIMPF] – Joice Mujuru, 900=Mouvement Socialiste Mauricien, 901=Mouvement Libérateur (ML), 902=Parti Mauricien Social Democrate, 903=Parti Travailleiste, 904=Mouvement Millitant Mauricien, 906=Front Solidarité Mauricien (FSM), 908=Organisation du Peuple Rodriguais (OPR), 909=Mouvement Rodriguais (MR), 930=Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), 931=All People's Congress (APC), 932=People's Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC), 933=National Democratic Alliance (NDA), 936=Coalition for Change Party (C4C), 937=National Grand Coalition (NGC), 1100=Alliance Nigérienne pour la Démocratie et le Progrès (ANDP Zaman Lahiya), 1101=Convention Démocratique et Sociale (CDS Rahama), 1102=Mouvement National pour la Société de Développement (MNSD Nassara), 1103=Mouvement Démocratique Nigérien pour une Fédération Africaine (MODEN FA Lumana), 1104=Parti Nigérien pour la Démocratie et le Socialisme (PNDS Tarayya), 1105=Parti Nigérien pour l'Auto gestion (PNA Al'Oumat, 1106=Rassemblement pour la Démocratie et le Progrès (RDP Jama'a), 1107=Rassemblement Social Démocrate (RSD Gaskia), 1108=Union pour la Démocratie et le Progrès Social (UDPS Amana), 1109=Mouvement Patriotique Nigérien (MPN-Kishin Kassa), 1110=MPR Jamhuriya, 1111=Ingantchi, 1140=UNIR (Union pour la République) de Faure Essozimna Gnassingb, 1141=UFC (Union des Forces de Changement) de Gilchrist Olympio, 1142=ANC (Alliance Nationale pour le Changement) de Jean-Pierre F, 1143=CAR (Comité d'Action pour le Renouveau) de Me Yaovi Agboyibo, 1144=CDPA (Convention Démocratique des Peuples Africains) du Prof, 1145=PRR (Parti du Renouveau et de la Rédemption) de Nicolas Laws, 1148=ADDI (Alliance des Démocrates pour le Développement Intégral, 1149=CST (Collectif « Sauvons le Togo »), 1150=Arc-en-Ciel, 1151=PNP (Parti National Panafricain de Tikpi Atchadam), 1220=Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM), 1221=Social Democratic Front (SDF), 1222=National Union For Democracy and Progress (UNDP), 1223=Union Démocratique du Cameroun (UDC), 1224=Mouvment for Progressiste (MP), 1260=Rassemblement des Républicains (RDR, 1261=Parti Démocratique de Cote d'Ivoire (PDCI), 1262=Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI), 1263=Union pour la Démocratie et pour la Paix en Cote d'Ivoire (U, 1265=Mouvement des Forces d'Avenir (MFA), 1266=Parti Ivoirien des Travailleurs (PIT), 1268=Union Pour la Cote d'Ivoire (UPCI), 1269=RHDP, 1300=Rassemblement du Peuple de Guinée (RPG), 1301=Union des Forces Démocratiques de Guinée (UFDG), 1302=Union des Forces Républicaines (UFR), 1303=Parti de l'Espoir pour le Développement National (PEDN), 1304=Union pour le Progrès de la Guinée (UPG), 1305=Rassemblement pour le Développement Intégré de la Guinée (RDIG), 1306=Bloc Libéral (BL), 1307=Union Démocratique de Guinée (UDG), 1308=Dadis, 1500=The Justice and Development Party (PJD), 1501=The Authenticity and Modernity Party (PAM), 1502=Istiqlal Party (PI), 1503=The National Rally of Independents (RNI), 1504=The Popular Movement (MP), 1505=Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USSP), 1506=The Constitutional Union (UC), 1507=Party of Progress and Socialism (PPS), 1508=Social and Democratic Movement (MDS), 1540=National Congress Party, 1541=Umma party, 1542=Democratic Unionist Party, 1543=Popular Congress Party, 1544=Communist Party, 1545=Sudanese congress Party, 1546=National Movement for Reform and Development,

1580=Nidaa Tounes, 1581=Ennahdha, 1582=The Free Patriotic Union, 1583=The Popular Front, 1584=Afek tounes, 1585=Tunisia Al Irada Movement (Hirak), 1586=The initiative, 1587=The people's Movement, 1588=The democratic current, 1589=Machrou3=Tounes, 1660=Acção Democrática e Independente (ADI), 1661=Movimento para a Libertação de S. Tomé e Príncipe (MLSTP/PSD), 1662=Partido da Convergência Democrática (PCD), 1663=Movimento para a Mudança e Progresso do Príncipe, 1664=União Democrática dos Cidadãos para a Mudança e Desenvolvimento (UDD), 1700=PDG (Parti Démocratique Gabonais), 1701=UN (Union Nationale), 1702=UPG (Union du Peuple Gabonais), 1703=CLR (Centre des Libéraux Réformateurs), 1704=DN (Démocratie Nouvelle), 1740=Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction (APRC), 1741=Gambia Democratic Congress (GDC), 1742=National Reconciliation Party (NRP), 1743=People's Democratic Organisation for Independence and Socialism (PDOIS), 1744=People's Progressive Party (PPP), 1745=Gambia Party for Democracy and Progress (GPDP), 1746=National Convention Party (NCP), 1747=Gambia Moral Congress (GMC), 1748=United Democratic Party (UDP), 9995=Other, 9997=Not applicable, 9998=Refused to answer, 9999=Don't know, 9996=Not asked in the country, -1=Missing

f. Physical wellbeing

Question Number: Q10A

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Felt unsafe walking in your neighborhood?

Variable Label: Q10a. How often felt unsafe walking in neighbourhood

Values: 0-4, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice 2=Several times 3=Many times 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Adapted from NDB

Question Number: Q11A

Question: During the past year, have you or anyone in your family: Had something stolen from your house?

Variable Label: Q11a. Had something stolen from your house

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=No, 1=Yes, once, 2=Yes, twice, 3=Yes, three or more times, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Adapted from NDB

Note: Interviewer was instructed to follow up by asking, "Did this happen once, twice, or three or more times?" if the respondent answered yes initially.

g. Absolute living situation

Question Number: Q4B

Question: In general, how would you describe: Your own present living conditions?

Variable Label: Q4B. Your present living conditions

Values: 1-5, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Much worse, 2=Worse, 3=Same, 4=Better, 5=Much better, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

2.3 Control variables

a. Location

Question Number: URBRUR

Question: PSU/EA

Variable Label: Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit

Values: 1-3, 460

Value Labels: 1=Urban, 2=Rural, 3=Semi-Urban, 460=Peri-Urban

Note: Answered by interviewer

b. Education

Question Number: Q97

Question: What is your highest level of education?

Variable Label: Q97. Education of respondent

Values: 0-9, 99, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=No formal schooling, 1=Informal schooling only (including Koranic schooling), 2=Some primary schooling, 3=Primary school completed, 4=Intermediate school or Some secondary school / high school, 5=Secondary school / high school completed, 6=Post-secondary qualifications, other than university e.g. a diploma or degree from a polytechnic or college, 7=Some university, 8=University completed, 9=Post-graduate, 99=Don't know [Do not read], 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

c. Age

Question Number: Q1

Question: How old are you?

Variable Label: Q1. Age

Values: 18- 99, 103, 106, 998, 999, -1

Value Labels: 998=Refused, 999=Don't Know , -1=Missing

d. Gender

Question Number: Q101

Question: Respondent's gender

Variable Label: Q101. Gender of respondent

Values: 1, 2, -1

Value Labels: 1=Male, 2=Female, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Note: Answered by interviewer

3. Appendix of Chapter 3

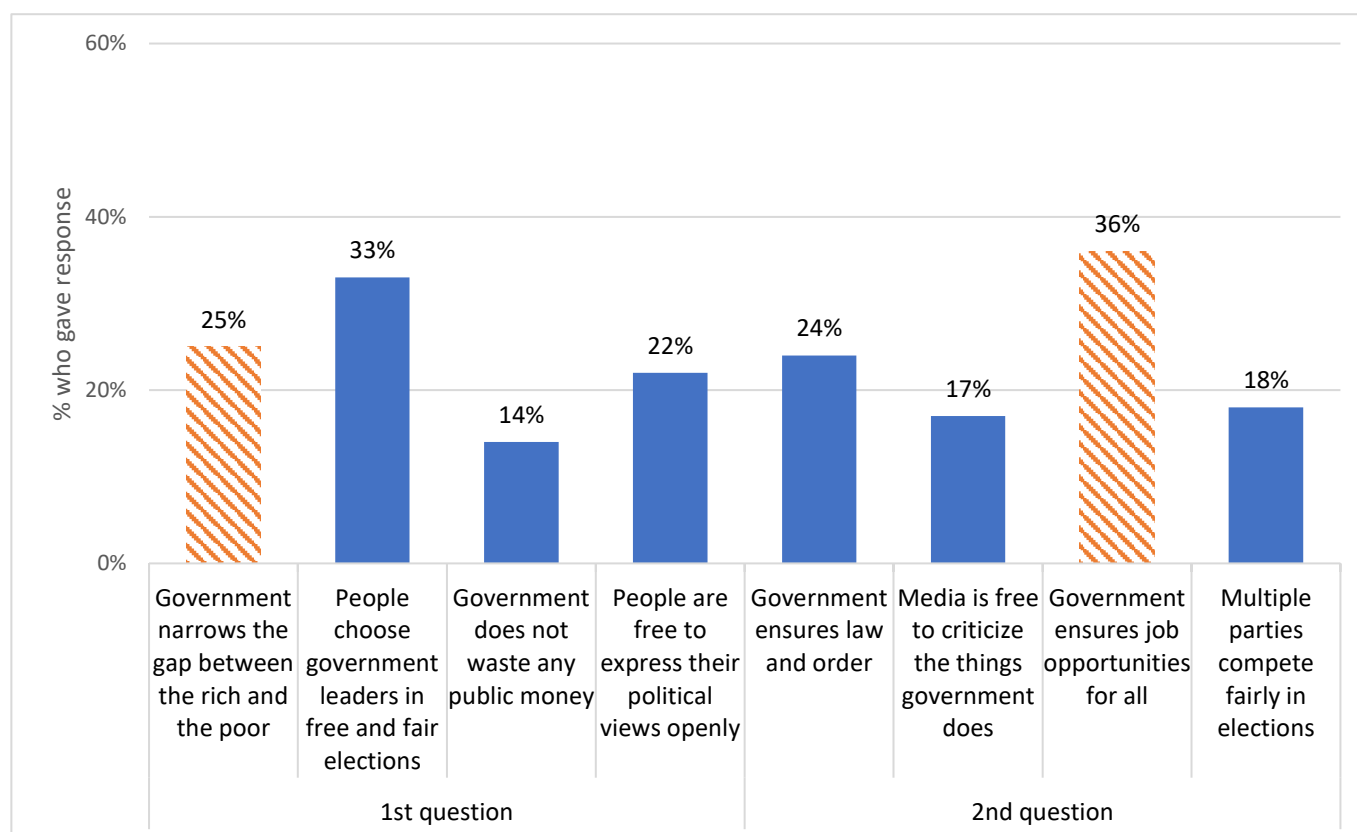
Appendix 1: Most essential characteristic of democracy (Afrobarometer Round 5).

In round 5 of the Afrobarometer survey, respondents were asked:

Many things may be desirable, but not all of them are essential characteristics of democracy. If you have to choose only one of the things that I am going to read, which one would you choose as the most essential characteristic of democracy?

Respondents were asked the same question twice and each time given four answer options, as well as the possibility to say 'none of these' or 'don't know'. The descriptive results of the answers given to both questions are displayed in the figure below. Percentages can only be compared to other frequencies within the same question, not across the two questions.

Figure 1: What respondents say is the most essential characteristic of democracy



Appendix 2: Variables used in the analyses of Chapter 3 (Source: Afrobarometer R7).

2.1 Independent variable: Perceived relative living situation

Question Number: Q5

Question: In general, how do you rate your living conditions compared to those of other [ENTER NATIONALITY]?

Variable Label: Q5. Your living conditions vs. others

Values: 1-5, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 1=Much worse, 2=Worse, 3=Same, 4=Better, 5=Much better, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

2.2 Dependent variables

a. Support for Democracy

Question Number: Q30

Question: Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion?

Statement 1: Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government.

Statement 2: In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable.

Statement 3: For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have.

Variable Label: Q30. Support for democracy

Values: 1-3, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Statement 3: Doesn't matter, 2=Statement 2: Sometimes non-democratic preferable, 3=Statement 1: Democracy preferable, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Note: Interviewer was instructed to "read the question in the language of the interview, but always read 'democracy' in English. Translate 'democracy' into local language only if respondent does not understand English term."

b. Demand for democracy

Question Number: Q28A

Question: There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives: Only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office?

Variable Label: Q28a. Reject one-party rule

Values: 1-5, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Strongly disapprove, 2=Disapprove, 3=Neither approve nor disapprove, 4=Approve, 5=Strongly approve, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q28B

Question: There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives: The army comes in to govern the country?

Variable Label: Q28b. Reject military rule

Values: 1-5, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Strongly disapprove, 2=Disapprove, 3=Neither approve nor disapprove, 4=Approve, 5=Strongly approve, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q28C

Question: There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives: Elections and Parliament are abolished so that the President can decide everything?

Variable Label: Q28c.Reject one-man rule

Values: 1-5, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Strongly disapprove, 2=Disapprove, 3=Neither approve nor disapprove, 4=Approve, 5=Strongly approve, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing.

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

2.3 Competing explanations

a. Lived Poverty Index

Question Number: Q8A

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough food to eat?

Variable Label: Q8a. How often gone without food

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Question Number: Q8B

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough clean water for home use?

Variable Label: Q8b. How often gone without water

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Question Number: Q8C

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without medicines or medical treatment?

Variable Label: Q8c.How often gone without medical care

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Question Number: Q8D

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough fuel to cook your food?

Variable Label: Q8d. How often gone without cooking fuel

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Question Number: Q8E

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without a cash income?

Variable Label: Q8e. How often gone without cash income

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

b. Asset index

Question Number: Q89A

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Radio?

Variable Label: Q89a. Own radio

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

Question Number: Q89B

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Television?

Variable Label: Q89b. Own television

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

Question Number: Q89C

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Motor vehicle or motorcycle?

Variable Label: Q89c. Own motor vehicle, car, or motorcycle

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

Question Number: Q89D

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Computer?

Variable Label: Q89d. Own computer

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 7

Question Number: Q89E

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Bank account?

Variable Label: Q89e. Own bank account

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 7

Question Number: Q89F

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Mobile phone?

Variable Label: Q89f. Own mobile phone

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

c. Freedoms Index

Question Number: Q42A

Question: In your opinion, how often, in this country: Do people have to be careful of what they say about politics?

Variable Label: Q42a. How often careful what you say

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Rarely, 2=Often, 3=Always, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Question Number: Q42B

Question: In your opinion, how often, in this country: Do people have to be careful about what political organizations they join?

Variable Label: Q42b. How often careful which organizations joined

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, 99, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Rarely, 2=Often, 3=Always, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, 99=Not asked in the country, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 7

Question Number: Q42C

Question: In your opinion, how often, in this country: Do people have to be careful about how they vote in an election?

Variable Label: Q42c. How often careful how vote

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Rarely, 2=Often, 3=Always, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 7

d. Free elections

Question Number: Q23

Question: On the whole, how would you rate the freeness and fairness of the last national election, held in [20xx]. Was it:

Variable Label: Q23. Freeness and fairness of the last national election

Values: 1-4, 8, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Not free and fair, 2=Free and fair, with major problems, 3=Free and fair, but with minor problems, 4=Completely free and fair, 8=Do not understand the question, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

Notes: Year of last national election was inserted in each country. See country questionnaires for details.

e. Economic performance index

Question Number: Q56A

Question: Now let's speak about the present government of this country. How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Managing the economy?

Variable Label: Q56a. Handling managing the economy

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56B

Question: Now let's speak about the present government of this country. How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Improving the living standards of the poor.

Variable Label: Q56b. Handling improving living standards of the poor

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 4

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56C

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Creating jobs?

Variable Label: Q56c. Handling creating jobs

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56D

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Keeping prices down?

Variable Label: Q56d. Handling keeping prices down

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

f. Service delivery index

Question Number: Q56F

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Reducing crime?

Variable Label: Q56f. Handling reducing crime

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very Badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56G

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Improving basic health services?

Variable Label: Q56g. Handling improving basic health services

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56H

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Addressing educational needs?

Variable Label: Q56h. Handling addressing educational needs

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56I

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Providing water and sanitation services?

Variable Label: Q56i. Handling providing water and sanitation services

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56J

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Ensuring everyone has enough to eat?

Variable Label: Q56j. Handling ensuring enough to eat

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

g. Government handling inequality

Question Number: Q56E

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Narrowing gaps between rich and poor?

Variable Label: Q56e. Handling narrowing income gaps

Values: 1-4, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

h. Performance of the President

Question Number: Q58A

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the following people have performed their jobs over the past twelve months, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? [NAME OF PRESIDENT]

Variable Label: Q58a. Performance: President

Values: 1-4, 7, 9, 8, 99, -1

Value Labels: 1=Strongly disapprove, 2=disapprove, 3=Approve, 4=Strongly approve, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 8=Refused to answer, 99=Not asked in the country, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

* The question asked about the most powerful executive role in the country, whether the President or the Prime Minister. If there was a secondary leader, those are included in country-specific questions. Refer to country data sets.

* The following countries asked about their President: BEN, BFO, BOT, CAM, CDI, CVE, GAB, GAM, GHA, GUI, KEN, LIB, MAD, MLI, MLW, MOZ, NAM, NGR, NIG, SAF, SEN, STP, SRL, SUD, TAN, TOG, UGA, ZAM, ZIM

* The following countries asked about their Prime Minister: LES, MAU, MRC, TUN

* Not asked in Swaziland/eSwatini.

i. Direction of country

Question Number: Q3

Question: Let's start with your general view about the current direction of our country. Some people might think the country is going in the wrong direction. Others may feel it is going in the right direction. So let me ask YOU about the overall direction of the country: Would you say that the country is going in the wrong direction or going in the right direction?

Variable Label: Q3. Overall direction of the country

Values: 1, 2, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 1=Going in the wrong direction, 2=Going in the right direction 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB, Zambia96

j. Incumbent supporter

Question Number: Q88A

Question: Do you feel close to any particular political party?

Variable Label: Q88a. Close to political party

Values: 0-1, 8, 9, 99, -1

Value Labels: 0=No, not close to any party, 1=Yes, feels close to a party, 8=Refused to answer, 9=Don't know, 99=Not asked in the country, -1=Missing

Source: Zambia 96

Question Number: Q88B

Question: Which party is that?

Variable Label: Q88b. Which party

Values: 100-106, 140-144, 146, 180-182, 184-185, 187-193, 220-221, 226-227, 261-265, 267, 300-309, 340-349, 352-354, 380-410, 422, 424-425, 428-429, 432-435, 437-438, 440-441, 443, 461-464, 467, 471, 474, 500-503, 505-517, 540-544, 580, 582-585, 587-594, 620-626, 631, 634, 638-640, 642-643, 660-665, 669, 671- 672, 674, 677-679, 684-686, 700, 702, 704-705, 708, 711-712, 716, 726, 740-742, 744, 476, 758, 780-782, 784, 788, 790-791, 821, 823, 825-828, 860-864, 866-867, 900-904, 906, 908-909, 930-943, 1100-1111, 1140-1145, 1148-1151, 1220-1224, 1260-1263, 1265-1266, 1268-1269,

1300-1308, 1500-1508, 1540-1546, 1580-1589, 1660-1664, 1700-1704, 1740-1748, 9995, 9997-9999, 9996, -1

Value Labels: 100=Nouveau Départ, 101=Union fait la Nation (UN), 102=Renaissance du Bénin (RB), 103=Parti du Renouveau Démocratique (PRD), 104=Force Cauris pour un Bénin Emergent (FCBE), 105=Alliance ABT, 106=PIK-Nouvelle conscience, 140=Botswana Congress Party (BCP), 141=Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), 142=Botswana Movement For Democracy (BMD), 143=Botswana National Front (BNF), 144=Botswana People's Party (BPP), 146=Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC+), 180=ADF/RDA (Alliance pour la démocratie et la fédération/Rassem, 181=CDP (Congrès pour la démocratie et le progrès) de Achille TA, 182=Le Faso Autrement de Ablassé OUEDRAOGO, 184=MPP (Mouvement du Peuple pour le Progrès) de Roch Marc Chris, 185=NAFA (Nouvelle Alliance du Faso) de Rasmané OUEDRAOGO, 187=ODT (Organisation pour la Démocratie et le Travail) de Maham, 188=PAREN (Parti de la Renaissance Nationale) de Laurent BADO, 189=PDS/Metba (Parti pour la Démocratie et le Socialisme) de Phi, 190=RDS (Rassemblement pour la Démocratie et le Socialisme) de O, 191=UBN (Union pour un Burkina Nouveau) de Djemdjoada Amadou DIC, 192=UNIR/PS (Union pour la renaissance/Parti sankariste) de Me B, 193=UPC (Union pour le Progrès et le Changement) de Zéphirin DIA, 220=Movement for Democracy (MPD), 221=African Party for Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV), 226=Cape Verdean Union Independent and Democratic (UCID), 227=Popular Party (PP), 260=Convention People's Party (CPP), 261=National Democratic Congress (NDC), 262=New Patriotic Party (NPP), 263=People's National Convention (PNC), 264=Progressive People's Party (PPP), 265=Democratic People's Party (DPP), 267=National Democratic Party (NDP), 300=Kenya Social Congress (KSC), 301=NARC Kenya, 302=Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), 303=Restore and Build Kenya (RBK), 304=SAFINA party, 305=The National Alliance (TNA), 306=United Democratic Front (UDF), 307=United Republican Party (URP), 308=Wiper Democratic Movement (WDM-K), 309=Jubilee Alliance Party (JAP)/Jubilee Party, 340=Democratic Congress (DC), 341=All Basotho Convention (ABC), 342=Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD), 343=Basotho National Party (BNP), 344=Popular Front for Democracy (PFD), 345=National Independent Party (NIP), 346=Lesotho People's Congress (LPC), 348=Marematlou Freedom Party (MFP), 349=Basotho Congress Party (BCP), 352=Alliance of Democrats (AD), 353=Movement for Economic Change (MEC), 354=Reformed Congress of Lesotho (RCL), 382=Alliance of Peace and Democracy (APD) – UPP & LPP, 383=National Democratic Coalition (NDC), 384=Liberty Party (LP), 386=Unity Party (UP), 387=National Democratic Party of Liberia (NDPL), 389=Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC), 393=All Liberia Coalition Party (ALCOP), 394=Liberia Reconstruction Party (LRP), 395=National Union for Democratic Progress (NUDP), 400=Victory for Change (VCP), 408=All Liberian Party (ALP), 409=People Unification Party (PUP), 410=Alternative National Congress (ANC), 422=AME (Antoko Miombon'Ezaka), 424=AREMA (Antokin'ny REvolisiona Malagasy), 425=AVI (Asa Vita no Ifampitsarana), 428=LEADER FANILO (Libéralisme Economique et Action DEmocratique pour la Réconciliation), 429=Mahaleo tena, 432=MDM (Miara Mientana ho an'ny Demokrasia), 433=MONIMA (MOuvement National pour l'Indépendance de Madagascar), 434=MTS (Malagasy Tonga Saina), 435=RPSD-Vaovao (Rassemblement pour la Social Démocratie), 437=TGV (Tanora malaGasy Vonona), 438=TIM (Tiako i Madagasikara), 440=MAPAR (Miaraka Amin'ny Prezida Andry Rajoelina), 441=HVM (Hery Vaovao ho an'i Madagasikara), 443=MMM (Malagasy Miara-Miainga), 461=Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), 462=Malawi Forum for Unity and Development (MAFUNDE), 463=Malawi Congress Party (MCP), 464=National Salvation Front (NSF), 467=People's Party (PP), 471=United Democratic Front (UDF), 474=United Independent Party (UIP), 500=ADEMA – PASJ / Dionkounda Traoré / Tiémoko Sangaré, 501=ADP – Maliba / Boubacar Diallo, 502=ASMA – CFP / Soumeylou Boubèye Maïga, 503=CDS – Mogo Tigiya / Mamadou Blaise Sangaré, 505=CNID – Faso Yiriwa Ton / Mountaga Tall, 506=CODEM / Ousséni Amion Guindo ou Poulô, 507=FARE – An Ka Wuli / Modibo Sidibé, 508=MIRIA / mamdou Kassa Traoré, 509=MPR / Choguel Kokala Maïga, 510=PARENA / Tiébilé Dramé, 511=PDES / ATT, 512=RPM / Ibrahim Boubacar Kéïta ou IBK, 513=SADI / Oumar Mariko / Cheick Oumar Sissoko, 514=UDD / Tiéman Hubert Coulibaly, 515=UM-RDA / Badara Aliou Macalou, 516=URD / Soumaïla Cissé, 517=YELEMA / Moussa Mara, 540=Frelimo (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique), 541=Renamo (Resistência Nacional Moçambicana), 542=MDM (Movimento Democrático Moçambicano), 543=PDD (Partido para Paz, Democracia e Desenvolvimento), 580=APP (All People's Party), 582=COD (Congress of Democrats), 583=DPN

(Democratic Party of Namibia), 584=DTA (DTA of Namibia), 585=MAG (Monitor Action Group), 587=NEFF (Namibia Economic Freedom Fighters), 588=NUDO (National Unity Democratic Organisation of Namibia), 589=RDP (Rally for Democracy and Progress), 590=RP (Republican Party of Namibia), 591=SWANU (Swanu of Namibia), 592=SWAPO (SWAPO Party of Namibia), 593=UDF (United Democratic Front of Namibia), 594=UPM (United People's Movement), 620=Advanced Congress of Democrats (ACD), 621=All Progressive Congress (APC), 622=Alliance for Democracy (AD), 623=African Democratic Congress (ADC), 624=All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP), 625=All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), 626=All People's Party (APP), 628=Conscience People's Congress (CPC), 631=Democratic People's Party (DPP), 634=Labour Party (LP), 638=People's Democratic Party (PDP), 639=Progressive People's Alliance (PPA), 640=Peoples Progressive Party (PPP), 642=People's Salvation Party (PSP), 643=Social Democratic Mega Party, 660=Abdoulaye WADE (Parti Démocratique Sénégalais), 661=Ousmane Tanor DIENG (Parti Socialiste), 662=Moustapha NIASSE (Alliance des Forces du Progrès), 663=Macky SALL (Alliance Pour la République), 664=Idrissa SECK (REWMI), 665=Diégane SENE (Union pour le Renouveau Démocratique), 669=JEF JEL, 671=Abdoulaye BALDE (UCS), 672=Malick GAKOU (Grand Parti), 674=Serigne Mansour SY DJAMIL (Beuss du Niak), 677=Abdoul MBAYE (ACT), 678=Ousmane SONKO (Pastef), 679=Macky SALL (Benno Book Yakaar), 684=Serigne Modou KARA MBACKE (Parti de la vérité pour le dévelo, 685=El Hadji Issa SALL (PUR), 686=Khalifa SALL (Manko Taxawou Sénégal), 700=African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP), 702=African National Congress (ANC), 704=Congress of the People (COPE), 705=Democratic Alliance (DA), 708=Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), 711=New National Party / Nuwe Nasionale Party (NNP), 712=Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), 716=Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), 726=National Freedom Party (NFP), 740=Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM), 741=The Civic United Front (CUF), 742=Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA), 744=National Convention for Construction and Reform (NCCR – MAGEUZI), 746=United People's Democratic Party (UPDP), 758=Alliance for Change and Transparency (ACT-Wazalendo), 780=National Resistance Movement [NRM], 781=Forum for Democratic Change [FDC], 782=Democratic Party [DP], 784=Uganda Peoples Congress [UPC], 788=The Justice Forum (JEEMA), 790=Go Foward, 791=Uganda Farmers Party, 821=Forum for Democracy & Development (FDD), 823=Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), 825=National Restoration Party (NAREP), 826=Patriotic Front (PF), 827=United National Independence Party (UNIP), 828=United Party for National Development (UPND), 860=Movement for Democratic Change- Tsvangirai [MDC-T], 861=Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front [ZANU-PF], 862=Movement for Democratic Change –Mutambara [MDC-M], 863=Mavambo. Kusile. Dawn [MKD] – Simba Makoni, 864=Zimbabwe African People's Union- Dabengwa [ZAPU-Dabengwa], 866=MDC People's Democratic Party [Tendai Biti], 867=Zimbabwe People First [ZIMPF] – Joice Mujuru, 900=Mouvement Socialiste Mauricien, 901=Mouvement Libérateur (ML), 902=Parti Mauricien Social Democrate, 903=Parti Travailleiste, 904=Mouvement Millitant Mauricien, 906=Front Solidarité Mauricien (FSM), 908=Organisation du Peuple Rodriguais (OPR), 909=Mouvement Rodriguais (MR), 930=Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), 931=All People's Congress (APC), 932=People's Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC), 933=National Democratic Alliance (NDA), 936=Coalition for Change Party (C4C), 937=National Grand Coalition (NGC), 1100=Alliance Nigérienne pour la Démocratie et le Progrès (ANDP Zaman Lahiya), 1101=Convention Démocratique et Sociale (CDS Rahama), 1102=Mouvement National pour la Société de Développement (MNSD Nassara), 1103=Mouvement Démocratique Nigérien pour une Fédération Africaine (MODEN FA Lumana), 1104=Parti Nigérien pour la Démocratie et le Socialisme (PNDS Tarayya), 1105=Parti Nigérien pour l'Auto gestion (PNA Al'Oumat, 1106=Rassemblement pour la Démocratie et le Progrès (RDP Jama'a), 1107=Rassemblement Social Démocrate (RSD Gaskia), 1108=Union pour la Démocratie et le Progrès Social (UDPS Amana), 1109=Mouvement Patriotique Nigérien (MPN-Kishin Kassa), 1110=MPR Jamhuriya, 1111=Ingantchi, 1140=UNIR (Union pour la République) de Faure Essozimna Gnassingb, 1141=UFC (Union des Forces de Changement) de Gilchrist Olympio, 1142=ANC (Alliance Nationale pour le Changement) de Jean-Pierre F, 1143=CAR (Comité d'Action pour le Renouveau) de Me Yaovi Agboyibo, 1144=CDPA (Convention Démocratique des Peuples Africains) du Prof, 1145=PRR (Parti du Renouveau et de la Rédemption) de Nicolas Laws, 1148=ADDI (Alliance des Démocrates pour le Développement Intégral, 1149=CST (Collectif « Sauvons le Togo »), 1150=Arc-en-Ciel, 1151=PNP (Parti National Panafricain de Tikpi Atchadam), 1220=Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM), 1221=Social

Democratic Front (SDF), 1222=National Union For Democracy and Progress (UNDP), 1223=Union Démocratique du Cameroun (UDC), 1224=Mouvement for Progressiste (MP), 1260=Rassemblement des Républicains (RDR), 1261=Parti Démocratique de Cote d'Ivoire (PDCI), 1262=Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI), 1263=Union pour la Démocratie et pour la Paix en Cote d'Ivoire (U), 1265=Mouvement des Forces d'Avenir (MFA), 1266=Parti Ivoirien des Travailleurs (PIT), 1268=Union Pour la Cote d'Ivoire (UPCI), 1269=RHDP, 1300=Rassemblement du Peuple de Guinée (RPG), 1301=Union des Forces Démocratiques de Guinée (UFDG), 1302=Union des Forces Républicaines (UFR), 1303=Parti de l'Espoir pour le Développement National (PEDN), 1304=Union pour le Progrès de la Guinée (UPG), 1305=Rassemblement pour le Développement Intégré de la Guinée (RDIG), 1306=Bloc Libéral (BL), 1307=Union Démocratique de Guinée (UDG), 1308=Dadis, 1500=The Justice and Development Party (PJD), 1501=The Authenticity and Modernity Party (PAM), 1502=Istiqlal Party (PI), 1503=The National Rally of Independents (RNI), 1504=The Popular Movement (MP), 1505=Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USSP), 1506=The Constitutional Union (UC), 1507=Party of Progress and Socialism (PPS), 1508=Social and Democratic Movement (MDS), 1540=National Congress Party, 1541=Umma party, 1542=Democratic Unionist Party, 1543=Popular Congress Party, 1544=Communist Party, 1545=Sudanese congress Party, 1546=National Movement for Reform and Development, 1580=Nidaa Tounes, 1581=Ennahdha, 1582=The Free Patriotic Union, 1583=The Popular Front, 1584=Afek tounes, 1585=Tunisia Al Irada Movement (Hirak), 1586=The initiative, 1587=The people's Movement, 1588=The democratic current, 1589=Machrou3=Tounes, 1660=Acção Democrática e Independente (ADI), 1661=Movimento para a Libertação de S. Tomé e Príncipe (MLSTP/PSD), 1662=Partido da Convergência Democrática (PCD), 1663=Movimento para a Mudança e Progresso do Príncipe, 1664=União Democrática dos Cidadãos para a Mudança e Desenvolvimento (UDD), 1700=PDG (Parti Démocratique Gabonais), 1701=UN (Union Nationale), 1702=UPG (Union du Peuple Gabonais), 1703=CLR (Centre des Libéraux Réformateurs), 1704=DN (Démocratie Nouvelle), 1740=Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction (APRC), 1741=Gambia Democratic Congress (GDC), 1742=National Reconciliation Party (NRP), 1743=People's Democratic Organisation for Independence and Socialism (PDOIS), 1744=People's Progressive Party (PPP), 1745=Gambia Party for Democracy and Progress (GPDP), 1746=National Convention Party (NCP), 1747=Gambia Moral Congress (GMC), 1748=United Democratic Party (UDP), 9995=Other, 9997=Not applicable, 9998=Refused to answer, 9999=Don't know, 9996=Not asked in the country, -1=Missing

Source: Zambia 96

k. Trust

Question Number: Q43A

Question: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: The President?

Variable Label: Q43a. Trust president

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=Not at all, 1=Just a little, 2=Somewhat, 3=A lot, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Zambia96

* The question asked about the most powerful executive role in the country, whether the President or the Prime Minister. If there was a secondary leader, those are included in country-specific data sets.

* The following countries asked about their President: BEN, BFO, BOT, CAM, CDI, CVE, GAB, GAM, GHA, GUI, KEN, LIB, MAD, MLI, MLW, MOZ, NAM, NGR, NIG, SAF, SEN, STP, SRL, SUD, TAN, TOG, UGA, ZAM, ZIM

* The following countries asked about their Prime Minister: LES, MAU, MRC, TUN

* Not asked in SWZ

Question Number: Q43E

Question: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: The Ruling Party?

Variable Label: Q43e. Trust the ruling party

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=Not at all, 1=Just a little, 2=Somewhat, 3=A lot, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 8=Refused to answer, 99=Not asked in the country, -1=Missing

Source: Adapted from Zambia96

Question Number: Q43H

Question: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: The army?

Variable Label: Q43h. Trust army

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=Not at all, 1=Just a little, 2=Somewhat, 3=A lot, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 5

2.4 Control variables

a. Location

Question Number: URBRUR

Question: PSU/EA

Variable Label: Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit

Values: 1-3, 460

Value Labels: 1=Urban, 2=Rural, 3=Semi-Urban, 460=Peri-Urban

Note: Answered by interviewer

b. Education

Question Number: Q97

Question: What is your highest level of education?

Variable Label: Q97. Education of respondent

Values: 0-9, 99, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=No formal schooling, 1=Informal schooling only (including Koranic schooling), 2=Some primary schooling, 3=Primary school completed, 4=Intermediate school or Some secondary school / high school, 5=Secondary school / high school completed, 6=Post-secondary qualifications, other than university e.g. a diploma or degree from a polytechnic or college, 7=Some university, 8=University completed, 9=Post-graduate, 99=Don't know [Do not read], 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

c. Age

Question Number: Q1

Question: How old are you?

Variable Label: Q1. Age

Values: 18- 99, 103, 106, 998, 999, -1

Value Labels: 998=Refused, 999=Don't Know , -1=Missing

d. Gender

Question Number: Q101

Question: Respondent's gender

Variable Label: Q101. Gender of respondent

Values: 1, 2, -1

Value Labels: 1=Male, 2=Female, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Note: Answered by interviewer

Appendix 3: Share of respondents per country who feel their living situation is the 'same' as others and mean perceived lived equality score (Afrobarometer R7).

	Same	Perceived equality (mean)
Mauritius	60%	2.6
Madagascar	57%	2.5
Morocco	56%	2.5
Tunisia	54%	2.4
Cabo Verde	51%	2.5
São Tomé and Príncipe	51%	2.5
Gabon	47%	2.4
Côte d'Ivoire	46%	2.4
Gambia	44%	2.4
Sudan	43%	2.3
Senegal	42%	2.3
Mozambique	37%	2.3
Guinea	37%	2.3
Kenya	36%	2.3
Burkina Faso	34%	2.3
eSwatini	34%	2.2
Togo	33%	2.2
Zimbabwe	33%	2.2
Cameroon	33%	2.2
Mali	32%	2.2
Lesotho	32%	2.1
Niger	30%	2.2
Benin	30%	2.2
Nigeria	30%	2.2
Tanzania	28%	2.2
South Africa	27%	2.1
Namibia	26%	2.1
Ghana	26%	2.2
Botswana	25%	2.1
Liberia	25%	2.1
Zambia	22%	2.1
Sierra Leone	19%	2.1
Uganda	17%	2.1
Malawi	14%	1.9

Appendix 4: Share of respondents per region who feel their living situation is the 'same' as others (Afrobarometer R7).

	Same
West Africa	34%
East Africa	28%
Southern Africa	33%
North Africa	51%
Central Africa	43%

Appendix 5: Descriptive statistics of support for democracy by country (Afrobarometer R7).

	STATEMENT 1: Democracy preferable	STATEMENT 2: Sometimes non-democratic preferable	STATEMENT 3: Doesn't matter
Sierra Leone	84%	6%	7%
Senegal	82%	6%	9%
Zambia	81%	9%	6%
Ghana	81%	12%	5%
Uganda	81%	5%	8%
Botswana	80%	10%	8%
Tanzania	78%	8%	8%
Mauritius	77%	6%	9%
Côte d'Ivoire	77%	5%	11%
Guinea	76%	11%	12%
Zimbabwe	75%	5%	13%
Togo	75%	8%	14%
Benin	73%	13%	13%
Gabon	72%	11%	16%
Cabo Verde	70%	10%	15%
Liberia	70%	13%	16%
Niger	69%	12%	16%
Morocco	69%	7%	15%
Nigeria	69%	15%	15%
Gambia	68%	20%	11%
Mali	67%	19%	13%
Kenya	67%	12%	10%
Namibia	65%	13%	20%
Burkina Faso	63%	17%	18%
Cameroon	62%	15%	15%
Sudan	62%	17%	17%
Malawi	62%	24%	11%
São Tomé and Príncipe	61%	11%	24%
Mozambique	57%	17%	16%
South Africa	54%	18%	25%
Lesotho	52%	18%	24%
Madagascar	47%	14%	28%
Tunisia	46%	20%	29%
eSwatini	43%	32%	20%
34-country sample:	68%	13%	14%

Appendix 6: Descriptive statistics of support for democracy by region (Afrobarometer R7).

	STATEMENT 1: Democracy preferable	STATEMENT 2: Sometimes non-democratic preferable	STATEMENT 3: Doesn't matter
West Africa	74%	12%	12%
East Africa	75%	8%	9%
Southern Africa	62%	15%	17%
North Africa	59%	15%	20%
Central Africa	65%	12%	19%

Appendix 7: Descriptive statistics of demand for democracy (Afrobarometer R7).

	% Who report full demand for democracy	Mean demand for democracy score	Reject military rule*	Reject one-party rule*	Reject one-man*
Mauritius	67%	3.47	76%	64%	89%
Zambia	67%	3.48	81%	86%	92%
Botswana	62%	3.44	81%	91%	92%
Uganda	60%	3.39	51%	47%	92%
Senegal	58%	3.36	74%	83%	84%
Côte d'Ivoire	55%	3.24	83%	77%	84%
Tanzania	55%	3.26	72%	50%	92%
Sierra Leone	54%	3.26	89%	81%	86%
Ghana	52%	3.22	86%	78%	88%
Gambia	52%	3.23	87%	71%	91%
Gabon	51%	3.21	64%	81%	90%
Kenya	46%	3.05	78%	72%	85%
Togo	46%	3.07	69%	87%	85%
Benin	46%	3.16	80%	71%	92%
Zimbabwe	44%	2.90	82%	92%	78%
Guinea	44%	3.06	80%	72%	81%
Nigeria	43%	2.98	79%	61%	75%
Liberia	42%	3.08	39%	77%	88%
Cabo Verde	42%	3.03	81%	69%	83%
São Tomé and Príncipe	41%	3.05	82%	72%	86%
Mali	40%	2.96	67%	87%	87%
Malawi	40%	3.04	76%	60%	88%
Namibia	39%	2.93	52%	53%	77%
Morocco	38%	2.73	88%	90%	60%
Niger	34%	2.88	80%	71%	79%
Cameroon	31%	2.71	72%	60%	75%
Sudan	28%	2.56	62%	57%	72%
South Africa	23%	2.44	85%	71%	69%
Burkina Faso	23%	2.57	74%	43%	77%
Mozambique	22%	2.06	67%	76%	41%
Madagascar	22%	2.53	77%	73%	69%
Lesotho	19%	2.44	71%	82%	76%
Tunisia	17%	2.06	81%	65%	61%
33- case sample:	42%	2.95	74%	72%	80%

* % given is the % of respondents in each country who said they either "strongly disapprove" or "disapprove"

Appendix 8: Descriptive statistics of demand for democracy (Afrobarometer R7).

	% who report full demand for democracy	Mean demand for democracy score	Reject military rule*	Reject one-party rule*	Reject one-man*
West Africa	46%	3.1	81%	69%	84%
East Africa	54%	3.2	72%	85%	90%
Southern Africa	38%	2.8	67%	73%	74%
North Africa	28%	2.5	63%	58%	64%
Central Africa	41%	3.0	78%	71%	83%

* % given is the % of respondents in each country who said they either 'strongly disapprove' or 'disapprove'

4. Appendix of Chapter 4

Appendix 1: Crosstabulation: Extent of democracy by Satisfaction with democracy.

		Satisfaction with democracy							
		The country is not a democracy	Not at all satisfied	Not very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Very satisfied	Refused	Do not know	Total
Extent of democracy	Not a democracy	652	3263	1201	321	136	7	36	5616
	A democracy, with major problems	45	4717	5646	2655	536	11	48	13658
	A democracy, but with minor problems	25	1358	4672	7851	1428	16	68	15418
	A full democracy	8	417	918	2945	4178	2	51	8519
	Do not understand question / democracy	77	55	63	77	44	13	775	1104
	Don't know	23	115	119	149	66	23	921	1416
Total	Refused	0	4	9	12	6	37	13	81
		830	9929	12628	14010	6394	109	1912	45812

Appendix 2: Correlation SWD by Extent with democracy, by country.
Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016- 2018).

South Africa	.340**
Liberia	.410**
Mozambique	.465**
Lesotho	.466**
Guinea	.478**
Gabon	.487**
Madagascar	.498**
Ghana	.500**
Tunisia	.503**
Togo	.510**
Malawi	.513**
Namibia	.513**
São Tomé and Príncipe	.530**
Nigeria	.539**
Sudan	.542**
Burkina Faso	.550**
Niger	.554**
Senegal	.556**
Cabo Verde	.557**
Kenya	.557**
Benin	.575**
Cameroon	.579**
eSwatini	.623**
Tanzania	.633**
Sierra Leone	.636**
Gambia	.637**
Mali	.654**
Uganda	.658**
Côte d'Ivoire	.659**
Zambia	.671**
Botswana	.673**
Mauritius	.678**
Morocco	.697**
Zimbabwe	.833**

**p<0.001

Appendix 3: Essential characteristics of Democracy. Afrobarometer Round 5 (2011- 2013).

Question Number: Q44

Question: Many things may be desirable, but not all of them are essential characteristics of democracy. If you have to choose only one of the things that I am going to read, which one would you choose as the most essential characteristic of democracy?

Variable Label: Essential characteristics of democracy: equality, fair election, etc

Values: 1-4, 8, 9, 998, -1

Value Labels: 1= Government narrows the gap between the rich and the poor, 2= People choose government leaders in free and fair elections, 3= Government does not waste any public money, 4= People are free to express their political views openly, 8= None of these, 9=Don't know, 998=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 5

Question Number: Q45

Question: And here is another list. Which one of these things would you choose as the most essential characteristic of democracy?

Variable Label: Essential characteristics of democracy: law and order, job, etc

Values: 1-4, 8, 9, 998, -1

Value Labels: 1= Government ensures law and order, 2= Media is free to criticize the things government does, 3= Government ensures job opportunities for all, 4= Multiple parties compete fairly in elections, 8= None of these, 9=Don't know, 998=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 5

Appendix 4: Variables used in the analyses of chapter 4.

4.1 Dependent variable: Satisfaction with democracy (Source: Afrobarometer Round 7 data)

Question Number: Q36

Question: Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in [ENTER COUNTRY]? Are you:

Variable Label: Q36. Satisfaction with democracy

Values: 0-4, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=[Country] is not a democracy, 1=Not at all satisfied, 2=Not very satisfied, 3=Fairly satisfied, 4=Very satisfied, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Eurobarometer

Note: Interviewer was instructed to "Read the question in the language of the interview, but always read "democracy" in English Translate "democracy" into local language only if respondent does not understand English term."

4.2 Predictor variable: Perceived relative living situation (Source: Afrobarometer Round 7 data)

Question Number: Q4B

Question: In general, how would you describe: Your own present living conditions?

Variable Label: Q4B. Your present living conditions

Values: 1-5, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Much worse, 2=Worse, 3=Same, 4=Better, 5=Much better, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB, Zambia96

4.3. Level 1 control variables (Source: Afrobarometer Round 7 data)

a. Lived Poverty Index

Question Number: Q8A

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough food to eat?

Variable Label: Q8a. How often gone without food

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Question Number: Q8B

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough clean water for home use?

Variable Label: Q8b. How often gone without water

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Question Number: Q8C

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without medicines or medical treatment?

Variable Label: Q8c. How often gone without medical care

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Question Number: Q8D

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough fuel to cook your food?

Variable Label: Q8d. How often gone without cooking fuel

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Question Number: Q8E

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without a cash income?

Variable Label: Q8e. How often gone without cash income

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

b. Asset index

Question Number: Q89A

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Radio?

Variable Label: Q89a. Own radio

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

Question Number: Q89B

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Television?

Variable Label: Q89b. Own television

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

Question Number: Q89C

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Motor vehicle or motorcycle?

Variable Label: Q89c. Own motor vehicle, car, or motorcycle

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

Question Number: Q89D

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Computer?

Variable Label: Q89d. Own computer

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 7

Question Number: Q89E

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Bank account?

Variable Label: Q89e. Own bank account

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 7

Question Number: Q89F

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Mobile phone?

Variable Label: Q89f. Own mobile phone

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

c. Performance of the President

Question Number: Q58A

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the following people have performed their jobs over the past twelve months, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? [NAME OF PRESIDENT]

Variable Label: Q58a. Performance: President

Values: 1-4, 7, 9, 8, 99, -1

Value Labels: 1=Strongly disapprove, 2=disapprove, 3=Approve, 4=Strongly approve, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 8=Refused to answer, 99=Not asked in the country, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

* The question asked about the most powerful executive role in the country, whether the President or the Prime Minister. If there was a secondary leader, those are included in country-specific questions. Refer to country data sets.

* The following countries asked about their President: BEN, BFO, BOT, CAM, CDI, CVE, GAB, GAM, GHA, GUI, KEN, LIB, MAD, MLI, MLW, MOZ, NAM, NGR, NIG, SAF, SEN, STP, SRL, SUD, TAN, TOG, UGA, ZAM, ZIM

* The following countries asked about their Prime Minister: LES, MAU, MRC, TUN

* Not asked in Swaziland/eSwatini.

d. Freedoms index

Question Number: Q42A

Question: In your opinion, how often, in this country: do people have to be careful of what they say about politics?

Variable Label: Q42a. How often careful what you say

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Rarely, 2=Often, 3=Always, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Question Number: Q42B

Question: In your opinion, how often, in this country: Do people have to be careful about what political organizations they join?

Variable Label: Q42b. How often careful which organizations joined

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Rarely, 2=Often, 3=Always, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 7

Question Number: Q42C

Question: In your opinion, how often, in this country: Do people have to be careful about how they vote in an election?

Variable Label: Q42c. How often careful how vote

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Rarely, 2=Often, 3=Always, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 7

e. Free and fair elections

Question Number: Q23

Question: On the whole, how would you rate the freeness and fairness of the last national election, held in [20xx]. Was it:

Variable Label: Q23. Freeness and fairness of the last national election

Values: 1-4, 8, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Not free and fair, 2=Free and fair, with major problems, 3=Free and fair, but with minor problems, 4=Completely free and fair, 8=Do not understand the question, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

Notes: Year of last national election was inserted in each country. See country questionnaires for details.

f. MPs listen

Question Number: Q54A

Question: How much of the time do you think the following try their best to listen to what people like you have to say: Members of the National Assembly?

Variable Label: Q54a. MPs listen

Values: 0-3, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Only sometimes, 2=Often, 3=Always, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

Notes: Question text referred to "Member of Parliament" or "Representative to the National Assembly" as appropriate in each country. See country questionnaires for details.

g. Level of corruption

Question Number: Q45

Question: In your opinion, over the past year, has the level of corruption in this country increased, decreased, or stayed the same?

Variable Label: Q45. Level of corruption

Values: 1-5, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 1=Increased a lot, 2=Increased somewhat, 3=Stayed the same, 4=Decreased somewhat, 5=Decreased a lot, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Transparency International

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

h. Trust in institutions

Question Number: Q43G

Question: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: The Police?

Variable Label: Q43g. Trust police

Values: 0-3, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Not at all, 1=Just a little, 2=Somewhat, 3=A lot, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard, -1=Missing

Source: Zambia 96

Question Number: Q43H

Question: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: The Army?

Variable Label: Q43h. Trust army

Values: 0-3, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Not at all, 1=Just a little, 2=Somewhat, 3=A lot, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 5

Question Number: Q43I

Question: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: Courts of law?

Variable Label: Q43i. Trust courts of law

Values: 0-3, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Not at all, 1=Just a little, 2=Somewhat, 3=A lot, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard, -1=Missing

Source: Zambia 96

i. Economic performance index

Question Number: Q56A

Question: Now let's speak about the present government of this country. How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Managing the economy?

Variable Label: Q56a. Handling managing the economy

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56B

Question: Now let's speak about the present government of this country. How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Improving the living standards of the poor.

Variable Label: Q56b. Handling improving living standards of the poor

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 4

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56C

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Creating jobs?

Variable Label: Q56c. Handling creating jobs

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56D

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Keeping prices down?

Variable Label: Q56d. Handling keeping prices down

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

j. Government handling inequality

Question Number: Q56E

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Narrowing gaps between rich and poor?

Variable Label: Q56e. Handling narrowing income gaps

Values: 1-4, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

k. Service deliver index

Question Number: Q56F

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Reducing crime?

Variable Label: Q56f. Handling reducing crime

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very Badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56G

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Improving basic health services?

Variable Label: Q56g. Handling improving basic health services

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56H

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Addressing educational needs?

Variable Label: Q56h. Handling addressing educational needs

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56I

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Providing water and sanitation services?

Variable Label: Q56i. Handling providing water and sanitation services

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56J

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Ensuring everyone has enough to eat?

Variable Label: Q56j. Handling ensuring enough to eat

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

I. Direction of the country

Question Number: Q3

Question: Let's start with your general view about the current direction of our country. Some people might think the country is going in the wrong direction. Others may feel it is going in the right direction. So let me ask YOU about the overall direction of the country: Would you say that the country is going in the wrong direction or going in the right direction?

Variable Label: Q3. Overall direction of the country

Values: 1, 2, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 1=Going in the wrong direction, 2=Going in the right direction 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB, Zambia96

m. Incumbent supporter

Question Number: Q88A

Question: Do you feel close to any particular political party?

Variable Label: Q88a. Close to political party

Values: 0-1, 8, 9, 99, -1

Value Labels: 0=No, not close to any party, 1=Yes, feels close to a party, 8=Refused to answer, 9=Don't know, 99=Not asked in the country, -1=Missing

Source: Zambia 96

Question Number: Q88B

Question: Which party is that?

Variable Label: Q88b. Which party

Values: 100-106, 140-144, 146, 180-182, 184-185, 187-193, 220-221, 226-227, 261-265, 267, 300-309, 340-349, 352-354, 380-410, 422, 424-425, 428-429, 432-435, 437-438, 440-441, 443, 461-464, 467, 471, 474, 500-503, 505-517, 540-544, 580, 582-585, 587-594, 620-626, 631, 634, 638-640, 642-643, 660-665, 669, 671- 672, 674, 677-679, 684-686, 700, 702, 704-705, 708, 711-712, 716, 726, 740-742, 744, 476, 758, 780-782, 784, 788, 790-791, 821, 823, 825-828, 860-864, 866-867, 900-904, 906, 908-909, 930-943, 1100-1111, 1140-1145, 1148-1151, 1220-1224, 1260-1263, 1265-1266, 1268-1269, 1300-1308, 1500-1508, 1540-1546, 1580-1589, 1660-1664, 1700-1704, 1740-1748, 9995, 9997-9999, 9996, -1

Value Labels: 100=Nouveau Départ, 101=Union fait la Nation (UN), 102=Renaissance du Bénin (RB), 103=Parti du Renouveau Démocratique (PRD), 104=Force Cauris pour un Bénin Emergent (FCBE), 105=Alliance ABT, 106=PIK-Nouvelle conscience, 140=Botswana Congress Party (BCP), 141=Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), 142=Botswana Movement For Democracy (BMD), 143=Botswana National Front (BNF), 144=Botswana People's Party (BPP), 146=Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC+), 180=ADF/RDA (Alliance pour la démocratie et la fédération/Rassem, 181=CDP (Congrès pour la démocratie et le progrès) de Achille TA, 182=Le Faso Autrement de Ablassé OUEDRAOGO, 184=MPP (Mouvement du Peuple pour le Progrès) de Roch Marc Chris, 185=NAFA (Nouvelle Alliance du Faso) de Rasmané OUEDRAOGO, 187=ODT (Organisation pour la Démocratie et le Travail) de Maham, 188=PAREN (Parti de la Renaissance Nationale) de Laurent BADO, 189=PDS/Metba (Parti pour la Démocratie et le Socialisme) de Phi, 190=RDS (Rassemblement pour la Démocratie et le Socialisme) de O, 191=UBN (Union pour un Burkina Nouveau) de Djemdjoada Amadou DIC, 192=UNIR/PS (Union pour la renaissance/Parti sankariste) de Me B, 193=UPC (Union pour le Progrès et le Changement) de Zéphirin DIA, 220=Movement for Democracy (MPD), 221=African Party for Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV), 226=Cape Verdean Union Independent and Democratic (UCID), 227=Popular Party (PP), 260=Convention People's Party (CPP), 261=National Democratic Congress (NDC), 262=New Patriotic Party (NPP), 263=People's National Convention (PNC), 264=Progressive People's Party (PPP), 265=Democratic People's Party (DPP), 267=National Democratic Party (NDP), 300=Kenya Social Congress (KSC), 301=NARC Kenya, 302=Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), 303=Restore and Build Kenya (RBK), 304=SAFINA party, 305=The National Alliance (TNA), 306=United Democratic Front (UDF), 307=United Republican Party (URP), 308=Wiper Democratic Movement (WDM-K), 309=Jubilee Alliance Party (JAP)/Jubilee Party, 340=Democratic Congress (DC), 341=All Basotho Convention (ABC), 342=Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD), 343=Basotho National Party (BNP), 344=Popular Front for Democracy (PFD), 345=National Independent Party (NIP), 346=Lesotho People's Congress (LPC), 348=Marematlou Freedom Party (MFP), 349=Basotho Congress Party (BCP), 352=Alliance of Democrats (AD), 353=Movement for Economic Change (MEC), 354=Reformed Congress of Lesotho (RCL), 382=Alliance of Peace and Democracy (APD) – UPP & LPP, 383=National Democratic Coalition (NDC), 384=Liberty Party (LP), 386=Unity Party (UP), 387=National Democratic Party of Liberia (NDPL), 389=Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC), 393=All Liberia Coalition Party (ALCOP), 394=Liberia Reconstruction Party (LRP), 395=National Union for Democratic Progress (NUDP), 400=Victory for Change (VCP), 408=All Liberian Party (ALP), 409=People Unification Party (PUP), 410=Alternative National Congress (ANC), 422=AME (Antoko Miombon'Ezaka), 424=AREMA (Antokin'ny REvolisiona Malagasy), 425=AVI (Asa Vita no Ifampitsarana), 428=LEADER FANILO (Libéralisme Economique et Action DEMocratique pour la Réconciliation), 429=Mahaleo tena, 432=MDM (Miara Mientana ho an'ny Demokrasia), 433=MONIMA (MOuvement National pour l'Indépendance de Madagascar), 434=MTS (Malagasy Tonga Saina), 435=RPSD-Vaovao (Rassemblement pour la Social Démocratie), 437=TGV (Tanora malaGasy Vonona), 438=TIM (Tiako i Madagasikara), 440=MAPAR (Miaraka Amin'ny Prezida Andry Rajoelina), 441=HVM (Hery Vaovao ho an'i Madagasikara), 443=MMM (Malagasy Miara-Miainga), 461=Democratic Progressive Party

(DPP), 462=Malawi Forum for Unity and Development (MAFUNDE), 463=Malawi Congress Party (MCP), 464=National Salvation Front (NSF), 467=People's Party (PP), 471=United Democratic Front (UDF), 474=United Independent Party (UIP), 500=ADEMA – PASJ / Dionkounda Traoré / Tiémoko Sangaré, 501=ADP – Maliba / Boubacar Diallo, 502=ASMA – CFP / Soumeylou Boubèye Maïga, 503=CDS – Mogo Tigiya / Mamadou Blaise Sangaré, 505=CNID – Faso Yiriwa Ton / Mountaga Tall, 506=CODEM / Ousséni Amion Guindo ou Poulô, 507=FARE – An Ka Wuli / Modibo Sidibé, 508=MIRIA / mamdou Kassa Traoré, 509=MPR / Choguel Kokala Maïga, 510=PARENA / Tiébilé Dramé, 511=PDES / ATT, 512=RPM / Ibrahim Boubacar Kéïta ou IBK, 513=SADI / Oumar Mariko / Cheick Oumar Sissoko, 514=UDD / Tiéman Hubert Coulibaly, 515=UM-RDA / Badara Aliou Macalou, 516=URD / Soumaïla Cissé, 517=YELEMA / Moussa Mara, 540=Frelimo (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique), 541=Renamo (Resistência Nacional Moçambicana), 542=MDM (Movimento Democrático Moçambicano), 543=PDD (Partido para Paz, Democracia e Desenvolvimento), 580=APP (All People's Party), 582=COD (Congress of Democrats), 583=DPN (Democratic Party of Namibia), 584=DTA (DTA of Namibia), 585=MAG (Monitor Action Group), 587=NEFF (Namibia Economic Freedom Fighters), 588=NUDO (National Unity Democratic Organisation of Namibia), 589=RDP (Rally for Democracy and Progress), 590=RP (Republican Party of Namibia), 591=SWANU (Swanu of Namibia), 592=SWAPO (SWAPO Party of Namibia), 593=UDF (United Democratic Front of Namibia), 594=UPM (United People's Movement), 620=Advanced Congress of Democrats (ACD), 621=All Progressive Congress (APC), 622=Alliance for Democracy (AD), 623=African Democratic Congress (ADC), 624=All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP), 625=All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), 626=All People's Party (APP), 628=Conscience People's Congress (CPC), 631=Democratic People's Party (DPP), 634=Labour Party (LP), 638=People's Democratic Party (PDP), 639=Progressive People's Alliance (PPA), 640=Peoples Progressive Party (PPP), 642=People's Salvation Party (PSP), 643=Social Democratic Mega Party, 660=Abdoulaye WADE (Parti Démocratique Sénégalais), 661=Ousmane Tanor DIENG (Parti Socialiste), 662=Moustapha NIASSE (Alliance des Forces du Progrès), 663=Macky SALL (Alliance Pour la République), 664=Idrissa SECK (REWMI), 665=Diégane SENE (Union pour le Renouveau Démocratique), 669=JEF JEL, 671=Abdoulaye BALDE (UCS), 672=Malick GAKOU (Grand Parti), 674=Serigne Mansour SY DJAMIL (Beuss du Niak), 677=Abdoul MBAYE (ACT), 678=Ousmane SONKO (Pastef), 679=Macky SALL (Benno Book Yakaar, 684=Serigne Modou KARA MBACKE (Parti de la vérité pour le dévelo, 685=El Hadji Issa SALL (PUR), 686=Khalifa SALL (Manko Taxawou Sénégal), 700=African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP), 702=African National Congress (ANC), 704=Congress of the People (COPE), 705=Democratic Alliance (DA), 708=Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), 711=New National Party / Nuwe Nasionale Party (NNP), 712=Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), 716=Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), 726=National Freedom Party (NFP), 740=Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM), 741=The Civic United Front (CUF), 742=Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA), 744=National Convention for Construction and Reform (NCCR – MAGEUZI), 746=United People's Democratic Party (UPDP), 758=Alliance for Change and Transparency (ACT-Wazalendo), 780=National Resistance Movement [NRM], 781=Forum for Democratic Change [FDC], 782=Democratic Party [DP], 784=Uganda Peoples Congress [UPC], 788=The Justice Forum (JEEMA), 790=Go Foward, 791=Uganda Farmers Party, 821=Forum for Democracy & Development (FDD), 823=Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), 825=National Restoration Party (NAREP), 826=Patriotic Front (PF), 827=United National Independence Party (UNIP), 828=United Party for National Development (UPND), 860=Movement for Democratic Change- Tsvangirai [MDC-T], 861=Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front [ZANU-PF], 862=Movement for Democratic Change –Mutambara [MDC-M], 863=Mavambo. Kusile. Dawn [MKD] – Simba Makoni, 864=Zimbabwe African People's Union- Dabengwa [ZAPU-Dabengwa], 866=MDC People's Democratic Party [Tendai Biti], 867=Zimbabwe People First [ZIMPF] – Joice Mujuru, 900=Mouvement Socialiste Mauricien, 901=Mouvement Libérateur (ML), 902=Parti Mauricien Social Democrate, 903=Parti Travailleiste, 904=Mouvement Millitant Mauricien, 906=Front Solidarité Mauricien (FSM), 908=Organisation du Peuple Rodriguais (OPR), 909=Mouvement Rodriguais (MR), 930=Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), 931=All People's Congress (APC), 932=People's Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC), 933=National Democratic Alliance (NDA), 936=Coalition for Change Party (C4C), 937=National Grand Coalition (NGC), 1100=Alliance Nigérienne pour la Démocratie et le Progrès (ANDP Zaman Lahiya), 1101=Convention Démocratique et Sociale (CDS Rahama), 1102=Mouvement

National pour la Société de Développement (MNSD Nassara), 1103=Mouvement Démocratique Nigérien pour une Fédération Africaine (MODEN FA Lumana), 1104=Parti Nigérien pour la Démocratie et le Socialisme (PNDS Tarayya), 1105=Parti Nigérien pour l'Auto gestion (PNA Al'Oumat, 1106=Rassemblement pour la Démocratie et le Progrès (RDP Jama'a), 1107=Rassemblement Social Démocrate (RSD Gaskia), 1108=Union pour la Démocratie et le Progrès Social (UDPS Amana), 1109=Mouvement Patriotique Nigérien (MPN-Kishin Kassa), 1110=MPR Jamhuriya, 1111=Ingantchi, 1140=UNIR (Union pour la République) de Faure Essozimna Gnassingb, 1141=UFC (Union des Forces de Changement) de Gilchrist Olympio, 1142=ANC (Alliance Nationale pour le Changement) de Jean-Pierre F, 1143=CAR (Comité d'Action pour le Renouveau) de Me Yaovi Agboyibo, 1144=CDPA (Convention Démocratique des Peuples Africains) du Prof, 1145=PRR (Parti du Renouveau et de la Rédemption) de Nicolas Laws, 1148=ADDI (Alliance des Démocrates pour le Développement Intégral, 1149=CST (Collectif « Sauvons le Togo »), 1150=Arc-en-Ciel, 1151=PNP (Parti National Panafricain de Tikpi Atchadam), 1220=Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM), 1221=Social Democratic Front (SDF), 1222=National Union For Democracy and Progress (UNDP), 1223=Union Démocratique du Cameroun (UDC), 1224=Mouvement for Progressiste (MP), 1260=Rassemblement des Républicains (RDR, 1261=Parti Démocratique de Cote d'Ivoire (PDCI), 1262=Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI), 1263=Union pour la Démocratie et pour la Paix en Cote d'Ivoire (U, 1265=Mouvement des Forces d'Avenir (MFA), 1266=Parti Ivoirien des Travailleurs (PIT), 1268=Union Pour la Cote d'Ivoire (UPCI), 1269=RHDP, 1300=Rassemblement du Peuple de Guinée (RPG), 1301=Union des Forces Démocratiques de Guinée (UFDG), 1302=Union des Forces Républicaines (UFR), 1303=Parti de l'Espoir pour le Développement National (PEDN), 1304=Union pour le Progrès de la Guinée (UPG), 1305=Rassemblement pour le Développement Intégré de la Guinée (RDIG), 1306=Bloc Libéral (BL), 1307=Union Démocratique de Guinée (UDG), 1308=Dadis, 1500=The Justice and Development Party (PJD), 1501=The Authenticity and Modernity Party (PAM), 1502=Istiqlal Party (PI), 1503=The National Rally of Independents (RNI), 1504=The Popular Movement (MP), 1505=Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USSP), 1506=The Constitutional Union (UC), 1507=Party of Progress and Socialism (PPS), 1508=Social and Democratic Movement (MDS), 1540=National Congress Party, 1541=Umma party, 1542=Democratic Unionist Party, 1543=Popular Congress Party, 1544=Communist Party, 1545=Sudanese congress Party, 1546=National Movement for Reform and Development, 1580=Nidaa Tounes, 1581=Ennahdha, 1582=The Free Patriotic Union, 1583=The Popular Front, 1584=Afek tounes, 1585=Tunisia Al Irada Movement (Hirak), 1586=The initiative, 1587=The people's Movement, 1588=The democratic current, 1589=Machrou3=Tounes, 1660=Acção Democrática e Independente (ADI), 1661=Movimento para a Libertação de S. Tomé e Príncipe (MLSTP/PSD), 1662=Partido da Convergência Democrática (PCD), 1663=Movimento para a Mudança e Progresso do Príncipe, 1664=União Democrática dos Cidadãos para a Mudança e Desenvolvimento (UDD), 1700=PDG (Parti Démocratique Gabonais), 1701=UN (Union Nationale), 1702=UPG (Union du Peuple Gabonais), 1703=CLR (Centre des Libéraux Réformateurs), 1704=DN (Démocratie Nouvelle), 1740=Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction (APRC), 1741=Gambia Democratic Congress (GDC), 1742=National Reconciliation Party (NRP), 1743=People's Democratic Organisation for Independence and Socialism (PDOIS), 1744=People's Progressive Party (PPP), 1745=Gambia Party for Democracy and Progress (GPDP), 1746=National Convention Party (NCP), 1747=Gambia Moral Congress (GMC), 1748=United Democratic Party (UDP), 9995=Other, 9997=Not applicable, 9998=Refused to answer, 9999=Don't know, 9996=Not asked in the country, -1=Missing

Source: Zambia 96

n. Discuss politics

Question Number: Q13

Question: When you get together with your friends or family, would you say you discuss political matters:

Variable Label: Q13. Discuss politics

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Occasionally, 2=Frequently, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing
Source: Adapted from Zambia96.

4.4 Sociodemographic control variables

a. Location

Question Number: URBRUR
Question: PSU/EA
Variable Label: Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit
Values: 1, 2
Value Labels: 1=Urban, 2=Rural
Note: Answered by interviewer

b. Gender

Question Number: Q101
Question: Respondent's gender
Variable Label: Q101. Gender of respondent
Values: 1, 2
Value Labels: 1=Male, 2=Female
Source: SAB
Note: Answered by interviewer

c. Education

Question Number: Q97
Question: What is your highest level of education?
Variable Label: Q97. Education of respondent
Values: 0-9, 98, 99, -1
Value Labels: 0=No formal schooling, 1=Informal schooling only (including Koranic schooling), 2=Some primary schooling, 3=Primary school completed, 4=Intermediate school or some secondary school/high school, 5=Secondary school/high school completed, 6=Post-secondary qualifications, other than university, 7=Some university, 8=University completed, 9=Post-graduate, 98=Refused, 99=Don't know, -1=Missing
Source: SAB

d. Age

Question Number: Q1
Question: How old are you?
Variable Label: Q1. Age
Values: 18-110, 998, 999, -1
Value Labels: 998=Refused, 999=Don't know, -1=Missing

Appendix 5: Overview of electoral systems and coding details.

Taken from: <https://www.idea.int/data-tools/continent-view/Africa/44>

	Year (closest to AB data)	Type	Coded as:
Benin	2019	PR	0
Botswana	2014	Majoritarian	1
Burkina Faso	2015	PR	0
Cabo Verde	2016	Majoritarian	1
Cameroon	2013	Majoritarian	1
Côte d'Ivoire	2016	Majoritarian	1
eSwatini	2018	Majoritarian	1
Gabon	2018	Majoritarian	1
Gambia	2017	Majoritarian	1
Ghana	2016	Majoritarian	1
Guinea	2019	Mixed	0
Kenya	2017	Majoritarian	1
Lesotho	2017	Mixed	0
Liberia	2017	Majoritarian	1
Madagascar	2019	Majoritarian and PR	0
Malawi	2019	Majoritarian	1
Mali	2019	Majoritarian	1
Mauritius	2014	Majoritarian	1
Morocco	2016	PR	0
Mozambique	2014	PR	0
Namibia	2014	PR	0
Niger	2016	PR	0
Nigeria	2019	Majoritarian	1
São Tomé and Príncipe	2018	PR	0
Senegal	2017	Mixed	0
Sierra Leone	2018	Majoritarian	1
South Africa	2019	PR	0
Sudan	2015	Mixed	0
Tanzania	2015	Majoritarian	1
Togo	2018	PR	0
Tunisia	2019	PR	0
Uganda	2016	Majoritarian	1
Zambia	2016	Majoritarian	1
Zimbabwe	2018	Mixed	0

Appendix 6: Correlations of predictor variables. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016- 2018).

		Lived Poverty Index	Freedoms index	Free elections	Ethnic group treated fairly	Change in corruption	MPs listen	Economic performance index	Service delivery index	Government handling income gaps	Performance of the president	Country going in the right direction= 1	Incumbent partisan	Trust in state institutions	Interest in politics
Freedoms index	Pearson Correlation	.036**	1												
	N	36198	36503												
Free elections	Pearson Correlation	-.116**	-.074**	1											
	N	35584	33943	35880											
Ethnic group treated fairly	Pearson Correlation	.111**	.059**	-.160**	1										
	N	33494	32390	31350	33779										
Change in corruption	Pearson Correlation	-.072**	-.034**	.214**	1										
	N	36485	34799	34234	32042	36832									
MPs listen	Pearson Correlation	-.040**	-.020**	.112**	-.012**	.118**	1								
	N	36061	34353	33840	31737	34750	36386								
Economic performance index	Pearson Correlation	-.165**	-.081**	.268**	-.110**	.321**	.262**	1							
	N	34976	33535	32872	30828	33831	33405	35265							
Service delivery index	Pearson Correlation	-.203**	-.075**	.231**	-.124**	.260**	.225**	.636**	1						
	N	35887	34233	33621	31536	34573	34183	33968	36201						
Government handling income gaps	Pearson Correlation	-.114**	-.061**	.190**	-.081**	.225**	.197**	.664**	.522**	1					
	N	36622	34840	34227	32103	35237	34763	34534	35283	36954					
Performance of the president	Pearson Correlation	-.089**	-.053**	.312**	-.136**	.302**	.166**	.422**	.368**	.297**	1				
	N	34255	32525	32024	30345	32822	32481	31815	32537	33089	34551				
Country going in the right direction= 1	Pearson Correlation	-.137**	-.057**	.223**	-.093**	.265**	.130**	.351**	.263**	.243**	.318**	1			
	N	37143	35228	34720	32560	35555	35115	34192	34985	35662	33404	37481			
Incumbent partisan	Pearson Correlation	.046**	-.052**	.146**	-.040**	.132**	.090**	.151**	.124**	.111**	.232**	.138**	1		
	N	37014	35586	34361	32907	35225	34804	33840	34607	35351	33079	35863	37369		
Trust in state institutions	Pearson Correlation	-.030**	-.060**	.195**	-.136**	.207**	.207**	.258**	.257**	.182**	.307**	.186**	.128**	1	
	N	36486	34815	34190	31995	35091	34739	33751	34580	35166	32856	35505	35236	36801	
Interest in politics	Pearson Correlation	-.009	-.001	-.063**	.047**	-.006	0.008	0.001	-.012*	-.014**	-.019**	-.019**	.174**	-.028**	1
	N	38521	36383	35767	33646	36707	36266	35155	36070	36823	34428	37336	37191	36671	38906

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Appendix 7: MLM model of intrinsic evaluation with only growth at level 2. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016- 2018).

	Estimate	Sig.
<i>Intercept</i>	1.008	0.000
Much Worse= 1	-0.007	0.758
Worse= 1	-0.039	0.004
Better= 1	0.031	0.016
Much Better= 1	0.112	0.000
Relative to national Asset Index mean	-0.008	0.001
Lived Poverty Index	-0.049	0.000
Economic performance index	0.045	0.000
Service delivery index	0.015	0.000
Government handling income gaps	0.002	0.826
Country going in the right direction= 1	0.167	0.000
Performance of the president	0.241	0.000
Age	0.002	0.000
Female= 1	-0.003	0.771
Rural= 1	0.060	0.000
Level of education	-0.026	0.000
Economic growth (mean: 2011- 2017)	0.024	0.434

5. Appendix of Chapter 5

Appendix 1: Variables used in the analyses of Chapter 5 (source: all taken from Afrobarometer Round 7 (2016- 2018)).

1.1 Dependent variables

a. Trust in representative government institutions

Question Number: Q43A

Question: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: The President?

Variable Label: Q43a. Trust president

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=Not at all, 1=Just a little, 2=Somewhat, 3=A lot, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Zambia96

* The question asked about the most powerful executive role in the country, whether the President or the Prime Minister. If there was a secondary leader, those are included in country-specific data sets.

* The following countries asked about their President: BEN, BFO, BOT, CAM, CDI, CVE, GAB, GAM, GHA, GUI, KEN, LIB, MAD, MLI, MLW, MOZ, NAM, NGR, NIG, SAF, SEN, STP, SRL, SUD, TAN, TOG, UGA, ZAM, ZIM

* The following countries asked about their Prime Minister: LES, MAU, MRC, TUN

* Not asked in SWZ

Question Number: Q43B

Question: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: Parliament?

Variable Label: Q43b. Trust parliament/national assembly

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=Not at all, 1=Just a little, 2=Somewhat, 3=A lot, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Adapted from Zambia96

Notes: Question text referred to "Parliament" or "the National Assembly" as appropriate in each country. See country questionnaires for details.

Question Number: Q43D

Question: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: [your local government council]?

Variable Label: Q43d. Trust your elected local government council

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=Not at all, 1=Just a little, 2=Somewhat, 3=A lot, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Adapted from Zambia96

Notes: Name of appropriate local government council was inserted in each country. See country questionnaires for details.

Question Number: Q43E

Question: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: The Ruling Party?

Variable Label: Q43e. Trust the ruling party

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=Not at all, 1=Just a little, 2=Somewhat, 3=A lot, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 8=Refused to answer, 99=Not asked in the country, -1=Missing

Source: Adapted from Zambia96

b. Trust in state institutions

Question Number: Q43G

Question: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: The Police?

Variable Label: Q43g. Trust police

Values: 0-3, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Not at all, 1=Just a little, 2=Somewhat, 3=A lot, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard, -1=Missing

Source: Zambia 96

Question Number: Q43H

Question: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: The Army?

Variable Label: Q43h. Trust army

Values: 0-3, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Not at all, 1=Just a little, 2=Somewhat, 3=A lot, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 5

Question Number: Q43I

Question: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: Courts of law?

Variable Label: Q43i. Trust courts of law

Values: 0-3, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Not at all, 1=Just a little, 2=Somewhat, 3=A lot, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard, -1=Missing

Source: Zambia 96

1.2 Independent variable: perceived relative living situation

Question Number: Q5

Question: In general, how do you rate your living conditions compared to those of other [ENTER NATIONALITY]?

Variable Label: Q5. Your living conditions vs. others

Values: 1-5, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 1=Much worse, 2=Worse, 3=Same, 4=Better, 5=Much better, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

1.3 Competing predictor variables

a. Lived Poverty Index

Question Number: Q8A

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough food to eat?

Variable Label: Q8a. How often gone without food

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Question Number: Q8B

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough clean water for home use?

Variable Label: Q8b. How often gone without water

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Question Number: Q8C

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without medicines or medical treatment?

Variable Label: Q8c. How often gone without medical care

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Question Number: Q8D

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough fuel to cook your food?

Variable Label: Q8d. How often gone without cooking fuel

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Question Number: Q8E

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without a cash income?

Variable Label: Q8e. How often gone without cash income

Values: 0-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

b. Asset index

Question Number: Q89A

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Radio?

Variable Label: Q89a. Own radio

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

Question Number: Q89B

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Television?

Variable Label: Q89b. Own television

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

Question Number: Q89C

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Motor vehicle or motorcycle?

Variable Label: Q89c. Own motor vehicle, car, or motorcycle

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

Question Number: Q89D

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Computer?

Variable Label: Q89d. Own computer

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 7

Question Number: Q89E

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Bank account?

Variable Label: Q89e. Own bank account

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 7

Question Number: Q89F

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Mobile phone?

Variable Label: Q89f. Own mobile phone

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

c. Incumbent support

Question Number: Q88A

Question: Do you feel close to any particular political party?

Variable Label: Q88a. Close to political party

Values: 0-1, 8, 9, 99, -1

Value Labels: 0=No, not close to any party, 1=Yes, feels close to a party, 8=Refused to answer, 9=Don't know, 99=Not asked in the country, -1=Missing

Source: Zambia 96

Question Number: Q88B

Question: Which party is that?

Variable Label: Q88b. Which party

Values: 100-106, 140-144, 146, 180-182, 184-185, 187-193, 220-221, 226-227, 261-265, 267, 300-309, 340-349, 352-354, 380-410, 422, 424-425, 428-429, 432-435, 437-438, 440-441, 443, 461-464, 467, 471, 474, 500-503, 505-517, 540-544, 580, 582-585, 587-594, 620-626, 631, 634, 638-640, 642-643, 660-665, 669, 671- 672, 674, 677-679, 684-686, 700, 702, 704-705, 708, 711-712, 716, 726, 740-742, 744, 476, 758, 780-782, 784, 788, 790-791, 821, 823, 825-828, 860-864, 866-867, 900-904, 906, 908-909, 930-943, 1100-1111, 1140-1145, 1148-1151, 1220-1224, 1260-1263, 1265-1266, 1268-1269, 1300-1308, 1500-1508, 1540-1546, 1580-1589, 1660-1664, 1700-1704, 1740-1748, 9995, 9997-9999, 9996, -1

Value Labels: 100=Nouveau Départ, 101=Union fait la Nation (UN), 102=Renaissance du Bénin (RB), 103=Parti du Renouveau Démocratique (PRD), 104=Force Cauris pour un Bénin Emergent (FCBE), 105=Alliance ABT, 106=PIK-Nouvelle conscience, 140=Botswana Congress Party (BCP), 141=Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), 142=Botswana Movement For Democracy (BMD), 143=Botswana National Front (BNF), 144=Botswana People's Party (BPP), 146=Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC+), 180=ADF/RDA (Alliance pour la démocratie et la fédération/Rassem, 181=CDP (Congrès pour la démocratie et le progrès) de Achille TA, 182=Le Faso Autrement de Ablassé OUEDRAOGO, 184=MPP (Mouvement du Peuple pour le Progrès) de Roch Marc Chris, 185=NAFA (Nouvelle Alliance du Faso) de Rasmané OUEDRAOGO, 187=ODT (Organisation pour la Démocratie et le Travail) de Maham, 188=PAREN (Parti de la Renaissance Nationale) de Laurent BADO, 189=PDS/Metba (Parti pour la Démocratie et le Socialisme) de Phi, 190=RDS (Rassemblement pour la Démocratie et le Socialisme) de O, 191=UBN (Union pour un Burkina Nouveau) de Djemdjoada Amadou DIC, 192=UNIR/PS (Union pour la renaissance/Parti sankariste) de Me B, 193=UPC (Union pour le Progrès et le Changement) de Zéphirin DIA, 220=Movement for Democracy (MPD), 221=African Party for Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV), 226=Cape Verdean Union Independent and Democratic (UCID), 227=Popular Party (PP), 260=Convention People's Party (CPP), 261=National Democratic Congress (NDC), 262=New Patriotic Party (NPP), 263=People's National Convention (PNC), 264=Progressive People's Party (PPP), 265=Democratic People's Party (DPP), 267=National Democratic Party (NDP), 300=Kenya Social Congress (KSC), 301=NARC Kenya, 302=Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), 303=Restore and Build Kenya (RBK), 304=SAFINA party, 305=The National Alliance (TNA), 306=United Democratic Front (UDF), 307=United Republican Party (URP), 308=Wiper Democratic Movement (WDM-K), 309=Jubilee Alliance Party (JAP)/Jubilee Party, 340=Democratic Congress (DC), 341=All Basotho Convention (ABC), 342=Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD), 343=Basotho National Party (BNP), 344=Popular Front for Democracy (PFD), 345=National Independent Party (NIP), 346=Lesotho People's Congress (LPC), 348=Marematlou Freedom Party (MFP), 349=Basotho Congress Party (BCP), 352=Alliance of Democrats (AD), 353=Movement for Economic Change (MEC), 354=Reformed Congress of Lesotho (RCL), 382=Alliance of Peace and Democracy (APD) – UPP & LPP, 383=National Democratic Coalition (NDC), 384=Liberty Party (LP), 386=Unity Party (UP), 387=National Democratic Party of Liberia (NDPL), 389=Coalition for Democratic Change (CDC), 393=All Liberia Coalition Party (ALCOP), 394=Liberia Reconstruction Party (LRP), 395=National Union for Democratic Progress (NUDP), 400=Victory for Change (VCP), 408=All Liberian Party (ALP), 409=People Unification Party (PUP), 410=Alternative National Congress (ANC), 422=AME (Antoko Miombon'Ezaka), 424=AREMA (Antokin'ny REvolisiona Malagasy),

425=AVI (Asa Vita no Ifampitsarana), 428=LEADER FANILO (Libéralisme Economique et Action DEMocratique pour la Réconciliation), 429=Mahaleo tena, 432=MDM (Miara Mientana ho an'ny Demokrasia), 433=MONIMA (MOuvement National pour l'Indépendance de Madagascar), 434=MTS (Malagasy Tonga Saina), 435=RPSD-Vaovao (Rassemblement pour la Social Démocratie), 437=TGV (Tanora malaGasy Vonona), 438=TIM (Tiako i Madagasikara), 440=MAPAR (Miaraka Amin'ny Prezida Andry Rajoelina), 441=HVM (Hery Vaovao ho an'i Madagasikara), 443=MMM (Malagasy Miara-Miainga), 461=Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), 462=Malawi Forum for Unity and Development (MAFUNDE), 463=Malawi Congress Party (MCP), 464=National Salvation Front (NSF), 467=People's Party (PP), 471=United Democratic Front (UDF), 474=United Independent Party (UIP), 500=ADEMA – PASJ / Dionkounda Traoré / Tiémoko Sangaré, 501=ADP – Maliba / Boubacar Diallo, 502=ASMA – CFP / Soumeylou Boubèye Maïga, 503=CDS – Mogo Tigiya / Mamadou Blaise Sangaré, 505=CNID – Faso Yiriwa Ton / Mountaga Tall, 506=CODEM / Ousséni Amion Guindo ou Poulô, 507=FARE – An Ka Wuli / Modibo Sidibé, 508=MIRIA / mamdou Kassa Traoré, 509=MPR / Choguel Kokala Maïga, 510=PARENA / Tiébilé Dramé, 511=PDES / ATT, 512=RPM / Ibrahim Boubacar Kéïta ou IBK, 513=SADI / Oumar Mariko / Cheick Oumar Sissoko, 514=UDD / Tiéman Hubert Coulibaly, 515=UM-RDA / Badara Aliou Macalou, 516=URD / Soumaïla Cissé, 517=YELEMA / Moussa Mara, 540=Frelimo (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique), 541=Renamo (Resistência Nacional Moçambicana), 542=MDM (Movimento Democrático Moçambicano), 543=PDD (Partido para Paz, Democracia e Desenvolvimento), 580=APP (All People's Party), 582=COD (Congress of Democrats), 583=DPN (Democratic Party of Namibia), 584=DTA (DTA of Namibia), 585=MAG (Monitor Action Group), 587=NEFF (Namibia Economic Freedom Fighters), 588=NUDO (National Unity Democratic Organisation of Namibia), 589=RDP (Rally for Democracy and Progress), 590=RP (Republican Party of Namibia), 591=SWANU (Swanu of Namibia), 592=SWAPO (SWAPO Party of Namibia), 593=UDF (United Democratic Front of Namibia), 594=UPM (United People's Movement), 620=Advanced Congress of Democrats (ACD), 621=All Progressive Congress (APC), 622=Alliance for Democracy (AD), 623=African Democratic Congress (ADC), 624=All Nigeria People's Party (ANPP), 625=All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA), 626=All People's Party (APP), 628=Conscience People's Congress (CPC), 631=Democratic People's Party (DPP), 634=Labour Party (LP), 638=People's Democratic Party (PDP), 639=Progressive People's Alliance (PPA), 640=Peoples Progressive Party (PPP), 642=People's Salvation Party (PSP), 643=Social Democratic Mega Party, 660=Abdoulaye WADE (Parti Démocratique Sénégalais), 661=Ousmane Tanor DIENG (Parti Socialiste), 662=Moustapha NIASSE (Alliance des Forces du Progrès), 663=Macky SALL (Alliance Pour la République), 664=Idrissa SECK (REWMI), 665=Diégane SENE (Union pour le Renouveau Démocratique), 669=JEF JEL, 671=Abdoulaye BALDE (UCS), 672=Malick GAKOU (Grand Parti), 674=Serigne Mansour SY DJAMIL (Beuss du Niak), 677=Abdoul MBAYE (ACT), 678=Ousmane SONKO (Pastef), 679=Macky SALL (Benno Book Yakaar, 684=Serigne Modou KARA MBACKE (Parti de la vérité pour le dévelo, 685=El Hadji Issa SALL (PUR), 686=Khalifa SALL (Manko Taxawou Sénégal), 700=African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP), 702=African National Congress (ANC), 704=Congress of the People (COPE), 705=Democratic Alliance (DA), 708=Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), 711=New National Party / Nuwe Nasionale Party (NNP), 712=Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), 716=Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), 726=National Freedom Party (NFP), 740=Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM), 741=The Civic United Front (CUF), 742=Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA), 744=National Convention for Construction and Reform (NCCR – MAGEUZI), 746=United People's Democratic Party (UPDP), 758=Alliance for Change and Transparency (ACT-Wazalendo), 780=National Resistance Movement [NRM], 781=Forum for Democratic Change [FDC], 782=Democratic Party [DP], 784=Uganda Peoples Congress [UPC], 788=The Justice Forum (JEEMA), 790=Go Foward, 791=Uganda Farmers Party, 821=Forum for Democracy & Development (FDD), 823=Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), 825=National Restoration Party (NAREP), 826=Patriotic Front (PF), 827=United National Independence Party (UNIP), 828=United Party for National Development (UPND), 860=Movement for Democratic Change- Tsvangirai [MDC-T], 861=Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front [ZANU-PF], 862=Movement for Democratic Change –Mutambara [MDC-M], 863=Mavambo. Kusile. Dawn [MKD] – Simba Makoni, 864=Zimbabwe African People's Union- Dabengwa [ZAPU-Dabengwa], 866=MDC People's Democratic Party [Tendai Biti], 867=Zimbabwe People First [ZIMPF] – Joice Mujuru, 900=Mouvement Socialiste Mauricien, 901=Mouvement Libérateur (ML), 902=Parti

Mauricien Social Democrate, 903=Parti Travailleiste, 904=Mouvement Militant Mauricien, 906=Front Solidarité Mauricien (FSM), 908=Organisation du Peuple Rodriguais (OPR), 909=Mouvement Rodriguais (MR), 930=Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), 931=All People's Congress (APC), 932=People's Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC), 933=National Democratic Alliance (NDA), 936=Coalition for Change Party (C4C), 937=National Grand Coalition (NGC), 1100=Alliance Nigérienne pour la Démocratie et le Progrès (ANDP Zaman Lahiya), 1101=Convention Démocratique et Sociale (CDS Rahama), 1102=Mouvement National pour la Société de Développement (MNSD Nassara), 1103=Mouvement Démocratique Nigérien pour une Fédération Africaine (MODEN FA Lumana), 1104=Parti Nigérien pour la Démocratie et le Socialisme (PNDS Tarayya), 1105=Parti Nigérien pour l'Auto gestion (PNA Al'Oumat, 1106=Rassemblement pour la Démocratie et le Progrès (RDP Jama'a), 1107=Rassemblement Social Démocrate (RSD Gaskia), 1108=Union pour la Démocratie et le Progrès Social (UDPS Amana), 1109=Mouvement Patriotique Nigérien (MPN-Kishin Kassa), 1110=MPR Jamhuriya, 1111=Ingantchi, 1140=UNIR (Union pour la République) de Faure Essozimna Gnassingb, 1141=UFC (Union des Forces de Changement) de Gilchrist Olympio, 1142=ANC (Alliance Nationale pour le Changement) de Jean-Pierre F, 1143=CAR (Comité d'Action pour le Renouveau) de Me Yaovi Agboyibo, 1144=CDPA (Convention Démocratique des Peuples Africains) du Prof, 1145=PRR (Parti du Renouveau et de la Rédemption) de Nicolas Laws, 1148=ADDI (Alliance des Démocrates pour le Développement Intégral, 1149=CST (Collectif « Sauvons le Togo »), 1150=Arc-en-Ciel, 1151=PNP (Parti National Panafricain de Tikpi Atchadam), 1220=Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM), 1221=Social Democratic Front (SDF), 1222=National Union For Democracy and Progress (UNDP), 1223=Union Démocratique du Cameroun (UDC), 1224=Mouvement for Progressiste (MP), 1260=Rassemblement des Républicains (RDR, 1261=Parti Démocratique de Cote d'Ivoire (PDCI), 1262=Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI), 1263=Union pour la Démocratie et pour la Paix en Cote d'Ivoire (U, 1265=Mouvement des Forces d'Avenir (MFA), 1266=Parti Ivoirien des Travailleurs (PIT), 1268=Union Pour la Cote d'Ivoire (UPCI), 1269=RHDP, 1300=Rassemblement du Peuple de Guinée (RPG), 1301=Union des Forces Démocratiques de Guinée (UFDG), 1302=Union des Forces Républicaines (UFR), 1303=Parti de l'Espoir pour le Développement National (PEDN), 1304=Union pour le Progrès de la Guinée (UPG), 1305=Rassemblement pour le Développement Intégré de la Guinée (RDIG), 1306=Bloc Libéral (BL), 1307=Union Démocratique de Guinée (UDG), 1308=Dadis, 1500=The Justice and Development Party (PJD), 1501=The Authenticity and Modernity Party (PAM), 1502=Istiqlal Party (PI), 1503=The National Rally of Independents (RNI), 1504=The Popular Movement (MP), 1505=Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USSP), 1506=The Constitutional Union (UC), 1507=Party of Progress and Socialism (PPS), 1508=Social and Democratic Movement (MDS), 1540=National Congress Party, 1541=Umma party, 1542=Democratic Unionist Party, 1543=Popular Congress Party, 1544=Communist Party, 1545=Sudanese congress Party, 1546=National Movement for Reform and Development, 1580=Nidaa Tounes, 1581=Ennahdha, 1582=The Free Patriotic Union, 1583=The Popular Front, 1584=Afek tounes, 1585=Tunisia Al Irada Movement (Hirak), 1586=The initiative, 1587=The people's Movement, 1588=The democratic current, 1589=Machrou3=Tounes, 1660=Acção Democrática e Independente (ADI), 1661=Movimento para a Libertação de S. Tomé e Príncipe (MLSTP/PSD), 1662=Partido da Convergência Democrática (PCD), 1663=Movimento para a Mudança e Progresso do Príncipe, 1664=União Democrática dos Cidadãos para a Mudança e Desenvolvimento (UDD), 1700=PDG (Parti Démocratique Gabonais), 1701=UN (Union Nationale), 1702=UPG (Union du Peuple Gabonais), 1703=CLR (Centre des Libéraux Réformateurs), 1704=DN (Démocratie Nouvelle), 1740=Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction (APRC), 1741=Gambia Democratic Congress (GDC), 1742=National Reconciliation Party (NRP), 1743=People's Democratic Organisation for Independence and Socialism (PDOIS), 1744=People's Progressive Party (PPP), 1745=Gambia Party for Democracy and Progress (GPDP), 1746=National Convention Party (NCP), 1747=Gambia Moral Congress (GMC), 1748=United Democratic Party (UDP), 9995=Other, 9997=Not applicable, 9998=Refused to answer, 9999=Don't know, 9996=Not asked in the country, -1=Missing

Source: Zambia 96

d. Free and fair elections

Question Number: Q23

Question: On the whole, how would you rate the freeness and fairness of the last national election, held in [20xx]. Was it:

Variable Label: Q23. Freeness and fairness of the last national election

Values: 1-4, 8, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Not free and fair, 2=Free and fair, with major problems, 3=Free and fair, but with minor problems, 4=Completely free and fair, 8=Do not understand the question, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

Notes: Year of last national election was inserted in each country. See country questionnaires for details.

e. Economic performance Index

Question Number: Q56A

Question: Now let's speak about the present government of this country. How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Managing the economy?

Variable Label: Q56a. Handling managing the economy

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56B

Question: Now let's speak about the present government of this country. How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Improving the living standards of the poor.

Variable Label: Q56b. Handling improving living standards of the poor

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 4

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56C

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Creating jobs?

Variable Label: Q56c. Handling creating jobs

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56D

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Keeping prices down?

Variable Label: Q56d. Handling keeping prices down

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

f. Service delivery Index

Question Number: Q56F

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Reducing crime?

Variable Label: Q56f. Handling reducing crime

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very Badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56G

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Improving basic health services?

Variable Label: Q56g. Handling improving basic health services

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56H

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Addressing educational needs?

Variable Label: Q56h. Handling addressing educational needs

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56I

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Providing water and sanitation services?

Variable Label: Q56i. Handling providing water and sanitation services

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

Question Number: Q56J

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Ensuring everyone has enough to eat?

Variable Label: Q56j. Handling ensuring enough to eat

Values: 1-4, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

g. Government handling income gaps

Question Number: Q56E

Question: How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say: Narrowing gaps between rich and poor?

Variable Label: Q56e. Handling narrowing income gaps

Values: 1-4, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 1=Very badly, 2=Fairly badly, 3=Fairly well, 4=Very well, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

h. Evaluations of the President's performance

Question Number: Q58A

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the following people have performed their jobs over the past twelve months, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? [NAME OF PRESIDENT]

Variable Label: Q58a. Performance: President

Values: 1-4, 7, 9, 8, 99, -1

Value Labels: 1=Strongly disapprove, 2=disapprove, 3=Approve, 4=Strongly approve, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 8=Refused to answer, 99=Not asked in the country, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

* The question asked about the most powerful executive role in the country, whether the President or the Prime Minister. If there was a secondary leader, those are included in country-specific questions. Refer to country data sets.

* The following countries asked about their President: BEN, BFO, BOT, CAM, CDI, CVE, GAB, GAM, GHA, GUI, KEN, LIB, MAD, MLI, MLW, MOZ, NAM, NGR, NIG, SAF, SEN, STP, SRL, SUD, TAN, TOG, UGA, ZAM, ZIM

* The following countries asked about their Prime Minister: LES, MAU, MRC, TUN

* Not asked in Swaziland/eSwatini

i. Change in levels of corruption

Question Number: Q45

Question: In your opinion, over the past year, has the level of corruption in this country increased, decreased, or stayed the same?

Variable Label: Q45. Level of corruption

Values: 1-5, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 1=Increased a lot, 2=Increased somewhat, 3=Stayed the same, 4=Decreased somewhat, 5=Decreased a lot, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Transparency International

Note: Interviewer probed for strength of opinion.

j. Perceived corruption in the executive and legislative

Question Number: Q44A

Question: How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: The President and Officials in his Office?

Variable Label: Q44a. Corruption: office of the Presidency

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=None, 1=Some of them, 2=Most of them, 3=All of them, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

* The question asked about the most powerful executive role in the country, whether the President or the Prime Minister. If there was a secondary leader, those are included in country-specific data sets.

* The following countries asked about their President: BEN, BFO, BOT, CAM, CDI, CVE, GAB, GAM, GHA, GUI, KEN, LIB, MAD, MLI, MLW, MOZ, NAM, NGR, NIG, SAF, SEN, STP, SRL, SUD, TAN, TOG, UGA, ZAM, ZIM

* The following countries asked about their Prime Minister: LES, MAU, MRC, TUN

* Not asked in SWZ

Question Number: Q44B

Question: How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say: Members of Parliament?

Variable Label: Q44b. Corruption: Members of Parliament

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=None, 1=Some of them, 2=Most of them, 3=All of them, 9=Don't know/Haven't heard enough, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing.

Source: SAB

Notes: Question text referred to "Member of Parliament" or "Representative to the National Assembly" as appropriate in each country. See country questionnaires for details.

1.4 Sociodemographic control variables

a. Age

Question Number: Q1

Question: How old are you?

Variable Label: Q1. Age

Values: 18-110, 998, 999, -1

Value Labels: 998=Refused, 999=Don't know, -1=Missing

b. Gender

Question Number: Q101

Question: Respondent's gender

Variable Label: Q101. Gender of respondent

Values: 1, 2, -1

Value Labels: 1=Male, 2=Female, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Note: Answered by interviewer

c. Location

Question Number: URBRUR

Question: PSU/EA

Variable Label: Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit

Values: 1-3, 460

Value Labels: 1=Urban, 2=Rural, 3=Semi-Urban, 460=Peri-Urban

Note: Answered by interviewer

d. Education

Question Number: Q97

Question: What is your highest level of education?

Variable Label: Q97. Education of respondent

Values: 0-9, 99, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=No formal schooling, 1=Informal schooling only (including Koranic schooling), 2=Some primary schooling, 3=Primary school completed, 4=Intermediate school or Some secondary school / high school, 5=Secondary school / high school completed, 6=Post-secondary qualifications, other than university e.g. a diploma or degree from a polytechnic or college, 7=Some university, 8=University completed, 9=Post-graduate, 99=Don't know [Do not read], 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Appendix 2: Overview table of variable name, question text, responses and scales, and descriptive statistics for Level 1 control variables used in the multi-level regression analyses. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016- 2018).

Variable	Question text	Responses/scale	Descriptives
Lived Poverty Index	Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough food to eat? Gone without enough clean water for home use? Gone without medicines or medical treatment? Gone without enough fuel to cook your food? Gone without a cash income?	Additive index. Index scale: No poverty (0), low poverty (1), moderate poverty (2), high poverty (3)	Min: 0, Max: 3; Mean: 1.53; SD=0.937
Asset Index	Which of these things do you or anyone in your household own? Radio; Television; Mobile phone; Motor vehicle; Bank account	Additive index. Index scale runs from 0 (no assets) to 12 (all assets)	Min: 0, Max: 12; Mean: 5.75; SD=3.24
Free and fair elections	On the whole, how would you rate the freeness and fairness of the last national election, held in [20xx]?	Not free and fair (1); Free and fair with major problems (2); Free and fair with minor problems (3), Completely free and fair (4)	Min: 1, Max: 4; Mean: 3.02; SD=1.102
Economic performance of government	How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say? Managing the economy; Improving the living standards of the poor; Creating jobs; Keeping prices stable	Additive index. Index scale runs from 4 (very bad) to 16 (very good)	Min: 4, Max: 16; Mean: 7.81; SD=2.97

Variable	Question text	Responses/scale	Descriptives
Social services performance of government	How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say? Reducing crime; Improving basic health services; Addressing educational needs; Providing water and sanitation services; Ensuring everyone has enough to eat	Additive index. Index scale runs from 5 (very bad) to 20 (very good)	Min: 5, Max: 20; Mean: 11.81; SD=3.62
Change in levels of corruption	In your opinion, over the past year, has the level of corruption in this country increased, decreased, or stayed the same?	Recoded from survey format. Scale runs from: Decreased a lot (1); Decreased (2); Stayed the same (3); Increased (4); Increased a lot (5)	Min: 1, Max: 5; Mean: 3.61; SD=1.33
Perceived corruption in the presidency	How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? The President and Officials in his Office	None (0); Some of them (1); Most of them (2); All of them (3)	Min: 0, Max: 3; Mean: 1.37; SD=0.934
Perceived corruption among MPs	How many of the following people do you think are involved in corruption, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? Members of Parliament		Min: 0, Max: 3; Mean: 1.42; SD=0.877
Incumbent partisan	Do you feel close to any particular political party? Which party is that?	0=no (affiliation with other party); 1=yes (feels close to the incumbent party)	46,9% feel close to other party; 53,1% feel close to incumbent party (of those who feel close to any party)

Appendix 3. Variables used in the figures in the introduction (Afrobarometer Round 7 data, 2016- 2018).

a. Political leaders serve their own interests

Question Number: Q50

Question: Do you think that the leaders of political parties in this country are more concerned with serving the interests of the people, or more concerned with advancing their own political ambitions, or haven't you heard enough to say?

Variable Label: Q50. Leaders serve interests of people or their own

Values: 1-5, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1= More to serve their own political ambitions – strongly agree, 2= More to serve their own political ambitions – agree 3= Neither agree nor disagree 4= More to serve the people – agree 5= More to serve the people – strongly agree 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

b. MPs don't listen

Question Number: Q59A

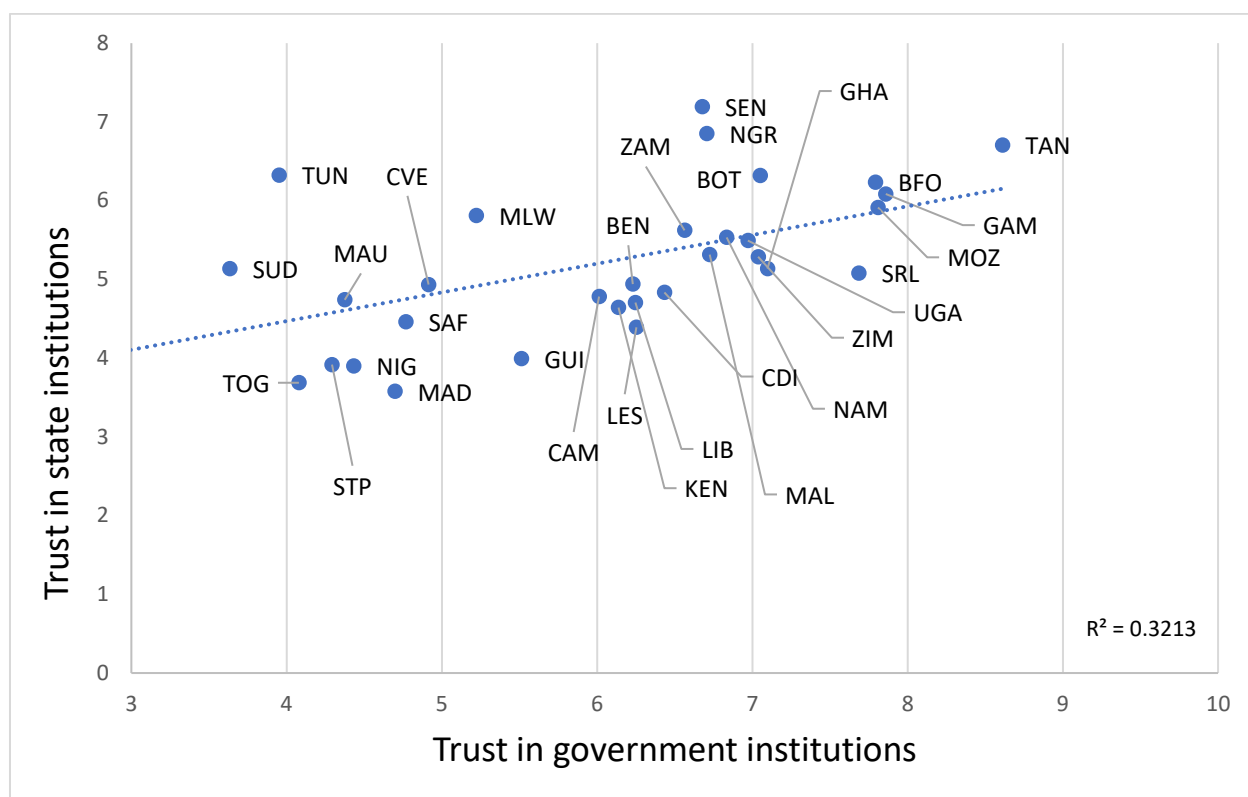
Question: How much of the time do you think the following try their best to listen to what people like you have to say: Members of Parliament?

Variable Label: Q59a. MPs listen

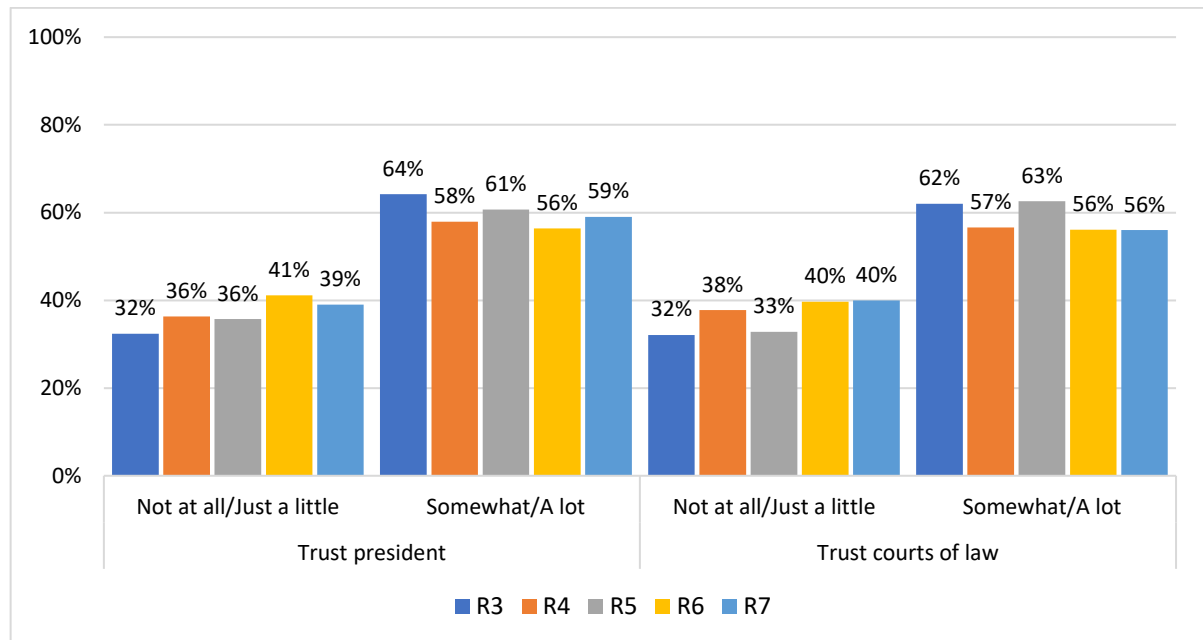
Values: 0-3, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never 1=Only sometimes, 2=Often, 3=Always, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Appendix 5: Correlation of trust in government and state institutions.
33 countries. n=39733. Afrobarometer Round 7 data (2016- 2018).



Appendix 6: Trust in president and courts between 2005 and 2018. 18 countries³⁷⁴. Afrobarometer Rounds 3-7 (2005- 2018).



³⁷⁴ Round 3: N=25085; Round 4: N=25296; Round 5: N=32403; Round 6: N=32366; Round 7: N=26494

6. Appendix of Chapter 6

Appendix 1: Variables used in the analyses of Chapter 6 (source: Afrobarometer).

1.1 Dependent variables

a. Vote in national election

Question Number: Q22

Question: Understanding that some people were unable to vote in the most recent national election in [20xx], which of the following statements is true for you?

Variable Label: Q22. Voting in the most recent national election

Values: 0-8, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=You were not registered to vote, 1=You voted in the elections, 2=You decided not to vote, 3=You could not find the polling station, 4=You were prevented from voting, 5=You did not have time to vote, 6=You did not vote because you could not find your name in the voters' register, 7=Did not vote for some other reason, 8=You were too young to vote, 9=Don't Know/Can't Remember, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3 and Round 6.

Notes: Year of last national election was inserted in each country. See country questionnaires for details.

b. Community activity index:

Question Number: Q21A

Question: Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year. If not, would you do this if you had the chance: Attended a community meeting?

Variable Label: Q21a. Attend a community meeting

Values: 0-4, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=No, would never do this, 1=No, but would do if had the chance, 2=Yes, once or twice, 3=Yes, several times, 4=Yes, often, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Question Number: Q21B

Question: Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year. If not, would you do this if you had the chance: Got together with others to raise an issue?

Variable Label: Q21b. Join the others to raise an issue

Values: 0-4, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=No, would never do this, 1=No, but would do if had the chance, 2=Yes, once or twice, 3=Yes, several times, 4=Yes, often, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Question Number: Q26A

Question: Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens when they are dissatisfied with government performance. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year. If not, would you do this if you had the chance: Joined others in your community to request action from government?

Variable Label: Q26a. Join others to request government action

Values: 0-4, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=No, would never do this, 1=No, but would do if had the chance, 2=Yes, once or twice, 3=Yes, several times, 4=Yes, often, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Zambia96

c. Contacting index:

Question Number: Q25A

Question: During the past year, how often have you contacted any of the following persons about some important problem or to give them your views: A local government councilor?

Variable Label: Q25a. Contact local government councilor

Values: 0-3, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Only once, 2=A few times, 3=Often, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Adapted from Zambia96

Notes: Name of appropriate local government representative was inserted in each country. See country questionnaires for details.

Question Number: Q25B

Question: During the past year, how often have you contacted any of the following persons about some important problem or to give them your views: [A Member of Parliament]?

Variable Label: Q25b. Contact MP

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Only once, 2=A few times, 3=Often, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Adapted from Zambia96

Notes: Question text referred to "Member of Parliament" or "Representative to the National Assembly" as appropriate in each country. See country questionnaires for details.

Question Number: Q25C

Question: During the past year, how often have you contacted any of the following persons about some important problem or to give them your views: An official of a government agency?

Variable Label: Q25c. Contact official of a government agency

Values: 0-3, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Only once, 2=A few times, 3=Often, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Adapted from Zambia96

Question Number: Q25D

Question: During the past year, how often have you contacted any of the following persons about some important problem or to give them your views: A political party official?

Variable Label: Q25d. Contact political party official

Values: 0-3, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Only once, 2=A few times, 3=Often, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 5

Question Number: Q26C

Question: Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens when they are dissatisfied with government performance. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year. If not, would you do this if you had the chance: Contacted a government official to ask for help or make a complaint?

Variable Label: Q26c. Contact official for help

Values: 0-4, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No, would never do this, 1=No, but would if had the chance, 2=Yes, once or twice, 3=Yes, several times, 4=Yes, often, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round5

d. Protesting

Question Number: Q26E

Question: Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens when they are dissatisfied with government performance. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year. If not, would you do this if you had the chance: Participated in a demonstration or protest march?

Variable Label: Q26e. Attend a demonstration or protest march

Values: 0-4, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=No, would never do this, 1=No, but would do if had the chance, 2=Yes, once or twice, 3=Yes, several times, 4=Yes, often, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round5

1.2 Independent Variables (level 1)

a. Perceived relative living situation

Question Number: Q5

Question: In general, how do you rate your living conditions compared to those of other [ENTER NATIONALITY]?

Variable Label: Q5. Your living conditions vs. others

Values: 1-5, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 1=Much worse, 2=Worse, 3=Same, 4=Better, 5=Much better, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

b. Lived Poverty index

Question Number: Q8A

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough food to eat?

Variable Label: Q8a. How often gone without food

Values: 0-4, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Question Number: Q8B

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough clean water for home use?

Variable Label: Q8b. How often gone without water

Values: 0-4, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Question Number: Q8C

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without medicines or medical treatment?

Variable Label: Q8c. How often gone without medical care

Values: 0-4, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: NDB

Question Number: Q8D

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without enough fuel to cook your food?

Variable Label: Q8d. How often gone without cooking fuel

Values: 0-4, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

Question Number: Q8E

Question: Over the past year, how often, if ever, have you or anyone in your family: Gone without a cash income?

Variable Label: Q8e. How often gone without a cash income

Values: 0-4, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Just once or twice, 2=Several times, 3=Many times, 4=Always, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

c. Assets index

Question Number: Q89A

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Radio?

Variable Label: Q89a. Own radio

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

Question Number: Q89B

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Television?

Variable Label: Q89b. Own television

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

Question Number: Q89C

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Motor vehicle or motorcycle?

Variable Label: Q89c. Own motor vehicle, car, or motorcycle

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

Question Number: Q89D

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Computer?

Variable Label: Q89d. Own computer

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 7

Question Number: Q89E

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Bank account?

Variable Label: Q89e. Own bank account

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 7

Question Number: Q89F

Question: Which of these things do you personally own? [If no, ask:] Does anyone else in your household own one: Mobile phone?

Variable Label: Q89f. Own mobile phone

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=No one in household owns, 1=Yes, someone else in household owns, 2=Yes, personally owns, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 3

1.3 Control Variables (level 1)

a. Education

Question Number: Q97

Question: What is your highest level of education?

Variable Label: Q97. Education of respondent

Values: 0-9, 99, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=No formal schooling, 1=Informal schooling only (including Koranic schooling), 2=Some primary schooling, 3=Primary school completed, 4=Intermediate school or Some

secondary school / high school, 5=Secondary school / high school completed , 6=Post-secondary qualifications, other than university e.g. a diploma or degree from a polytechnic or college, 7=Some university, 8=University completed, 9=Post-graduate, 99=Don't know [Do not read], 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

b. Age

Question Number: Q1

Question: How old are you?

Variable Label: Q1. Age

Values: 18-105, 998-999, -1

Value Labels: 98=Refused to answer, 999=Don't know, -1=Missing

c. Gender

Question Number: Q101

Question: Respondent's gender

Variable Label: Q101. Gender of respondent

Values: 1, 2

Value Labels: 1=Male, 2=Female

Source: SAB

Note: Answered by interviewer

d. Employment status

Question Number: Q95

Question: Do you have a job that pays a cash income? If yes, is it full-time or part-time? If no, are you presently looking for a job?

Variable Label: Q95. Employment status

Values: 0-3, 9, 98, -1

Value Labels: 0=No (not looking), 1=No (looking), 2=Yes, part time, 3= Yes, full time, 9=Don't know, 98=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: SAB

e. Location

Question Number: URBRUR

Question: PSU/EA

Variable Label: Urban or Rural Primary Sampling Unit

Values: 1-2

Value Labels: 1=urban, 2=rural

Note: Answered by interviewer

f. Discussing

Question Number: Q13

Question: When you get together with your friends or family, would you say you discuss political matters:

Variable Label: Q13. Discuss politics

Values: 0-2, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Never, 1=Occasionally, 2=Frequently, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Adapted from Zambia96.

g. Membership

Question Number: Q20B

Question: Let's turn to your role in the community. Now I am going to read out a list of groups that people join or attend. For each one, could you tell me whether you are an official leader, an active member, an inactive member, or not a member: Some other voluntary association or community group?

Variable Label: Q20b. Member of voluntary association or community group

Values: 0-3, 8, 9, -1

Value Labels: 0=Not a Member, 1=Inactive member, 2=Active member, 3=Official leader, 8=Refused, 9=Don't know, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 4

h. Partisan of a political party

Question Number: Q88A

Question: Do you feel close to any particular political party?

Variable Label: Q88a. Close to political party

Values: 0-1, 8, 9, 99, -1

Value Labels: 0=No, not close to any party, 1=Yes, feels close to a party, 8=Refused to answer, 9=Don't know, 99=Not asked in the country, -1=Missing

Source: Zambia 96

i. Fear intimidation during elections

Question Number: Q40

Question: During election campaigns in this country, how much do you personally fear becoming a victim of political intimidation or violence?

Variable Label: Q40. How much fear political intimidation or violence

Values: 0-3, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=A lot, 1=Somewhat, 2=A little bit, 3=Not at all, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing.

Source: Afrobarometer Round 4

j. Fear violence during protests

Question Number: Q60C

Question: In any society, people will sometimes disagree with one another. These disagreements occasionally escalate into physical violence. Please tell me whether, in the past two years, you have ever personally feared any of the following types of violence? [If yes] Have you actually personally experienced this type of violence in the past two years? Violence occurring during a public protest or march.

Variable Label: Q60c. Feared violence during public protest

Values: 0-2, 9, 8, -1

Value Labels: 0=No, never ,1=Yes, Feared, but didn't experience, 2=Yes, Feared and experienced, 9=Don't know, 8=Refused to answer, -1=Missing

Source: Afrobarometer Round 7