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Towards a silent revolution?

South African voters during the first years of democracy 1994 – 2006

Thesis Presented for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
In the Department of Political Science, University of Cape Town

March 2009

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Supervisors

Professor Robert Mattes
Professor Jeremy Seekings

Declaration Form

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work, both in concept and execution, and that apart from the normal guidance from my supervisor, I have received no assistance. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other University. It is submitted for the Degree of Doctor in Philosophy in the Department of Political Studies at the University of the Cape Town, South Africa.

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August 2008

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Abstract

A Silent Revolution: South African voters during the first years of democracy 1994 – 2006

Collette Schulz-Herzenberg, 2008

Although South Africa has established a functioning democracy scholars continue to express serious concerns about the quality and stability of its new democratic dispensation and the potential for its consolidation. In particular, they question the extent of genuine multi-party competition due to the electoral imbalances in the political party system and the static nature of voting outcomes that have characterised South African politics since 1994.

South Africa has undergone rapid socio-economic and political transformation between 1994 and 2006, factors that many electoral analysts argue may change 'frozen' cleavage structures and electoral behaviour. These processes may therefore have important consequences for the partisan responses of social groups, the subsequent composition of partisan coalitions, and the behavioural motivations of individual voters.

This study consists of a longitudinal analysis of change in first, the level and direction of partisanship among the entire electorate, second, the social groups within the ANC's partisan coalition, and third, the motivations of individual voters by comparing different electorates over twelve years (1994-2006), using a series of cross-sectional surveys. I explore the relative influence of competing theoretical models on partisanship such as demographic and sociological factors, evaluations of government performance, party images, social networks, and the voter's cognitive skills. I also explore the relative mix and intersection of these models on partisanship. Findings are based on a range of statistical analyses such as cross-tabulations of structural and demographic variables, bivariate analyses and multivariate data analyses (logistic regression).

South African voters, much like voters elsewhere, respond to a multitude of short and long term factors. During the first decade of democracy the various theoretical models all contribute to our knowledge of partisanship in South Africa. However, they are not of equal importance. While multiple factors drive partisanship, sociological factors and party images dominate voter choice. Yet, subtle but potentially profound shifts in the motivations of voters appear to be gaining ground. Performance evaluations play an increasingly more important role over time. Cognitive awareness indirectly affects voter choice by emphasizing different types of information, but still plays a minimal role in voter behaviour.

There are several reasons to be optimistic that electoral fluidity might increase among the South African electorate. The first reason is that the overall impact of sociological factors

(including race) on partisanship has declined during the first decade of democracy. Fixed social cleavages therefore hold less sway than ever before. Furthermore, South African voters do not appear to base their partisan stances on the basis of primordial racial or ethnic loyalties regardless of political performance. Instead, I find that the indirect influence of race is complex and feeds into voter decision-making via multiple channels, namely through party images and evaluations of government performance. Voters also appear to look at short term issues such as retrospective economic evaluations and future economic prospects, as well as party and candidate characteristics such as trustworthiness. I find that the influence of government performance evaluations on partisanship has increased over time, indicating that partisan choices are increasingly motivated by short-term issues. These factors are capable of producing partisan change or fluidity within the electorate, which should improve the quality of democracy in the long run as incumbents are forced to consider popular opinion. Finally, the fluctuations in partisan alignment, and the clear dealignment trend among opposition supporters, should free more voters to move their partisan support to new parties at elections.

However, several of my findings hold negative implications for electoral politics. The first concerns party images. Voters' images of the racialised nature of political parties remain quite rigid even after twelve years of democratic elections. Voters are unlikely to change their partisan allegiances because they see 'other' parties to be exclusive of their interests, or are uncertain of who they represent. In addition, the social environments of many voters generate homogenous partisan signals that reinforce existing partisan proclivities and perceptions about the racial exclusivity of political parties. In addition, opposition parties have failed to broaden their appeal among the electorate. On the whole, they remain weak and ineffective. Together, these factors are bound to minimise partisan fluidity. The chance for significant realignment is diminished and electoral predictability increases.

Finally, the study notes several concerns for the quality and stability of democracy. Any increases in dealignment is likely to have negative effects on the quality of South Africa's democracy as people become less inclined to identify with or support any party at elections. A pre-dominant party system will continue into the future but its electoral margins will probably be based on decreasing percentages of the overall voter population. The second concern relates to the continuity of a predominant party system. Elections are unlikely to act as a meaningful vehicle for popular control of government if voters are unwilling to change their partisan allegiances. In the face of continued one-party dominance, I conclude that the greatest challenge for democracy during the next decade will be maintaining high levels of incumbent responsiveness and accountability towards citizens.

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Glossary & Acronyms

ACDP	African Christian Democratic Party
AEB	Afrikander Eenheids Beweging
ANC	African National Congress
AsgiSA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa
BIG	Basic Income Grant
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
DA	Democratic Alliance
DP	Democratic Party
FA	Federal Alliance
FF+	Freedom Front Plus
GEAR	Growth Employment and Redistribution policy
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ID	Independent Democrats
IDASA	Institute for Democracy in South Africa
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
NNP	New National Party
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
UDM	United Democratic Movement
USA	United States of America
VAP	Voting Age Population

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Chapter 1

A Decade of Multi-Party Elections and Social Change

1.1 Introduction to the study

Although South Africa has established a functioning democracy scholars continue to express serious concerns about the quality and stability of its new democratic dispensation and the potential for consolidation. In particular, they question the extent of genuine multi-party competition due to the electoral imbalances in the political party system and the static nature of voting outcomes that have characterised South African elections since 1994.

South Africa has undergone rapid socio-economic and political transformation between 1994 and 2006, factors that many electoral analysts argue might change 'frozen' cleavage structures and electoral behaviour. These processes may therefore have important consequences for the partisan responses of social groups, the subsequent composition of partisan coalitions, and the behavioural motivations of individual voters.

To search for indications of emerging electoral fluidity I use data from nine separate nationally representative surveys (conducted between 1994 and 2006) to investigate the motivations of South African voters and changes to the demographic support bases of parties. In examining changes in the South African electorate during the first decade of democracy I explore the relative influence of several sets of variables on partisanship such as demographic and sociological factors, evaluations of government performance and party images, and the voter's cognitive skills.

The findings inform us about the key motivations of South African voters during the first years of democracy. They also tell us about the ANC's ability to maintain its broad-based coalition as well as prospects for the quality and stability of democracy in South Africa.

1.2 Purpose of the study

There is general consensus among scholars that, at the formal level, South Africa has established a functioning democracy.¹ The Constitutional and institutional features necessary for a democratic dispensation are in place, including a Bill of Rights, a host of Chapter Nine 'watchdog' institutions, an independent judiciary, a Constitutional Court and legislature, a strong executive, a highly representative electoral system, free and fair elections, and a multi-party system. South Africa also enjoys the benefits of a vibrant civil society and a relatively

¹ Larry Diamond and Marc Plattner, *Democratisation in Africa* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1999); Freedom House. "Freedom in the World", 2004. www.freedomhouse.org/research/freeworld/2004/countryratings

diversified and critical media. The country's accomplishments in this regard have been internationally applauded.

However, beyond the formal endowments, scholars and activists alike continue to raise serious questions about the depth and stability, as well as the consolidation, of South Africa's democracy. Perhaps the most frequent object of their concerns are the electoral imbalances in the political party system and the static nature of voting outcomes that have continue to characterise South African elections since 1994. Scholars still doubt the existence of genuine multi-party competition due to the politicisation of numerically imbalanced racial cleavages, the weakness of opposition parties and the associated electoral dominance of the governing African National Congress (ANC).² The weakness of opposition parties stems from their inability to compete with the ANC's struggle credentials, their inability to advance alternative policies on the economy, and a culture or mindset of negativity and complaint.³ The dominance of the governing party is evident in its increased aggregate support from 63 percent in 1994 to a two-thirds majority in the 2004 elections with 69 percent. In a concomitant manner the proportion of the oppositions' share of the vote has declined and further fragmented among opposition parties.

Seeing South Africa through the prism of a highly divided society, scholars warn that the legacies of colonialism and apartheid encourage enduring and inflexible racial and ethnic cleavages that inform electoral behaviour.⁴ The 1994 elections were widely described as a 'racial or ethnic census', since the electoral outcome seemed to reflect a link between the voter and race or ethnicity. Twelve years later partisan support still appears racially aligned or, at least, motivated by notions of group politics.

Analysts anxiously search for signs that that people's political choices are beginning to be informed by more fluid, crosscutting interests rather than fixed group identities. The central concern is electoral competition, understood as the quantity of *mobile voting* or *electoral availability*.⁵ A truly competitive political party system therefore remains a key challenge to

² Roger Southall, "The Centralisation and Fragmentation of South Africa's Dominant Party System" *African Affairs* 97, 389 (1998): 443-469; Steven Friedman, "No easy stroll to dominance: party dominance, opposition and civil society in South Africa", in *The Awkward Embrace: one-party domination and democracy* ed. Hermann Giliomee and Charles Simkins, 97-126 (Cape Town: Tafelberg publishers, 1999); Schrire 2000; Mattes, Robert and Emmanuel Gyimah-Boadi. "The Quality of Two African Democracies." In Larry Diamond and Leonardo Morlino, 238-273. *Assessing the quality of democracy*. Journal of democracy book. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.

³ James Hamill, 'The Elephant and the Mice: Election 2004 and the Future of Opposition Politics in South Africa.' *The Round Table*, 93, 377 (2004): 691-708, 700.

⁴ Arend Lijphart, *Electoral Systems and Party Systems* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Donald Horowitz, *A Democratic South Africa? Constitutional Engineering in a Divided Society* (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1991).

⁵ Stephano Bartolini and Peter Mair. *Identity, Competition, and Electoral Availability: The Stabilisation of European electorates 1885-1985*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 286.

democracy in South Africa and the lack thereof inevitably holds negative implications for both the quality and stability of democracy.⁶

Electoral politics based on any form of ascriptive identities (with the associated static voting outcomes) can hinder the *quality* of a democracy because it undermines essential components such as competitiveness, accountability, responsiveness and equality. Democracy requires more than formal endowments. It demands a degree of uncertainty about the outcomes of political competition to ensure accountable and responsive government. If voting behaviour is motivated by fixed sociological and cultural factors such as race and ethnicity, there are no incentives for political uncertainty. When voters are constrained by strong cleavage identities they are unavailable to respond to the 'political market' created by political parties. Parties have little reason to try and persuade new voters and governments have little reason to consider voter reactions to public policy in terms of its impact on electoral prospects.

Predominant party systems also tend to generate a range of detrimental symptoms for democratic politics. In the first place, it tends to erode the important constitutional distinction between the state and party in power.⁷ When government cease to come and go, an insidious process of politicization takes place through which state officials and institutions adjust to the ideological and political priorities of the dominant party. The ruling party comes to treat the supposedly neutral state as its own instrument. Second, an extended period in power can engender complacency, arrogance and even corruption in the dominant party.⁸ When parties cease to 'fear the ballot box' they are likely to become unresponsive and ideologically entrenched.⁹ A dominant party, such as the ANC, is able to take the citizenry's vote for granted because it is not seriously threatened at the polls. If there is no threat to prospects for re-election the value of elections as a discipline to elite behaviour is eroded.¹⁰ Political uncertainty is good for democracy because it keeps politicians alert, and makes them responsive to the citizenry.¹¹ Furthermore, predominant party systems may lead to increased

⁶ Political scientists argue that ethnic parties and the politicization of racial and ethnic differences are presumed to constitute a major threat to democratic stability and that divided societies that comprise permanent majorities and minorities are equally problematic for the stability and quality of democracy. See Seymour Lipset, *Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* (London: Heinemann, 1983); Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (New Haven: Yale University Press) 1971; Robert Dahl, *Democracy and its Critics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); Lijphart, *Electoral Systems*; Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in plural societies: a comparative exploration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977); Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (New York: Harper, 1962); Andreas Schedler, "Taking Uncertainty Seriously: The Blurred Boundaries of Democratic Transition and Consolidation," *Democratization* 8, 4 (2001): 1-22; Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); Alvin Rabushka and Kenneth Shepsle, *Politics in Plural societies*, 1972.

⁷ Andrew Heywood, *Politics*. Third edition (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 287.

⁸ Hamill, 702.

⁹ Heywood, 287.

¹⁰ William Riker, *Liberalism against Populism: A confrontation between the theory of democracy and the theory of social choice* (San Francisco: W.H Freeman and Company, 1982).

¹¹ Adam Habib and Collette Herzenberg. "Popular Control over Decision-Makers". In *Democracy in the Time of Mbeki*, eds. Richard Calland and Paul Graham (Cape Town: Idasa Publishing, 2005), 168.

levels of political apathy as predetermined electoral outcomes de-energize the political system and cause stagnation among voters.¹² Overall, these circumstances diminish competition for political leadership and opportunities for elite rotation or government turnover.¹³ Political certainty about electoral outcomes and the prospects of re-election invites predictable politics, which in turn, signals the deterioration of responsive and accountable government to citizens.¹⁴

When static cleavages are reflected in electoral behaviour permanent majorities and minorities are often created along ascriptive lines. Minorities (whether racial or opinion based) then face an unequal contest for political power and become marginalised.¹⁵ Permanent losers are less likely to be heard and are therefore less equal. As Arblaster says, 'The existence of permanent minorities, whose aspirations, wishes and even principles are systematically ignored or overridden in the collective decision-making processes, can easily make a majoritarian system unjust and unworkable.'¹⁶ This in effect further weakens the quality of that democracy.¹⁷

These factors can lead to apathy, social instability and even violence, which may affect the overall *stability* or consolidation of a young democracy. Minorities that are continually denied access to power and feel excluded and discriminated against in the face of permanent majority rule may lose their allegiance to the regime.¹⁸ Where continual conflict occurs between two or more permanently defined groups and where one group perceives itself to be permanently underrepresented or short of political influence, political institutions can become dysfunctional. These conditions can lead to a stagnant political system or violent conflict rather than the use of institutional channels to deal with societal tensions. Horowitz considers census-type elections to be responsible for the decline or total breakdown of new democracies in places such as Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nigeria.¹⁹

Lipset concluded that a country's major political parties should attract supporters from various sections of society, to avoid a situation where the basic lines of conflict are not reflected and reinforced,

¹² Hamill, 702.

¹³ Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (New York: Harper, 1962), 269-271. Schumpeter highlighted the dangers that power monopolies can wreak on democratic competition. He believed competition for leadership to be of such importance that he framed it as the true test of the democratic system. The primary function of the electorate is to produce or evict a government, hence his emphasis on competition thereby reducing powers vested in the electorate to make direct decisions in a democracy.

¹⁴ Schedler, 19.

¹⁵ Dahl, *Democracy and its Critics*, 147. Anthony Arblaster, *Democracy*, 3rd edition. (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2002), 68.

¹⁶ Arblaster, 68.

¹⁷ Arend Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy, Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-six countries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 275-300, Diamond and Plattner, *Democratisation in Africa*.

¹⁸ Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy*, 33.

¹⁹ Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups*, 97.

*A stable democracy requires a situation in which all the major political parties include supporters from many segments of the population. A system in which the support of different parties corresponds too closely to basic social divisions cannot continue on a democratic basis, for it reflects a state of conflict so intense and clear-cut as to rule out compromise. Where parties are cut off from gaining support from a major stratum, they lose a major reason for compromise.*²⁰

O'Donnell and Schmitter argue that the practice of democracy institutionalizes 'normal' uncertainty in that democracy leads to level of certainty with respect to some aspects of the political game.²¹ Political actors, in other words, are aware that the democratic regime provides institutional parameters (or pre-established set of explicit rules of competition) that restrict uncertainty of future outcomes. Where the rules are successfully elaborated they lay the basis for 'contingent consent', which is the basis of modern political democracy. This is the burden of consent on the part of the winners and losers that they will be able to keep playing within the rules of democratic electoral competition.²² Political actors accept the rules of the game and find being minority or opposition an acceptable risk. The losers consent to living by the rules made by the winners since the losers have a chance to win in future elections.

1.3 South Africa's democratic elections

I now turn to a brief discussion of South African political parties and national election results, which are central to my analysis. The electoral dominance of the ANC governing party has steadily increased since 1994 at both national and provincial levels (see table 1.1). In 1994 the party took power with 63 percent of the national vote, and increased its share to 66 percent in the 1999 elections. By 2004 the ANC held 70 percent of the national vote. The party won a plurality of votes in all nine provinces, and a majority in seven, with only the Western Cape and Kwa-Zulu Natal (KZN) as exceptions.²³

In contrast to the ANC's increasing electoral dominance, the opposition's share of the vote has steadily declined and fragmented since 1994. Within this broad trend, there is a difference between the periods 1994-1999 and 1999-2004. The largest increase in the number of opposition parties represented in the National Assembly occurred between 1994 and 1999. Between 1999 and 2004 there has been a slight concentration of the opposition vote behind the largest opposition party, though as a bloc, the opposition saw its vote share decrease.²⁴ The largest opposition party in 2004, the Democratic Alliance (DA), won only 12

²⁰ Lipset, 12-13.

²¹ Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe C Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 67.

²² O'Donnell and Schmitter, 59.

²³ Jessica Piombo and Lia Nijzink, *Electoral Politics in South Africa, Assessing the First Democratic Decade* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 258.

²⁴ Ibid.

percent of the seats in National Parliament, a decline from the 20 percent of seats won by the biggest opposition party in 1994 (the National Party). The fragmentation of the opposition in 2004 is highlighted by the fact that twenty different parties contested the election, with thirteen gaining representation in parliament. The share of the vote for represented opposition parties in 2004 was 30 percent. In contrast, in 1994 just six opposition parties got into the National Assembly, while in 1999 this doubled to twelve.²⁵

Table 1.1: National election results: 1994-2004

	Votes			% Votes			Seats		
	1994	1999	2004	1994	1999	2004	1994	1999	2004
ACDP	88,104	228,975	250,272	0.45	1.43	1.60	2	6	7
AEB		46,292			0.29			1	
ANC	12,237,655	10,601,330	10,880,915	63.12	66.35	69.69	252	266	279
AZAPO		27,257	39,116		0.15	0.27		1	1
DA	338,426	1,527,337	1,931,201	1.75	9.56	12.37	7	38	50
FA		86,704			0.54			2	
FF+	424,555	127,217	139,465	2.19	0.80	0.89	9	3	4
ID			269,765			1.73			7
IFP	2,058,294	1,371,477	1,088,664	10.62	8.58	6.97	43	34	28
MF	13,433	48,277	55,267	0.07	0.30	0.35		1	2
NNP	3,983,690	1,098,215	257,824	20.55	6.87	1.65	82	28	7
PAC	243,478	113,125	113,512	1.26	0.71	0.73	5	3	3
UCDP		125,280	117,792		0.78	0.76	0	3	3
UDM		546,790	355,717		3.42	2.28		14	9
Other	145,683	28,866	113,161		0.20	0.75			
Valid Votes	19,533,498	15,977,142	15,612,671	100	100	100	400	400	400

Source: Piombo and Nijzink 2005: 258.

The DA is the only opposition party to increase its percentage of the national vote and actual votes between 1994 and 2004. In 1994 the Democratic Party (predecessor to the DA) received just under 2 percent of the vote, in 1999 10 percent, and in 2004 12 percent. Despite its status as the largest opposition party, or 'official opposition', it has not earned this position by cultivating a broad support base that reflects the diversity of South African society.²⁶ Its core support comes mainly from minority groups and urban areas, with a tiny percentage of support from the black majority.²⁷

²⁵ Ibid., 259.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Susan Booysen, "The Democratic Alliance: Progress and Pitfalls," in *Electoral Politics in South Africa: Assessing the First Democratic Decade* ed. by Jessica Piombo & Lia Nijzink, 129-147 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 142.

The 2004 election signalled the end of the road for the architects of apartheid, the New National Party (formerly the National Party).²⁸ The NNP was decimated with its share of the national vote whittled down to 1.7 percent from 6.9 percent in 1999 and 20.6 percent in 1994. Shortly after the election, the party leader, Marthinus van Schalkwyk, announced that the party would disband and merge with its former political enemy, the ANC.

The performance of the smaller parties since 1994 has been mixed. While some parties have retained or increased their share in the National Assembly, like the ACDP, PAC, UDM and FF+, others have disappeared (AEB and FA). The one contender to emerge in the 2004 elections, the ID, did reasonably well but has not lived up to pre-election predictions that it would become a viable and strong opposition party.²⁹ At first glance therefore, voting patterns in South Africa appear fairly stable. Table 1.2 presents aggregate election results over three national elections showing similar outcomes with consistent proportions of votes obtained by the governing party and opposition parties respectively.

Table 1.1: Aggregate electoral results (%)

	1994	1999	2004
ANC	63.12	66.35	69.69
Opposition parties *	36.88	33.65	30.31
Total	100	100	100

Source: Independent Electoral Commission

Note: * The principle opposition parties during these elections were the National Party (to become the New National Party and was not an opposition party at the time of the 1994 election as it constituted part of the Government of National Unity); the Democratic Party (to become the Democratic Alliance); Inkatha Freedom Party; the Freedom Front Plus; The Pan Africanist Congress; the United Democratic Movement (from 1999 election onwards) and a number of smaller parties.

This apparent stability and lack of electoral volatility has generated consensus among scholars that the composition of partisan coalitions remains largely as they emerged in 1994. The African population continues to identify with the ANC while minority groups identify with opposition parties.

Moreover, this overall stability is thought to reflect the absence of changes in the motivations of individual voters. Put differently, South Africanist scholars have assumed that aggregate stability is a function of individual level stability. Therefore, traditional interpretations assume that the motivations of individual voters remain fairly static and that they were, and are driven mainly by sociological factors.³⁰

²⁸ Collette Schulz-Herzenberg, "The New National Party: The End of the Road," in *Electoral Politics in South Africa: Assessing the First Democratic Decade* edited by Jessica Piombo & Lia Nijzink, 166-186 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 166.

²⁹ Hoeane, Thabisi. "Struggling to Represent the Left: The Pan Africanist Congress, the Azanian People's Organisation, and the Independent Democrats." In *Electoral Politics in South Africa: Assessing the First Democratic Decade* edited by Jessica Piombo & Lia Nijzink, 187-206. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005, 188.

³⁰ Hermann Giliomee, "The National Party's Campaign for a Liberation Election," in *Election '94: The campaigns, results and future prospects*, ed. Andrew Reynolds, 43-71 (Cape Town: David Philip, 1994);

Political parties and South African citizens are thus regarded as 'captives' of the historical moment when the new democracy was founded in 1994. Political issues surrounding apartheid and its demise, and notably the historic electoral victory of the ANC as a struggle movement, dominated that context. Political parties entering the new democracy inherited political labels that represented the politics of the apartheid era. Partisanship was formed not on the basis of new crosscutting cleavages such as class interests, but rather on 'nested cleavages'. These are multidimensional cleavage structures in which ethnic categories on one dimension, such as language, 'nest' within categories on another dimension, such as race, and are mutually reinforcing.³¹ Partisanship is also assumed to rest on the political divide between parties that are majoritarian and pro-democracy and those distrustful of a new majority-led government. Although there has been a subsidence of race as the primary political issue since 1994, due to an increasing relevance of other socio-economic issues, the extent to which partisan attachments can still be regarded as a lingering reflection of old political sentiments from the founding election is unknown.

1.4 Looking beneath the aggregate data

Yet despite the initial appearance of electoral stability, the inclusion of voter turnout in the analysis suggests that several major changes have occurred in the last ten years, particularly in terms of the size of the active ANC electorate.

South Africa has witnessed a general decline in electoral participation in terms of both voter registration and voter turnout. First, while the eligible voting age population (VAP) has increased by approximately 5 million over ten years (due to population growth), the number of registered voters has not kept pace. Between 1999 and 2004 the IEC increased the voters roll by 2.5 million to 20.6 million voters. Yet, according to VAP figures 7 million potential voters

Hermann Giliomee, "South Africa's Emerging Dominant Party Regime", *Journal of Democracy* 9, 4 (1998): 128-143; Hermann Giliomee and Charles Simkins, *The Awkward Embrace: one-party domination and democracy* (Cape Town: Tafelberg Publishers, 1999); Horowitz, *Democratic South Africa*; R.W. Johnson, 'The 1994 Election: Outcome and Analysis', in *Launching Democracy in South Africa: The First Open Election*, ed. R.W. Johnson and Lawrence Schlemmer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 319; Lijphart, *Electoral Systems*; Lijphart, *Democracy in plural societies*; Y. Sadie, "Political Parties and Interest Groups." In *Government & Politics in the new South Africa* edited by Albert Venter and Chris Landsberg, 276-313 (Pretoria: J.L. Van Schaik, 1998); Lawrence Schlemmer, "South Africa's First Open Election and the Future of its New Democracy" in *The Bold Experiment: South Africa's New Democracy* edited by Hermann Giliomee and Lawrence Schlemmer, 149-167 (Cape Town: Southern Book Publishers, 1994). Lawrence Schlemmer, "Democracy or Democratic Hegemony? The Future of Political Pluralism in South Africa," in *The Awkward Embrace: one-party domination and democracy*, ed. Hermann Giliomee and Charles Simkins, 281-300 (Cape Town: Tafelberg Publishers, 1999).

³¹ Chandra K and C Boulet, "Ethnic Cleavage Structures, Permanent Exclusion and Democratic Stability." Presentation, Alien Rule and its Discontents, 2005, 8. The notion of partisanship being based on permanent cleavages is first set out in Seymour Lipset and Stein Rokkan, *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives* (New York: Free Press, 1967).

remain unregistered.³² Second, the number of votes cast (or overall turnout) actually decreased by roughly 3.9 million since 1994, despite growth in the VAP and in registration.

Third, despite increasing electoral margins for the ANC from 63 per cent to 69 per cent, the size of the VAP actually voting for the governing party has not increased or even remained static in proportion to population growth. In fact, its actual support has decreased from 53 to 39 per cent of South Africa's eligible voting population. By calculating the proportion of the VAP who voted for the ANC (calculated using total votes for ANC / total VAP) we can see that the ANC has retained 72 per cent of its original 1994 vote share but lost approximately 28 per cent. Significant decreases in turnout and a reduced share of the vote qualifies the nature of the ANC's victory in the 2004 national election. The magnitude of the ANC's latest 2004 election victory thus shrinks under scrutiny.

In a corresponding fashion, the opposition has lost one-half of its active vote share among the eligible voter population. The size of the opposition bloc vote contracted from 37 percent of the electorate in 1994 to 30 percent in 2004. The only major shifts are within the opposition bloc as votes are redistributed among these parties.³³

Table 1.2: Voting Age Population (VAP), Registration, Turnout and Proportion of VAP for governing party and opposition³⁴

	1994*	1999	2004
Voting age population (VAP)	22 709 152	22 589 369	27 865 537
Number of registered voters	No registration	18 172 751	20 674 926
VAP registered %	No registration	80.4	75.4
Overall turnout / total votes cast	19 533 498	15 977 142	15 612 671
Turnout of registered voters %	No registration	89.3	76.7
Turnout of VAP %	86	71.8	57.8
% of VAP vote for the ANC **	53.8	46.9	39
% of VAP vote for opposition parties	32.1	23.7	16.9
% of abstaining voters	14	29.4	43.9

Source: Independent Electoral Commission; Reynolds 1999; Piombo & Nijzink 2005

Notes: * In 1994 there was no formal registration and hence no voters' roll. To vote in the 1994 elections citizens simply had to present their identity document.

** Calculated using total votes for ANC/total VAP

³² Claude Kabemba, "Electoral Administration: Achievements and Continuing Challenges," in *Electoral Politics in South Africa: Assessing the First Democratic Decade* ed. by Jessica Piombo & Lia Nijzink, 87-105 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 95.

³³ Hamill, 701.

³⁴ Sources for VAP figures: Andrew Reynolds, *Elections '99 South Africa: From Mandela to Mbeki* (Cape Town: David Phillip, 1999); Piombo and Nijzink. The 2004 VAP figures are based on Statistics South Africa Census 2001 data. The proportion of VAP for the ANC and opposition is calculated using total votes for ANC / total VAP. In 1994 there was no formal registration and hence no voters roll. To vote in the 1994 elections citizens simply had to present their Identity Document.

Aggregate electoral stability or fluidity can be tested in two ways. The first is the absence or presence of structural change in the party system. The second is the underlying stability in the pattern of individual voting behaviour.³⁵ When aggregate electoral volatility is present it is often viewed as an indirect indicator of the accumulation of individual voting shifts.³⁶ However, one problem with measuring partisan change at the aggregate level is that it cannot be used to absolutely infer the stability or otherwise of individual partisan preferences.³⁷ So, the subtle changes or shifts in party support at the aggregate level discussed here can only be suitably explained by examining individual level behaviour. The magnitude of aggregate partisan change between 1994 and 2004 (demonstrated by declines in registered and actual voters and proportion of VAP for governing party) therefore provides an intriguing opportunity to investigate the relationship between aggregate and individual-level stability and fluidity.

It may be that the apparent stability in aggregate electoral results conceals significant individual-level flux and disguises significant changes in internal party coalitions. Signs of electoral volatility show themselves in the data in Table 1.3. While there was an increasing percentage of potential voters, and an increase in the number of registered voters since 1999, the number casting a vote declined. Yet, it is not clear if the abstainers are former government or opposition supporters. Moreover, aggregate data does not shed light on whether there is any significant voter realignment between parties. Although the percentages obtained at the polls remain similar for the governing party and opposition respectively this does not mean that the same people voted for the same parties across all three elections. Instead, these trends could reflect countervailing shifts in partisan loyalties. Equally sized shifts between parties can cancel each other out and make it appear as if no shifts have happened in the aggregate. Overall stability in electoral results therefore, does not imply that there is stability within internal partisan coalitions.

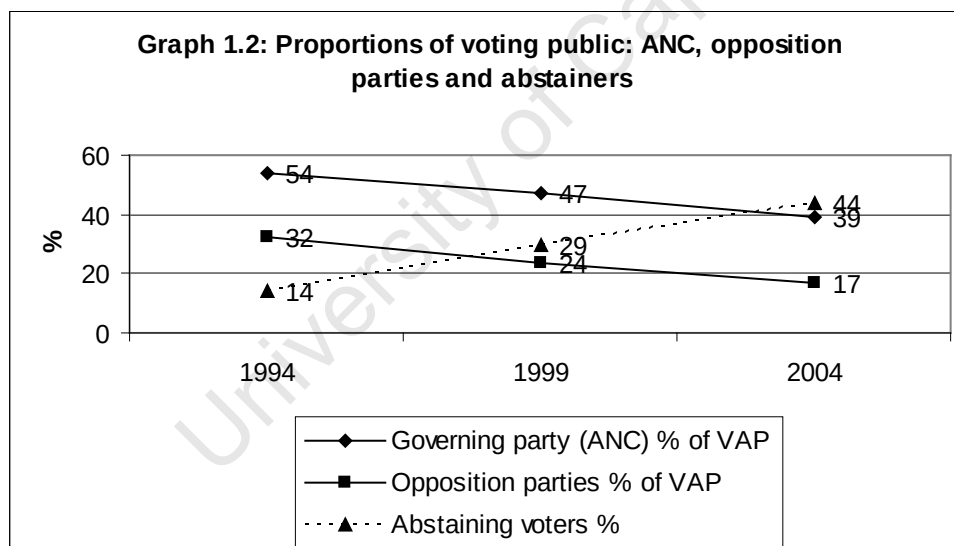
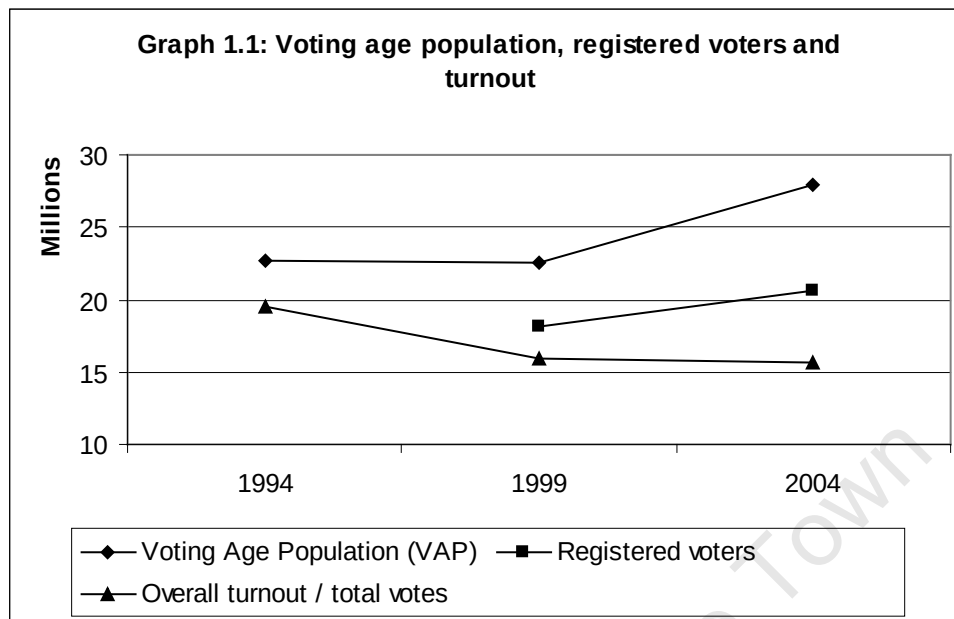
Alternatively, these trends may be a function of increasing political alienation, as identifiers and non-identifiers move away from politics across all parties, thus ensuring that aggregate support for the ANC and the opposition remains similar over time. Finally, the data does not tell us about the intensity of commitment toward a party and the motivations or reasons for support. Early signs of behavioural shifts at the individual level may have therefore been

³⁵ Bartolini and Mair, 4.

³⁶ Ibid., 24-7. The simplest definition of electoral volatility is as a measure of the net electoral change between two consecutive elections. Electoral volatility is also referred to as electoral 'shifts', electoral 'mobility', electoral 'fluidity' and electoral 'swing'. As a measure of change between consecutive elections, net electoral shifts can be measured at the level of the single party (party volatility), at the level of groups of parties (block volatility), and at the level of the party system (total volatility) as a whole. The formula for the three levels is provided in Bartolini and Mair, 19-20. Also see Mark Franklin and Thomas Mackie, "Electoral Change in Western Countries: Consequences of Post-Industrial Social Change," in *Elections and Voting Behaviour: New challenges, new perspective*, ed. Pippa Norris (Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing, 1998), 67.

³⁷ Russell Dalton, Scott C. Flanagan and Paul Allen Beck, *Electoral change in Advanced Industrial democracies. Realignment or dealignment?* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), 10.

overlooked because of the apparent (and misleading) consistency in the aggregate electoral data.



1.5 An electorate in transformation: cleavage structures and socio-economic change

Reasons to expect changes to voting behaviour can be found in the rapid socio-economic transformation experienced by South Africans since the early 1990's. The variations or shifts within the size of partisan coalitions outlined in Table 1.3 may be directly linked to the momentous political, economic and social developments that have transpired. New societal processes and modernising forces are a result of democratisation, rapid 'globalisation' and the removal of the artificial barriers imposed by apartheid. These massive shifts may have

reoriented the way people view themselves in relation to social groupings as societal change affects their structural positions in society. Moreover, individual partisan adjustments are not limited to key structural or sociological change, but may also lead to changes to their value systems, the way they evaluate government performance, and the manner in which they accumulate, access and process political information. Because voter behaviour is shaped by perceptions of social and economic conditions and how parties and candidates relate to those conditions, rapid socio-economic and political transformation can alter long-standing or 'frozen' cleavage structures that guide electoral behaviour.

Cleavages are social or value-based conflicts. The term cleavage refers to long-standing lines of political divisions within a society. In their classic work on party systems, Lipset and Rokkan (1967) identified four main sources of political division within European society: the centre vs. periphery; church vs. state and the conflict between capital and labour.³⁸ These cleavages were intensified by processes unleashed by state building and the industrial revolution. Lipset and Rokkan argue that, once established, cleavage systems typically tend to freeze and manifest themselves through political parties. They refer to the 'freezing' of these party systems when they argue that, 'the party systems of the 1960's reflect, with few but significant exceptions, the cleavage structures of the 1920's'.³⁹ The stability that followed World War II was considered to be confirmation of Lipset and Rokkan's 'freezing' hypothesis. By 1974, when Rose found that the relationship between social structure and party choice had changed very little since 1945, the apparent stability of party systems was viewed as a confirmation of Lipset and Rokkan's 'freezing theses'.⁴⁰

Cleavages can be said to have three constitutive elements, the social-structural, normative-cultural and political-organisational, which all mutually reinforce individual attitudes and behaviour.⁴¹ Once cleavages become established and institutionalised they develop their own autonomous strength and begin to influence social, cultural and political life. Political cleavages are thus relatively stable patterns of polarization in which given groups support given policies or parties, while other groups support opposing policies or parties.⁴² In short, cleavages are divisions that are of such a particular nature and intensity that they demand an enduring and entrenched position in the social structure and also politically organise and unite the individuals who belong to them. Hence, political cleavages are basically seen as reflecting broadly based and long-standing social and economic divisions within society, and the

³⁸ Lipset and Rokkan, *Party systems*, 34. The class conflict translated itself into party systems across European countries, with the rise of working class parties in the wake of early industrialisation. Their model is not deterministic. Political conflicts may differ from one nation to the next, because cleavage structures vary and because not all social cleavages become politicised.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 50.

⁴⁰ Franklin and Mackie, 64.

⁴¹ Bartolini and Mair, 216.

⁴² Ronald Inglehart, 'The Changing structure of political cleavages in Western society', *Electoral change in Advanced Industrial democracies: realignment or dealignment?* Eds. Russell Dalton, Scott C. Flanagan and Paul Allen Beck 25-69 (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984), 25.

cleavage structure is thought of in terms of social groups and of the loyalties of members to their social groups.⁴³ Cleavages therefore shape and condition electoral behaviour. Their strength is indicated by the extent to which they restrict electoral choice.

Seen through this prism electoral change is gradual, even glacial, in pace. The strength of the cleavage system and its capacity to structure political behaviour prevents the emergence of new cleavages and electoral mobility.⁴⁴ As Franklin et al explain, 'The prolonged nature of a number of the previous political struggles, the deeply felt identification of voters with their social segment which resulted from that history, and the deeply felt association between social segments and political parties would all promote a certain immobility in individual choice and hence...also immobility in (aggregate) election results.'⁴⁵ Bartolini and Mair describe the binding relationship between political cleavages and electoral behaviour in the following way: 'the stronger and more pervasive is the strength of the cleavage system of a given country or period, the lower will be the elasticity of the vote and, therefore, the lower will be the level of electoral instability.'⁴⁶ Cleavages are thus reflections of key social transformations, and once formed they tend to shape electoral behaviour. Years later the same cleavage structures resonate politically among an electorate, even though they may have become less socially relevant over time.

Under certain circumstances, however, cleavage structures can change. Social and economic transformation, if sufficiently extensive, can unfreeze and change stable or 'frozen' cleavage structures. Social change increases the incidences of cross-pressures on voters as old and new identities and interests begin to conflict. Developments, such as transformations in economic status, population movements, a rise in education, a decline in religious attachments, and new generational cohorts, have all led to dramatic changes in the social structure across Europe.⁴⁷ These developments reshaped partisan politics among European electorates by increasing the number of new identities, which cut across older loyalties such as religion and class. The decline of class politics in Britain stands as a classic example of change to a major cleavage structure. Older cleavages became less relevant to partisanship in these countries resulting in changes in electoral behaviour and outcomes.⁴⁸ Traditional cleavages then decline as conditioning factors of partisanship. As partisan alignments weakened party systems became more fragmented and volatile.⁴⁹

⁴³ Mark Franklin, Thomas Mackie and Henry Valen, *Electoral change: Responses to evolving social and attitudinal structures in Western Countries* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 4.

⁴⁴ Bartolini and Mair, 37.

⁴⁵ Franklin, Mackie and Valen, 6.

⁴⁶ Bartolini and Mair, 212.

⁴⁷ Franklin, Mackie and Valen, chapter 2. For an in-depth discussion of the extent of changes in the social structure across Europe.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 8, 49.

⁴⁹ Russell Dalton, "Cognitive Mobilisation and Partisan Dealignment in Advanced Industrial Democracies," *The Journal of Politics* 46, 1 (1984): 264-284.

Perhaps a classic illustration of how social events can set in motion changes to traditional cleavage structures can be found in the American South. The enfranchisement of black Americans and their subsequent incorporation into the Democratic Party served to push long-standing Democratic white voters towards the Republican Party. This realignment was due both to cohort replacement as new voters adopted a more Republican stance, as well as individual level change as the same voter's switched partisan affiliations.⁵⁰ The pace of change in partisan affiliation occurred over several decades starting around 1965 but picking up speed rapidly in the early 1980's as the image of the Republican Party changed, buoyed by Reagan and other conservative religious movements. This example is important because it establishes several important facts about cleavage change. First, that a significant social event can have an impact on the salience of existing cleavages, and second, that once an old cleavage has lost its rationale, or a new cleavage emerges, voter realignment often takes place.

The link between social and cleavage change, and the resulting effects on electoral behaviour, is not confined to Europe or the United States. For instance, rapid social change in Japan is cited as a significant factor leading to increased volatility and changes in party support. Japanese voters appear to be becoming 'more volatile' as the social structure continues to change.⁵¹ Social networks, which traditionally anchored the vote, have been affected by new influences due to urbanisation, modern values, cognitive mobilisation, and political sophistication and no longer function as a stabilising force underpinning electoral behaviour.⁵² People are now less bounded, more urbanised, with more exposure to a greater variety of conflicting partisan influences. Traditional cues have been overtaken by social change.⁵³

In addition, social change affected voting behaviour in India, thereby altering the face of politics in that country. Economic liberalisation and subsequent social development in India altered the traditional cleavages that were present at independence, which is reflected in changes to the party system. New cross-cutting interests have emerged making it more challenging for the Congress led alliance to retain its traditional support among the bourgeoisie whilst needing to attract the support of its new constituencies: the poor, minorities and lower classes.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Donald Green, Bradley Palmquist and Eric Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds: Political Parties and the Social Identities of Voters* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 141.

Philip E. Converse, "On the Possibility of Major Political Realignment in the South," in *Elections and the Political Order*, ed. Angus Campbell et al., 212-242 (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1966), 212.

⁵¹ Joji Watanuki, "Social Structure and Voting Behaviour," in *The Japanese Voter*, ed. Scott Flanagan et al. 49-83 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 82.

⁵² Scott Flanagan et al., *The Japanese Voter* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), 436.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 418.

⁵⁴ Radhika Desai, "Forward March of Hindutva Halted?" *New Left Review*. 30 (2004): 49-67.

Economic liberalisation and subsequent social development in India caused the defection and exodus of the propertied middle-caste groups from the Congress, as the party became too limited a vehicle for their growing socio-economic and political aspirations. As increasing numbers of middle-caste farmers'

A society subjected to extensive socio-economic developments may therefore experience an 'unfreezing process' as cleavage structures change. This is especially possible where a democracy and party system is relatively young, such as South Africa. The relaxation of cleavages should, in turn, affect partisan loyalties and increase electoral volatility. Scholars now recognise the effects of social change on cleavage reformation and electoral behaviour. Richardson states, 'dramatic social change since World War II generated new political preferences or encouraged volatility by removing the traditional social anchors of the vote'.⁵⁵ Franklin et al suggest that the demise of cleavage politics rests on the advancement of developmental processes.⁵⁶ As they state, 'Those (European) countries where social cleavages no longer condition partisanship are at the forefront of ... development'.⁵⁷ Political cleavages may still reflect the broad social and economic divisions within society but they have lost much of their political salience, or, alternatively, the source of cleavages may be changing from social structure to values. As Inglehart concluded, 'The cleavage structures underlying politics in Western nations have changed profoundly during the past two decades'.⁵⁸ Studies testing the 'freezing hypothesis' conclude that European party systems could not be regarded as inherently stable structures after the 1970's.⁵⁹

The social upheavals experienced in post-apartheid South Africa may therefore be sufficiently powerful to reshape the static cleavage structures created during the apartheid era.⁶⁰ Each or all of these processes may also hold important consequences for the partisan responses of social groups, the subsequent composition of partisan coalitions, and the behavioural motivations of voters.⁶¹

acquired interests and investments in urban and industrial economies, their political affiliations underwent a subtle change. The result of this shift was the rise of the BJP and regional parties to the national stage in 1989 to cater for the urban ambitions of the so-recently rural, middle-caste propertied elite, the loss of the support of the new middle class for the once mighty Congress, who is now forced to join forces with coalition partners.

⁵⁵ Bradley M. Richardson, "European Party Loyalties Revisited" In *Elections and Voting Behaviour: New challenges, new perspectives*, ed. Pippa Norris, 21-46 (Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing, 1998), 22.

⁵⁶ Franklin, Mackie and Valen, 409.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 390

⁵⁸ Inglehart 'The changing structure of political cleavages', 25.

⁵⁹ Bartolini and Mair's study tests the freezing hypothesis using class cleavage persistence over a long-term perspective and the extent of change across the cleavage lines. See Bartolini and Mair, 65. Flanagan and Dalton test the Lipset-Rokkan thesis when they explain instability and volatility in party systems and the possible emergence of new cleavages. Russell Dalton and Scott C. Flanagan, "Political Forces and Partisan Change," in *Electoral Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*, ed. Russell Dalton et al. 451-476 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 457. Inglehart suggests that new cleavages and new issues are unfreezing European party systems, in Inglehart 'The changing structure of political cleavages', 26. Franklin, Mackie and Valen, 410. These scholars test the thesis and conclude party systems were not frozen in the early years after World War II.

⁶⁰ Most of the salient traditional political cleavages outlined by Lipset and Rokkan, in *Party systems*, can be identified in South Africa. The culture cleavage is reflected in the various languages, religions and regional identities in the country. The church-state cleavage is generally viewed in terms of secularism and religiosity. The primary versus secondary economy is defined by distinguishing between urban and rural location, and formal versus informal employment or unemployment. The worker versus employer cleavage is seen in terms of occupational class, education, trade union membership, and income.

⁶¹ Although I assert that may be a breakdown of traditional cleavages in South Africa, a caution should be noted with respect to how we measure the breakdown of a cleavage. I argue that cleavage

The nature of racial oppression imposed by the apartheid regime and white-minority rule by the National Party produced deep and lasting ethnic cleavages among the black population through its employment of 'divide and rule' tactics. In turn, the ideological instruments of the apartheid state (such as separate development and Bantustans) and the struggle against apartheid created and reinforced the white-black racial cleavage. The convergence of South Africa's oppressed groups around the issue of political liberation and majority rule as well as the solidarity demanded by struggle politics created a relatively cohesive political block that fused together African ethnic groups. This solidarity is reflected in the political movements that gained mass support across racial groups in South Africa during apartheid such as the United Democratic Front and the African National Congress. Nevertheless, potential divisions among various racial and ethnic groups remain socially, politically and economically powerful, and many still hold significant political salience, as witnessed in political confrontations in Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Western Cape since 1994, where some political identities are still significantly linked to parties that represent 'racial and ethnic group identities'. South Africa's post-liberation era remains marked by its divided past.

However, much has changed in the first twelve years of democracy. In this section I summarise the key changes in the social, economic and political spheres that have occurred during the post-apartheid years.

Demographic changes to the electorate

The South African electorate has changed enormously. First, the demographics of the electorate are vastly different to that of 1994. The voting age population has become significantly younger as a result of generational change. By the 2004 elections, approximately one-third of the potential electorate would have been too young to have voted in the historic 1994 elections, while 17 percent the potential electorate would have been too young to vote in 1999.⁶² By 2006, almost half the South African population (43 percent) was 18 years old or younger and therefore too young to vote, while approximately 20 percent of the population

disintegration can be present without significant interparty movement. This view is at odds with Bartolini and Mair, who state that the relaxation of cleavages can only be measured by block volatility (the amount of electoral interchange across the cleavage line which divides parties). Therefore cleavages can only be said to be relaxing when electoral interchange between parties occurs. While I expect some interparty movement in South Africa I do not specifically regard the movement of voters across party/cleavage lines as a sign of electoral volatility. South African voters are not faced with sufficient political choice to perform genuine interparty movement. The measurement of cleavage breakdown that Bartolini and Mair use can only work in a society in which there is a sufficiently broad political marketplace and all the parties are seen as legitimate. Instead I assume that the relaxation of traditional cleavages can be found by examining the extent and strength of partisanship by social (especially racial groups) and through changes to the underlying motivations of voters. This is premised on the explanation that historical cleavage structures are in the process of relaxation, which is reflected more so by signs of volatility to partisan coalitions rather than defections in partisanship or vote choice.

⁶² Jeremy Seekings, "The electoral implications of social and economic change since 1994," in *Electoral Politics in South Africa: Assessing the First Democratic Decade* ed. Jessica Piombo & Lia Nijzink, 23-39 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 24.

between 20 and 29 years had not participated in the 1994 elections.⁶³ As Seekings states, 'this is a largely post-apartheid generation of voters, with possibly different perceptions and attitudes to their elders.'⁶⁴ In addition, population growth and demographic population shifts have also altered the regional and racial composition of the electorate, with the urban and African share of the population rising, and the white proportion declining.⁶⁵ Changes to South Africa's class and economic structure as well as other socio-economic developments, such as the spread of HIV/AIDS, access to education and media usage, have disproportionately affected the youngest age cohort who now makes up the majority of the potential electorate.

Unemployment and income inequality

Since the early 1990's, structural constraints on job-creating economic growth, high levels of enduring unemployment, and poverty, in addition to the inaccessibility of the formal economy to the unskilled have combined to widen or deepen the inequality gap between the rich and the poor, as well as between workers within the formal sector of the economy and those who struggle to make a living outside it.⁶⁶

In 1993 official unemployment was 12.7 percent (30 percent by the expanded definition).⁶⁷ By 1998 these figures had risen to 25.2 percent and 37.5 percent respectively, and by 2003 they were 28.2 and 41.8 percent.⁶⁸ Falling levels of formal employment, particularly in the mining industry and agricultural sectors, has had dire consequences for unskilled labour, particularly among Africans, women and the rural poor.⁶⁹ Rural, African women are the most disadvantaged – in 1999, 35 percent wanted and were actively seeking work while a further 20 percent wanted to work but had given up seeking it.⁷⁰ Slow economy growth and a rising demand for skilled labour have disenfranchised the unskilled from entering the formal economy.⁷¹ Post-1995 employment trends show South Africa has clearly had insufficient economic growth relative to the demands of a growing labour force.⁷²

⁶³ Source: 2006 estimates of the Census 2001 Community Profiles Database, Pretoria: Statistics South Africa, 2003. <http://www.statssa.gov.za/Publications/PopulationStats.asp>
Sourced at Data First Lab, University of Cape Town.

⁶⁴ Seekings, "The electoral implications", 24.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 24.

⁶⁶ V. Taylor, *Transforming the Present – Protecting the Future*. Report of the Committee of Inquiry into a Comprehensive System of Social Security for South Africa. March 2002, 70. The number of South Africans living in poverty is estimated to be between 45 and 55 percent [20-28 million], depending on the poverty line used. Poverty is concentrated among Africans (61%) and Coloureds (38%), compared with 5% of Indians and 1% of whites. "Poverty and Inequality in South Africa", United National Development Programme (UNDP) Summary Report, May 1998 <http://www.undp.org.za/docs/poverty2.html#7> The poverty rate for rural areas is 71%. While the absolute number of urban poor is greatest in the metropolitan areas, in relative terms the poverty burden is most severe in South Africa's small towns and secondary cities.

⁶⁷ Jeremy Seekings and Nicoli Nattrass, *Class, Race and Inequality in South Africa* (Scottsville, South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2006), 277.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 318.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 314-317; 352-3.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 317.

⁷¹ See Borat 2004: 31 for discussion on labour skills shortages. Real GDP growth rates were 4.2 percent in 1996/7, and thereafter declined gradually to 1.9 percent in 2001/02. Anna McCord, Overview of the South Africa economy. *HRD Review* 2003: 39.

Unemployment is the main driver of widening inequality in South Africa, pushing many households deeper into poverty. At the end of the apartheid era the Gini coefficient for the distribution of income was estimated at between 0.58 and 0.68.⁷³ By 2000, it hovered closer to 0.7, showing that overall levels of inequality have since increased.⁷⁴ There has been a decline in interracial inequality due to a steady shift in the incomes shares of the different 'racial groups'. By 2000 about as many African households in the top income quintile as there were white households.⁷⁵ Intraracial inequality has however risen.⁷⁶

Whereas inequality in South Africa was historically driven by the racial gap in incomes, it became increasingly determined by the growing gap in incomes within the African population as some benefited from upward occupational mobility and rising wages while others found themselves unemployed and increasingly marginalised within the labour market.⁷⁷ Among Africans, the Gini coefficient rose from 0.70 in 1995 to 0.81 in 1998.⁷⁸ Intra racial inequality is high, accounting for between 50 percent and 59 percent of overall inequality.⁷⁹ So, while inter-racial inequality has declined, intra-racial inequality continues to increase in South Africa.

The new 'middle class'

Since the demise of apartheid the structure of South Africa's class system has changed. The composition of the privileged group and the basis of privilege have changed over time as the basis of exclusion has shifted from race to class.⁸⁰ Thus, class has come to replace race as the main driver of social stratification in the post-apartheid era.

New class divides refer specifically to the first divide between the rich (which includes the rise of a new multi-racial middle class) and the working classes, and the second divide between the employed and those who were systematically marginalised from the labour market and largely unemployed, namely new African 'underclass'. These new divides also give way to an emerging class hierarchy particularly among the African population.

<http://hrdreview.hsrc.ac.za/saeconomy/saeconomy.pdf> Seekings and Nattrass, chapters 10 and 11, offer a useful overview of factors impeding economic growth and exacerbating inequality: see.

⁷² Between 1995 and 2002 the economy provided 32 jobs for every 100 economically active persons. While employment has grown at 17%, demand for employment requires growth of 52%. Bhorat 2004: 33.

⁷³ Seekings and Nattrass, 188. The Gini-coefficient is a quantitative measure of income inequality within a population, ranging from 0 (perfect equality) to 1 (perfect inequality). The higher the coefficient, the higher the inequality of the income distribution.

⁷⁴ Seekings and Nattrass, 303. Roger Southall, "Political change and the black middle class in Democratic South Africa." *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 38, 3 (2004): 521-542, 531.

⁷⁵ Seekings and Nattrass, 306.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 307.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 189.

⁷⁸ Southall, "Political change", 531.

⁷⁹ Seekings and Nattrass, 200.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 6.

The emergence of an African elite and multiracial 'middle' class is perhaps the most dramatic shift in the social landscape of post-apartheid South Africa.⁸¹ The rapid emergence of an African middle class is due in part to a political and legislative commitment by government to address economic disparities.⁸² In particular, the ANC introduced redistributive policies and anti-discrimination measures such as Black Economic Empowerment, and Employment Equity to address income inequality between race groups. The growth of this class is generally deemed to have positive social, economic and political attributes for South Africa's new democracy, by encouraging democratic pluralism and countervailing hegemony of the top political and economic elites.⁸³

Although there is divergence among scholars as to what constitutes, or defines, the new African middle class, it generally comprises people in salaried jobs (such as managers and teachers) and professionals whose income is generally treated as salary, as well as entrepreneurs and capitalists.⁸⁴ The growth of the black middle class can be seen in the changing racial composition of the middle classes. Labour Force Survey (LFS) data show strong upward mobility by African people into higher-income occupations, especially within the public sector. Between 1991 and 1996, the number of middle-class African households rose by 78 percent, compared to overall growth of 26 percent. In 1995, 73 per cent of the individuals in the top decile (the richest ten per cent) were white, but by 2000, there were as many African households in the top income quintile as there were white households.⁸⁵ Between 1993 and 2003 the growth of Africans in the top LSM category (Living Standards Measure Category) was a phenomenal 21 percent per year, amounting to over eight times the growth in the adult population.⁸⁶ The distribution of national income accruing to Africans increased from 19.8 per cent in 1970 to 35.7 per cent in 1996 - by 2004, 27 per cent of formally employed black Africans could be broadly defined as 'middle class'.⁸⁷

An African 'underclass'

These dynamics have given rise to an African 'underclass'. The 'underclass' constitutes a marginal or residual class of people who are unemployed, but are also systematically disadvantaged through exclusion from access to opportunities to find employment.⁸⁸ The

⁸¹ Ibid., 308-13.

⁸² Lawrence Schlemmer, "South Africa's new middle class," in *The Next Decade: Perspectives on South Africa's Growth and Development* ed. Ann Bernstein and Sandy Johnston, 112-140 (Johannesburg: Centre for Development and Enterprise, 2005), 115.

⁸³ Ibid., 113.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 116. His definition of South African class is quite restricted. Seekings and Nattrass, 309, offer a more expansive concept. They also argue that although this growing income group has been generally described as 'middle class', these were actually members of the upper and semi-professional classes. The application of the term 'middle class' thus makes little sense in the South African context, where the urban working classes really constitute the actual middle class.

⁸⁵ Seekings, "The electoral implications", 24.

⁸⁶ Schlemmer, "South Africa's new middle class", 120.

⁸⁷ Southall, "Political change", 531.

⁸⁸ Seekings and Nattrass, 280. Other analysts refer to this category of unemployed and unskilled people as 'the unemployable'. See Bhorat 2004: 47.

underclass thus compromise a segment of the population who are not only unemployed in a society where unemployment means poverty but also lack the capital to give them a significant chance of securing employment in the future. In other words, they lack the human, social and financial capital to access and secure employment opportunities.⁸⁹ The underclass is located largely among the rural poor, and African women. As Seekings and Natrass explain, 'By the end of apartheid, South Africa had a clear underclass of unemployed people in that social and economic conditions had created an especially disadvantaged class. The underclass was perhaps the most terrible legacy of apartheid.'⁹⁰

In short, social stratification after apartheid saw, on the one hand the upper classes deracialising and becoming better off economically, and the semi-professional, core working class and petty traders shrinking but also becoming better off economically, on the other hand the marginal working class growing and finding itself worse off economically. Seekings and Natrass encapsulate the incongruous nature of the first post-apartheid decade when they state,

*'What is striking about inequality in South Africa in the decade following the end of apartheid is the number of continuities from the preceding decade. There continued to be upward mobility into the upper classes and income deciles by black South Africans, and urban workers benefited from rising wages. But unemployment grew, the informal and smallholder agricultural sectors remained stagnant, and the ranks of the poor swelled. Inequality remained as high as ever, if not higher, even if interracial differentials declined. The expansion of opportunities at the top did not bring significant improvements at the bottom.'*⁹¹

Trade unions and the politicisation of the working classes

Apart from socio-economic explanations, there are also political and ideological explanations for a growing class salience in South Africa, particularly through changes to trade union membership. First, rising unemployment has changed the composition of union membership in the last decade. COSATU, the largest trade union affiliate, stated in 2006 that its membership composition had changed as a result of the retrenchment of 'low-skilled' workers, combined with the growth of public sector unionisation.⁹² Increasingly, the federation represents growing numbers of workers with higher skill and education levels.⁹³ Thus, unions represent the most secure wage earners from the worker stratum in society. While unions still attempt to champion the interests of the poor through campaigns such as the Basic Income Grant (or 'BIG'), they are not the political vanguard of the poorest sections of the population but instead have tended in recent years to represent a relatively narrowly defined skill groups

⁸⁹ Seekings and Natrass, 298, 280.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 273. The authors note that the concept of an underclass has unfortunate connotations. However, they show that there are good theoretical and empirical grounds for recognising a section of the population that suffers especially acute disadvantage: 298.

⁹¹ Ibid., 301.

⁹² Between 2000-2003 COSATU's memberships declined by 5%, but thereafter has increased by 4% since 2003. COSATU therefore declined by 1% between 2000 and 2006. COSATU, with a membership of 1.8 million, is followed by FEDUSA with 560,000 members and NACTU with almost 400,000 members. Trade union membership is approximately 3.11 million and constitutes 25% of the workforce.

⁹³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trade_unions_in_South_Africa
<http://www.cosatu.org.za/press/2006/sept/press22.htm>

such as miners, and textile workers.⁹⁴ Second, whereas trade unions historically constituted a solid base of working class support for the ANC, since 1996 political disputes and tensions between the ANC and trade union leaders over the direction of economic policy, namely its Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy and the subsequent Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (AsgiSA), exposed union members to class-based and ideological debates within the anti-apartheid movement.

Social spending and redistribution

A wide range of redistributive policies were initiated by the post-apartheid ANC government to address income inequality, poverty and rising unemployment. Between 1994 and 2004 the ANC government passed over 800 new pieces of legislation, resulting in a shift in social delivery through a more redistributive budget and the availability of basic services, while ensuring that social spending was focused on the poor.⁹⁵ Social spending on the poorest 40 percent of households rose by about 50 percent between 1993 and 1997.⁹⁶ Budgetary redistribution included cash transfers and social assistance grants (pensions and the child support grant), and public education, healthcare, water and housing.⁹⁷ South Africa redistributes more extensively via the budget than any other developing country for which data is available.⁹⁸

Nonetheless, despite the extension of social welfare and redistribution, the post-apartheid state has shown limited capacity to address poverty and inequality rapidly.⁹⁹ The welfare system for social assistance falls short of being a thoroughly inclusive social security net. It does not make provision for the unemployed who do not qualify for the child grants, disability or old age pension.¹⁰⁰ It therefore fails to significantly reduce the poverty gap: even with a 100 percent takeup of grants the poverty gap would be reduced by about 37 percent only.¹⁰¹

Government has increased spending on infrastructural development and basic services such as housing, water, electricity, healthcare and education to the poorer segments of society. Yet, housing remains a pressing priority in South Africa. Although 1.8 million houses have been built since 1994, more than 1.8 million households have inadequate shelter.¹⁰² And despite massive increases in enrolment and spending on education particularly in previously

⁹⁴ Seekings and Nattrass, 373-4.

⁹⁵ Habib and Herzenberg, 170.

⁹⁶ Seekings and Nattrass, 357.

⁹⁷ For a breakdown of social expenditure by income quintile between 1993 and 1997 see Seekings and Nattrass, 358.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 356.

⁹⁹ Gerhard Mare, "The State of the State," in *State of the Nation: South Africa 2003-2004* ed. John Daniel, Adam Habib and Roger Southall. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2003, 6.

¹⁰⁰ Seekings and Nattrass, 356.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 356.

¹⁰² Mail and Guardian, September 16 to 22, 2005. 'Provinces pass, councils fail': 6. Statistics sourced from The Provincial Budgets and Expenditure Review for 2004/5.

disadvantaged schools, the quality of education for pupils remains poor.¹⁰³ Indeed, some analysts argue that government's policy efforts are of little consequence for poverty in that they actually reinforce existing inequalities.¹⁰⁴

Changing social identities

If new cleavages are emerging, it is also possible the South African identities may be shifting. Some scholars argue that identities are constructed and fluid and their can therefore change over time.¹⁰⁵ Posner's work on ethnicity in Zambia demonstrates how people do change their identities strategically in response to situational incentives. Jung also shows how fluid and situational South African identities are.¹⁰⁶

Post-apartheid society is likely to spurn a new set of social and political identities. One-party oligarchic white rule produced a rather narrow identity repertoire, limiting the effective arena of political competition to choosing between racial groups. Once democratic multi-partism begins the arena expands to include many more aspects of political and social conflict. A broader and more varied identity repertoire is made available to voters.¹⁰⁷ Where race was once the primary social and political identity, today South Africans can identify with a greater number of cross-cutting identities, including class or age based identities. As the identity matrix expands the number of cleavage dimensions and the number and sizes of the groups on each cleavage dimension changes and each become a potential political cleavage.¹⁰⁸

Altering the boundaries of the political arena also changes the incentives for political actors to mobilise or politicise one identity instead of another.¹⁰⁹ This can generate a shift in the social cleavages that come to organise politics.¹¹⁰ So, as the cleavage structure changes in the post apartheid years, it gives way to an explosion of new identities among voters, some of which may begin to compete politically with race.

There is already some evidence of a convergence of attitudes around class in South Africa as changing material conditions encourage a shift in self-defined social identities away from race towards class and occupations. In 2003, Robert Mattes found a clear and unmistakable trend

¹⁰³ Seekings and Nattrass, 359.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 341. They define the "distributional regime" as encompassing the combination of economic, labour-market, and industrial policies that affect the economic growth path (and hence income distribution) as well as those policies that redistribute directly via public welfare and education. For further discussion on the ineffectual post-apartheid distributional regime see chapter 10.

¹⁰⁵ Daniel N. Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Courtney Jung, *Then I was Black: South African Political Identities in Transition* (London: Yale University Press, 2000).

¹⁰⁶ Jung.

¹⁰⁷ Posner argues that, in the case of Zambia during one-party rule, conflict is localised and identity is connected to the 'tribe'. During multiparty rule conflict is more national and diversified, and identities widen to include main ethnic groups.

¹⁰⁸ See Posner's identity matrix formula, 130, and 283.

¹⁰⁹ Jung.

¹¹⁰ Posner, 275.

in Afrobarometer data that South Africans' self-defined social identities were rapidly shifting away from dimensions of race and ethnicity, and increasingly revolved around dimensions of class and occupation.¹¹¹ In the same year, the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation's "Reconciliation Barometer" found that more than 30 percent of respondents felt that the division between poor and middle income or wealthy South Africans constituted the biggest division in South Africa.¹¹² A 2007 study of post-apartheid Cape Town found that 60 percent of respondents regard cultural and class-based identities as important.¹¹³ Schlemmer also found signs of a convergence of attitudes among the middle class that supersede race on certain policy issues such as education, and support for a business driven development economy.¹¹⁴ The rise of the so-called social movements and protest politics in recent years, aimed at mobilising the poor and marginalised against evictions for non-payment of bonds, rent and disconnections of electricity and water for non-payment, is also indicative of an emerging class-consciousness among the poor.¹¹⁵ In his study of class and income in post-apartheid Cape Town, Seekings found that when respondents were asked about specific services provided by government, responses were influenced by class. Discontent with basic services (electricity, water and housing) is more acute among the poor.¹¹⁶ A new class-based cleavage among the working class poor has also recently found expression through leftist trade union rhetoric.

Class-based political identities thus appear to be increasingly significant in South African politics. Whether consciously or unwittingly, the people shut out of economic growth, or those benefitting from it, will be the most likely ones to reinvest in a new identity as their material interests dictate.

A more informed, sophisticated electorate

There has been a dramatic racial restructuring of the student profile since the early 1990's with the enrolment of African students in higher education growing from 29 percent in 1988 to

¹¹¹ Mattes, Robert. "Shifting Social Identities and their Implications for Politics in South Africa." Paper prepared for the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation workshop on "The Prospects of Reconciliation: Changing Identities, Race and Class, December 2003.

¹¹² Karin Lombard, "The South African Reconciliation Barometer, Prospects For Reconciliation: Race and Class." Survey Report, Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, 2003; Seekings and Nattrass, 370; Seekings, "The electoral implications", 29.

¹¹³ Jeremy Seekings, "Perceptions of class and income in post-apartheid Cape Town," Centre for Social Science Research (CSSR) Working Paper No. 198, University of Cape Town, 2007, 27.

¹¹⁴ Schlemmer, "South Africa's new middle class", 133. However, he also cautions that the new African middle class does not have a cohesive identity and internal coherence.

¹¹⁵ Richard Ballard, Adam Habib and Imraan Valodia, "Social Movements in South Africa: crisis or creating stability?" in *The development decade? Economic and social change in South Africa, 1994-2004* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2006). Adam Habib, "State-Civil Society Relations in Post-Apartheid South Africa," in *The State of the Nation: South Africa 2003-2004*, eds. John Daniel, Adam Habib and Roger Southall (Cape Town: Human Sciences Research Council Press, 2003), 238. Social movements include the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) on the issue of anti-retrovirals for HIV positive people, the Basic Income Grant Coalition (BIG) on the availability of a universal grant to alleviate poverty and the Anti-Privatisation Forum (APF) on availability of free basic services.

¹¹⁶ Seekings, "Perceptions of class and income", 26.

60 percent in 2002.¹¹⁷ By 1999, there were almost twice as many African students as white students.¹¹⁸ In terms of public schooling, there have also been gains in the number of learners reaching grade 12.¹¹⁹ Despite improved enrolment rates, the public schooling and higher education systems have been criticised in terms of the poor quality of some schools, teaching and pass rates.¹²⁰

Access to media and information has increased and diversified since 1994. Afrobarometer surveys show that radio is the most frequently used information medium for political news in South Africa, followed by TV and then newspaper articles. An average of 78 percent of the population use radio, 70 percent use TV, and 48 percent use newspapers frequently. Broadcast media remains the main source of political information for most South Africans, expanding significantly since 1994.¹²¹ In 1997, 52 percent of South Africans listened to the radio on a daily basis, 44 percent watched television, and 16 percent read newspapers. By the 2004 election, media usage had risen: over 23 million watched television at least once a week and over 27 million listened to the radio.¹²²

The normalisation of politics and society

Politically, South Africa has ended its first decade of democratic rule, after centuries of racially defined oligarchic rule. Multi-party democracy has created a platform for previously opposed groups to cooperate and build consensus through political institutions such as the national legislature. A proportional representation electoral system facilitates the legislative representation of small opposition parties, such as the ACDP, the FF and the ID.

By the 2004 national and provincial elections the electorate differed substantially from the one that had participated in the 1994 elections in terms of generational experiences and expectations, historical memory, class mobility, well-being and political sophistication. After a decade of democracy, the focus of politics in South Africa has shifted from realising liberation from apartheid towards new concerns such as social redress and nation-building. South African citizens confront and debate issues that represent a more 'normalised' political terrain, such as housing, education and budgetary matters and directly experience the outcomes of policy choices, and the political successes and failures of an ANC-led government. Despite increased social delivery, the governing African National Congress has come under criticism

¹¹⁷ George Subotzky, "Public Higher Education," in *Human Resources Development Review 2003: education, employment and skills in South Africa* ed. Andre Kraak and Helene Perold, 352-379 (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2003), 364.

¹¹⁸ N Cloete and I Bunting, *Higher Education Transformation. Assessing performance in South Africa* (Pretoria: Centre for Higher Education Transformation, 2000), 18.

¹¹⁹ Helen Perry and Fabian Arends, "Public Schooling," in *Human Resources Development Review 2003: education, employment and skills in South Africa* edited by Andre Kraak and Helene Perold, 303-325 (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2003), 303.

¹²⁰ Subotzky, 355; Seekings and Nattrass, 313, 359.

¹²¹ Davis Gavin, "Media coverage in election 2004: Were some parties more equal than others?" in *Electoral Politics in South Africa: Assessing the First Democratic Decade* ed. Jessica Piombo and Lia Nijzink (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 232.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 232.

for its controversial stance on HIV/AIDS; its position of quiet diplomacy towards Zimbabwe, and its alleged corrupt involvement in the expensive Arms Deal and attempts to quash parliamentary oversight.

As the post-apartheid democratisation project unfolds social structure and social identities have been reconfigured. As Daniel, Habib and Southall state, 'contemporary political and economic processes are engendering a plurality and diversity in society, which serve as some of the founding blocks for democracy'.¹²³ As democratic political competition takes hold it is likely that dominant group (racial) identities are being subjected to a multitude of cross pressures. So while race may continue to act as a powerful mobilising tool, new cross-cutting cleavages should begin to break down the hegemony of this traditional cleavage.

A society subjected to sufficiently extensive socio-economic developments can experience an 'unfreezing process' as cleavage structures change and begin to affect partisan loyalties differently.¹²⁴ Therefore the rapid social transformation since 1994 can be expected to reshape the static cleavage structures created by apartheid and thus reshape voting patterns. The emergence of a new set of cleavages, whereby individual citizens at the micro level reposition themselves vis-à-vis each other may reshape and condition electoral behaviour.

These observations raise several related questions concerning the motivations of individual voters, the partisan profiles of social groups, and subsequent changes to the social composition of the ANC's partisan coalition. First, to what extent has partisanship in South Africa remained stable across the electorate? Second, can we detect any changes in the support given to the ANC party by key social groups over time? Third, have South African voters been motivated by deep-seated sociological, racial partisan loyalties or other evaluative, short-term factors, and has the relative impact of these factors changed over time?

Despite a growth in the body of knowledge about the South African voter, there appears to be little agreement about the factors that dominate South African voters. Instead, existing scholarly research seems to suggest that a number of competing theoretical propositions have resonance in the South African context.¹²⁵ The inconclusive nature of the literature invites further examination. I ask if the voter reflects a set of deeply socialized beliefs about parties and politics that stems from historical or family and community ties. Or, are voters instead more influenced by their (changing) socio-economic conditions and interests. And to what extent are elections regarded as an opportunity to evaluate government's current

¹²³ John Daniel, Adam Habib and Roger Southall, *State of the Nation: South Africa 2003-2004*. Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2003, 16.

¹²⁴ Lipset and Rokkan, *Party systems*; Inglehart 'The changing structure of political cleavages', 25; Bartolini and Mair, 65; Franklin, Mackie and Valen, 410.

¹²⁵ Refer to chapter two for an overview of the South African literature on voting behaviour and the debates therein.

policies and performance and reward or punish as they see appropriate? Do the cognitive abilities of voters' influence or mediate partisanship?

Few, if any, scholars have simultaneously examined the relative influence of competing theories of voter behaviour in the South African context.¹²⁶ Moreover, there appears to have been no attempt to apply multivariate study to voter behaviour over a series of surveys over time. I therefore explore the influence of several major theoretical perspectives on South African voters over a twelve year time span, while I also explore the relative mix and intersection of these models on partisanship.

1.6 Research questions

This study is motivated by four inter-related questions:

1. *What is the extent (level) of partisanship among the entire electorate over time?*

To answer this question I examine trends and patterns in partisanship over time and test for different types of electoral periods, specifically for stable alignments and dealignments.

2. *What is the direction of partisan support among the entire electorate over time?*

I examine the ratios of ANC supporters versus opposition supporters versus independents across the electorate over time.

3. *Has the social composition of the ANC partisan coalition changed over time?*

To answer this question I examine the social composition of the ANC's partisan coalition over time. Cross-sectional patterns of structural variables tell us whether the key partisan cleavages or demographic characteristics are static or dynamic among specific social groups. I also focus on trends in the strength of partisan attachments of social groups to map changes in the core support of the ANC. Finally, I also examine which types of people move in and out the active electorate through voter abstention, over this period.

While the first three questions consist mainly of descriptive research, they provide the stimulus for a fourth explanatory research question.

¹²⁶ A few scholars have tested theoretical explanations in specific survey years. See Robert Mattes, *The Election Book: Judgments and choice in South Africa's 1994 election* (Cape Town: Idasa publishers, 1995); Robert Mattes and Amanda Gouws, "Race, Ethnicity, and Voting Behaviour: Lessons from South Africa," in *Elections and Conflict Management in Africa* ed. Timothy D Sisk and Andrew Reynolds (Washington, D.C: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998); Robert Mattes and Jessica Piombo, "Opposition Parties and the Voters in South Africa's General Election of 1999," *Democratization* 8, 3 (2001): 101-128; Maxi Schoeman and Charles Puttergill, "Voting behaviour in the South African local government elections of 2006 with specific reference to the youth," *Journal of African Elections* 6, 1 (2007): 152-173. They applied the rational choice model, the sociological model and party identification to the third local government elections in 2006.

4. *What are the micro level motivations of individual voters, and have they changed over time?*

Testing several major competing theoretical models of voter behaviour, I conduct a micro-level analysis of the behavioural motivations of individual voters over time and ask whether key motivations have changed between 1994 and 2006 and search for the longer causes of any observed changes.

This study therefore consists of a longitudinal analysis of partisan change in first, the aggregate patterns of party support (level and direction of partisanship) among the entire electorate, second, among social groups within the ANC's partisan coalition, and third, to the motivations of individual voters over twelve years (1994-2006), using a series of cross-sectional survey studies.

1.7 General expectations

Over the past decade, South Africans have experienced a turbulent period of socio-economic and political change. It seems plausible that, after a decade of democratization, voter behavior is affected by social transformation and government performance. Our understanding of partisanship should therefore take into account any structural changes to party support bases, as well as changing motivations of individual voters.

1. *What is the extent (level) of partisanship among the entire electorate over time?*

I expect to find that levels of partisan support for all parties have decreased over time and the amount of independent voters has increased.

2. *What is the direction of partisan support among the entire electorate over time?*

While I expect to find decreasing partisanship across all parties, I expect to find that the ANC maintained relatively higher levels of partisan support than the opposition block. In other words, I hypothesize that as people have moved away from opposition parties at a higher rate than from the ANC.

3. *Has the social composition of the ANC partisan coalition changed over time?*

I expect to find some significant changes to the social composition of the ANC's partisan coalition since 1994. I anticipate that socio-economic change will reduce the number of core (or strong) ANC partisans among the youngest cohorts. In addition, divergent economic experiences should give way to a new class-based social cleavage that begins to find political expression. Newly emerging class-based interests also have the potential to reshape existing racial cleavages, or at least, weaken race as the explicit basis of social and political division. The urban-rural divide may show itself as rural voters, perceiving a relatively better life through social delivery, continue to strongly support the ANC. By 2006, the ANC's most vital

sources of support lie with one of the most marginalised section of the electorate (the rural poor) and their greatest beneficiaries (the emergent middle classes), both of which have benefited in a disproportional manner from the re-allocation of resources since the end of apartheid.

4. *What are the micro motivations of individual voters, and have they changed over time?*

I expect to see important shifts in partisan alignments not only because the social structure has changed but also because people's value systems are not simply robotic reflections of the social structure. People's experiences and evaluations matter, they acquire new information and skills, and learn and reason. Adjustments are not necessarily limited to structural or sociological factors but may also involve changes to the way people evaluate economic and political governance as well as political parties, levels of cognitive skills, the quality and type of information available and their value systems. If these changes are occurring at the individual level, they are bound to effect the micro motivations that underlie voting behaviour and patterns.

I expect the sociological context to remain important to voters in South Africa. However, while race should be a significant predictor of partisanship in 1994, by 2006 its influence should decline as new socio-economic processes influence the behavioural motivations of voters. Class in particular, should emerge as a competing and significant predictor to race or ethnicity. Yet, the combined effects of race, ethnicity and class will ensure that the entire sociological model remains a strong predictor of partisan support over time. In addition, where race is found to be powerful, I expect its influence on partisanship to be explained as a result of rational and cognitive calculations as opposed to primordial or group identity factors.¹²⁷ In other words the sociological context is expected to act as an information source.

Performance evaluations will also become more important to voters as they come to regard elections as a referendum on government policies and performance and reward or punish the incumbents accordingly. The numerous delivery challenges faced by government, its controversial stances on issues of HIV/AIDS, coupled with persistent unemployment and poverty, will test the support for the governing party. I therefore expect to find fluctuations in partisanship as a response to changes in voter evaluations of government economic and political performance. In particular, there should be a noticeable increase in the influence of economic and political performance evaluations on partisanship between 1994 and 2006. People's experiences and evaluations matter, as they acquire new information and skills, and learn and reason.

¹²⁷ Robert Huckfeldt and John Sprague, 'Citizens, Contexts and Politics' in *The State of the Discipline*, ed. Ada W. Finifter, 281-304 (Washington D.C.: American Political Science Association, 1993). Several micro theories explain sociological voting and are outlined in Chapter Six.

Perceptions of party images will also influence the way people relate to political parties. Due to the pervasiveness of race in South Africa I particularly expect information about the racial credentials of political parties to have an important influence on perceptions of inclusiveness and trustworthiness of political parties.¹²⁸ The information voters gather from the racial credentials of political parties should then translate into partisan support as voter's use this information to inform themselves about how well parties represent them.

Many South African voters remain deeply embedded in information networks that are clearly defined and stratified along class and racial lines. Political pressures emanating from these homogenous social contexts are expected to persuasively reinforce low information reasoning, and thereby inform one's partisan preferences.

Finally, cognitive awareness of politics should play a mediating role. Less cognitively mobilised voters should show a greater reliance on information cues or shortcuts while cognitively mobilised voters should show less reliance. Furthermore, I expect to see significant variation in the types of cues used by voters. Cognitive voters are expected to be more capable of cognition driven reasoning and therefore more dependent on evaluative factors. On the other hand, less cognitively mobilised voters should be more dependent on social reference cues which are more easily attained. Cognitive mobilisation should therefore play an important but indirect role in forming and sustaining partisanship.

The challenge for this study is to sort among the various contrasting explanations on voter behaviour to assess which is most applicable to South Africa. My overall expectations are that partisanship is not shaped only by structural or sociological factors. It is also driven by changes to the way people evaluate economic and political governance, the information people glean from party images and their immediate social networks, as well as their levels of cognitive skills. Partisanship should thus begin to reflect of a number of different experiences and beliefs as South African voters begin to respond to a multitude of factors.

1.8 Significance of the study

Differing answers to these research questions hold very divergent implications for democracy in South Africa. If my expectations are correct and the data reveals that voters respond to short term factors such as government's economic and political performance, partisanship and South African voting outcomes should become increasingly volatile and less predictable over time. South African society may be moving away from a majoritarian society (defined primarily by race) towards a crosscutting society made up of cyclical majorities.¹²⁹ The

¹²⁸ This hypothesis builds on similar theoretical propositions and empirical work developed by Karen E. Ferree, "The Microfoundations of Ethnic Voting". Afrobarometer Working paper No. 40 (2004).

¹²⁹ Dahl, *Democracy and its critics*, 145. Nicholas Miller, "Majority rule and minority interests", in *Political Order* ed. Ian Shapiro and Russell Hardin, 207-250. NOMOS XXXVIII (New York University Press, 1996), 218.

consequence is that citizens with minority interests on a particular issue are unlikely to be a minority with respect to all or even most issues, where there are a number of issues and preferences that are at least crosscutting.¹³⁰ If so, it follows that the dangers posed by majority rule in a divided society context will lessen over time.¹³¹

On the other hand, if the data endorse existing explanations of voting behaviour in South Africa that focus on sociological and cultural motivations there will be increasing grounds for concern for the quality and stability of democracy and fears of majoritarianism along cleavage lines such as race.¹³² Evidence of permanent majorities and minorities may increase the possibility that minorities will perceive themselves as underrepresented or permanently excluded from majoritarian rule despite the proportional representation (PR) electoral system. Violence or extra-institutional measures can arise from such political exclusion, which may undermine the stability of the new dispensation.

If, however, the data reveals a more complex scenario where competing theoretical explanations of voting behaviour each explain some part of the larger political reality, it may indicate that voters may become electorally volatile as they begin to respond to a multitude of factors, but their behaviour remains constrained by long-standing social cleavages

If I find that aggregate patterns of party support are weakening as voters become increasingly electorally mobile this holds significant consequences for democracy. Dealignment, or weakening partisan ties, diminishes the stabilising influence of partisanship on party alignments.¹³³ This should increase electoral competitiveness and increase the unpredictability of elections and uncertainty of outcomes, which, in turn, will encourage parties and candidates to respond to voter interests. New political contenders may emerge and garner some of the national vote quickly. And given the demographic composition of South Africa, increases in non-partisans, or independents, among the black electorate could become the key to future electoral realignments. If I find however, that voters remain largely constrained by long-standing cleavages as a process of dealignment occurs, there are negative consequences for the political process. As people increasingly decline to cast their ballots for any party whatsoever the governing party is likely to win successive elections with a larger percentage of the vote from a decreasing number of voters. A similar scenario is evident from other Southern African country elections, such as Zimbabwe, Namibia, and

¹³⁰ Miller, 229.

¹³¹ Ibid., 242.

¹³² See the following scholars from sociological and cultural explanations: Giliomee, "National Party's Campaign; Giliomee, "South Africa's Emerging Dominant"; Giliomee and Simkins, *Awkward Embrace*; Horowitz, *Democratic South Africa*; Lijphart, *Electoral Systems*; Lijphart, *Democracy in plural societies*; Sadie; Johnson, 'The 1994 Election'; Schlemmer, "South Africa's First Open Election"; Schlemmer, "Democracy or Democratic Hegemony?" Democratic theory argues that divided societies which comprise permanent majorities and minorities are problematic for the stability and quality of democracy. See Dahl, *Democracy and its critics*; Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy*; Schumpeter; Schedler.

¹³³ Russell Dalton and Martin Wattenberg, *Parties without Partisans*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 38.

Mozambique, where support for the respective governing parties increased while turnout has decreased. Increasing majorities and an election mandate from a smaller percentage of voters indicates a low quality of democracy since fewer citizens are willing to cast legitimacy over the regime. Furthermore, if a large voting pool of traditional voters are found to increasingly abstain from casting their vote for the ANC, but do not relocate their support elsewhere, South Africa may face an increasing number of dissatisfied citizens who believe democracy has failed them.

Some degree of electoral stability, where the electoral strength of the major parties has stabilized and the vote is structured, is essential to the process of conflict management and democratic institutionalization. As Bartolini and Mair have argued, 'electoral stability or even electoral stalemate appears as a necessary prerequisite for democratic consolidation.'¹³⁴ The paradox lies in the need for some degree of electoral competitiveness within the system in the short term to allow for the creation of potentially winning alternatives.¹³⁵ Both perspectives show the importance of the dynamics of electoral change. They also highlight the need for balance between extreme electoral stability and extreme instability, particularly in the South African context. Scholars, observing the South African electoral 'stalemate', will probably agree that while more volatility is required, the stability the ANC majority provides continues to be a crucial factor for democratic consolidation.

Results will also tell us more about the types of partisans that exist in South Africa, offering clues to the nature of support for the ANC and the degree to which the party is held to account for their performance in government. If I find a high number of ritual partisans for instance, who are typically mobilized by habitual cues and give little attention to government performance, these partisans are less likely to punish incumbents and hold government to account at elections. This bodes negatively for responsive and accountable governance.¹³⁶ On the other hand, a growth in voters who are politically interested, well-educated and orient themselves to politics on their own, rather than rely on their partisan attachment, should place greater emphasis on government's performance thus ensuring responsiveness and accountability among politicians. Moreover, results can tell us whether the rise in non-partisans, or independents, are located primarily among the apartisans who are cognitively mobilised or the apoliticals who are the least likely to involve themselves in the electoral process and are the most unsophisticated about politics. As Dalton states, 'if the growth of independents merely expanded the number of these (apolitical) non-partisans, it would be a negative development for the contemporary electoral process.'¹³⁷

¹³⁴ Bartolini and Mair, 2.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

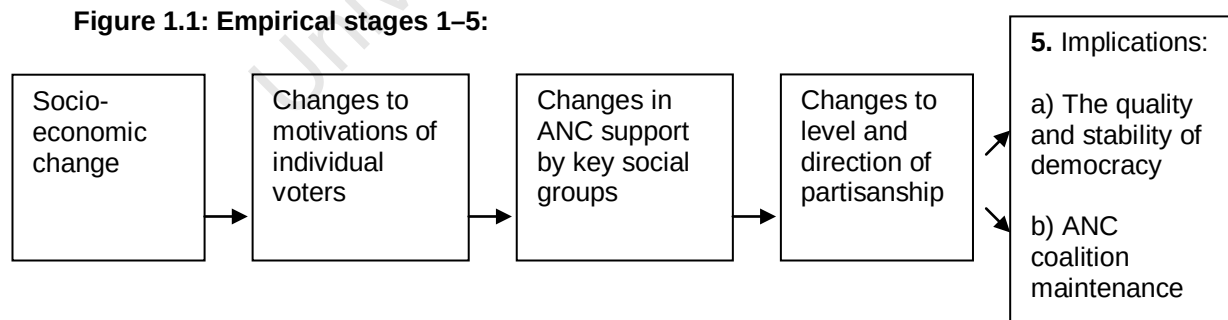
¹³⁶ See Dalton's four-fold typology of partisanship in Russell Dalton, *Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Democracies*, 2nd ed. (New Jersey: Chatham House Publishers, 1998), 215.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 213.

Finally, the results should tell us about the ANC's ability to maintain their broad-based coalition. Changes to the ANC's partisan support, in terms of demographics or behavioural motivations, hold significant implications for the party. Far from maintaining its broad-based support, the party may be increasingly reliant on a specific segment of the public for their core electoral support. New core constituencies may create a new set of tensions for the ANC by demanding contradictory policy outcomes, further testing the party's ability to hold the coalition together. Shifts at the mass level may be reflected in shifts in the party's profile or its image at the grassroots level; or it may be reflected in shifts in policy positions. The ANC's relationship with its tripartite alliance partners may also, as a result, be affected. A prominent feature of a dominant party system like South Africa's is the tendency for the political focus to shift from competition between parties to factional conflict within the dominant party itself.¹³⁸ Factions within the ANC alliance may begin to align themselves with certain social groups which serve to undermine the cohesiveness and stability of the whole. The concern is whether the ANC will be able to maintain an untenable coalition made up of groups with opposing economic and social interests. The ANC has managed to maintain internal cohesion of its diverse coalition through rhetoric that serves to deepen or 'freeze' existing racial cleavages, in effect setting the "ethnic us" against the "ethnic other".¹³⁹ Yet, the goal of this rhetoric to primordialize or "freeze" existing racial cleavages is likely to be threatened by the fluidity of ethnic and inter-ethnic divisions by new cross-cutting cleavages. Overall, answers to my questions can tell us more about the key motivations of voters, about prospects for the quality and stability of democracy, and inform us about ANC coalition maintenance and the conduct of party politics in South Africa.

Figure 1.1 sketches the argument that has been outlined so far:

Figure 1.1: Empirical stages 1–5:



¹³⁸ Heywood, 286.

¹³⁹ Shaheen Mozaffar and Gail Maloney, "Are multi-ethnic societies and deeply divided societies different?" Presentation, 12th Annual World Convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities, Columbia University, New York City. April 12-14 2007, 36.

1.9 Structure of the study

This thesis is divided into three main sections. The next chapter sets out the possible answers to my four research questions by looking at the major theoretical models of voting behaviour. Chapter Two also reviews the South African literature. Chapter Three focuses on outlining the central arguments or hypotheses that underpin the study. Chapter Four is devoted to discussion of research design and methodologies.

The second section is empirical and presents the data results. Each of the five data chapters assesses the impact of a group of related theoretical variables on partisanship. Chapter Five look at trends and patterns in partisanship over time and then explores changes to the demographic support bases of parties by focusing on the partisan responses of social groups. Chapter Six to Nine discuss the influence on the direction of partisanship of sociological factors, government performance evaluations, party image evaluations and social networks, and cognitive mobilisation respectively.

Chapter Ten involves a detailed empirical analysis of the overall results by attempting to integrate or synthesize these different approaches into a general explanatory model. The concluding chapter discusses the implications of the results for the quality and stability of democracy in South Africa.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Perspectives on Voting Behaviour

Voting behaviour is shaped by both short-term and long-term influences. Short term influences are specific to a particular election and include the state of the economy and the images of party leaders. Long-term influences include sociological influences and one's partisan affiliations. All these considerations are best examined in relation to rival models of voting.¹ Each model offers alternative theories to explain why people vote the way they do. Debates pivot around two key issues: voters' abilities and levels of sophistication and the factors or cues that most influence or guide decision-making.² Each theoretical model grew out of distinct research agendas that evolved from methodological innovations, intellectual developments, and political changes.³

In this chapter I discuss the major theoretical voter models and their key concepts that strive to explain voting behaviour in South Africa. The first section explores the rival theories which international research postulates as explanations for individual voter behaviour. The second section reviews the South Africa literature on voting behaviour and relates it to the larger body of research. The discussion of the four major theoretical models prepares the way for the tests and measurements that follow.

2.1 Sociological or structural approach

The sociological model links voting behaviour to group membership. Party choice is determined by one's position in the social structure because voters use sociological cues to guide their voting choices. Voting patterns therefore reflect the economic and social position of the group to which voters belong. Sociological factors create common group interests. Since different social groups hold different interests, individual voters, encapsulated in a specific social group, will vote according to the interests of their group. A voter thus develops partisan predispositions towards parties that support the social groups to which he belongs. In turn, the party can easily mobilize social groups by representing their interests. This model highlights the importance of social alignment and divisions within a society, namely class, race, ethnicity, gender and religion or region.⁴ As Dalton argues, 'A large number of policy issues can be cast in terms of conflicts between class, religious, ethnic or other social

¹ Heywood, 266.

² Russell Dalton and Martin Wattenberg, "The Not So Simple Act of Voting," in *The State of the Discipline*, ed. Ada W. Finifter (Washington D.C.: American Political Science Association, 1993).

³ Pippa Norris, *Elections and Voting Behaviour: New challenges, new perspectives* (Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing, 1998), introduction.

⁴ Dalton and Wattenberg, "The Not So Simple Act of Voting", 196; Heywood, 267.

groupings. Membership in a social group, either formally or through psychological ties, can be a valuable guidepost in dealing with these policy questions.⁵

No single overarching theoretical assumption underlies or explains the importance of sociological factors to voting. A number of micro theories exist and each suggests an alternative mechanism to explain impact of sociological variables on partisan behaviour.⁶ Firstly, sociological voting is explained by some scholars as a referent for group behaviour where the individual turns to the group to anchor his opinions and attitudes. This approach is best expressed in the Columbia studies which pioneered the sociological approach when they used data relating to demographic patterns of voting to explain their findings (1944) and later (1954) data relating to primary groups or clusters of groups in the social strata.⁷ Their emphasis on 'social determinism', comparing group demographics to voting patterns, created a useful model for identifying and examining a set of social cues or demographic variables that structure or shape voting decisions. Second, sociological voting has been described as an expression of a group identity as is most clearly seen in Donald Horowitz's discussion of ethnicity, party systems and voting behaviour.⁸ Elections become an 'ethnic' or 'racial' census, which is problematic for the process of bargaining and compromise in democracies due to the ascriptive and rigid nature of these identities.⁹ Third, sociological political behaviour can also be viewed as a product of a social learning process through 'behavioural contagion'.¹⁰ Citizens form their opinions and attitudes over time through a repetitive process where they are rewarded or punished for their political viewpoints by the people they encounter. Lastly, sociological voting can be explained as a result of rational and cognitive calculations.¹¹ To reduce the inherent costs that go with obtaining information, an individual treats socially obtained information as an information cue. Inherent limitations on individual's capacities to gather information means that they may rely on information shortcuts supplied by their immediate social contexts and networks. Social groups can be an important reference point in orienting the individual to political issues and providing information about politics.¹² In this case voters make instrumental use of the group by informing themselves where their individual interests lie. If most people from their 'group support a particular party, the voter concludes that it is probably rational to do the same. While the information sources are

⁵ Russell Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies: Public Opinion and Political Parties in the United States, Great Britain, Germany and France* (New Jersey: Chatham House Publishers, 1988), 28.

⁶ Huckfeldt and Sprague, 281-299.

⁷ Lazarsfeld, Paul Felix, Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet, *The people's choice: how the voter makes up his mind in a presidential campaign* (New York: Duell, Sloan, and Pearce, 1944).

⁸ Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups*; Horowitz, *Democratic South Africa*.

⁹ Also see Lijphart, *Electoral Systems*; Lijphart, *Democracy in plural societies*.

¹⁰ Paul Allan Beck, Russell Dalton, Steven Greene and Robert Huckfeldt, "The Social Calculus of Voting: Interpersonal, Media, and Organizational Influences on Presidential Choice," *American Political Science Review* 96, 1 (2002): 68.

¹¹ Anthony Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (New York: Harper Collins, 1957); Samuel Popkin, *The Reasoning Voter* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Posner, 91; Kanchan Chandra, *Why Ethnic Parties Succeed. Patronage and Ethnic Head Counts in India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

¹² Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*, 151.

sociological, the choice of information sources is driven by rational decisions. Sociological explanations can therefore be partly explained by rational choice explanations.

This approach is reflected in the work of Daniel Posner, who argues that ethnic identities in Zambia act as an information source or short cut to voters about likely patterns of patronage.

¹³ Far from being mobilized by deep-rooted affective ties, Zambian voters instead choose strategically among a repertoire of ethnic identities because of the information that identities convey about the expected behaviour of other political actors. Voters are therefore informing themselves about the dynamics of electoral competition in order to maximize electoral payoffs. Ethnic groups are mobilized or joined not because of the depth of attachment but because of the usefulness of the political coalitions that they define. Ethnic voting is utility-driven and the voter is therefore making rational and cognitive decisions about which identity group to support.¹⁴

So, for some, voting is merely an expression of group loyalties – the reference group model argues that environments shape people's interests. For others, voters use information cues taken from groups to inform their partisan preferences, which suggests that people instrumentally choose which social environments can influence them.¹⁵

Despite the different assumptions underpinning sociological mechanisms, all interpretations of sociological voting have one unifying feature. They are all contextual theories in that they build on the assumption of behavioral interdependence, where the actions of individuals represent an intersection between an individual's circumstances and those of surrounding individuals.¹⁶ They all involve cross-level inference – in that the political choices of individuals are understood in relation to their environment. The question then becomes a matter of 'specification of interdependence' – which mechanism of contextual influence is the most relevant to understand sociological voting? Once we can agree that one mechanism of contextual influence (such as cognitive learning from social settings), rather than another (group loyalties) drives voter identification, this serves as a vehicle to a greater understanding for implications of sociological voting at the aggregate electoral level.

The traditional application of the sociological model is perhaps clearest in relation to social class. At the most basic level the class model of voting was simple and deterministic. The connection between class structure and party system is one of economic interest - class equals party. Each class has economic interests that reflect its position in the social structure and influences the behaviour of everyone belonging to that class. The working classes are generally held to have different economic policy interests from the middle class, especially

¹³ Posner, 91.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 104-5.

¹⁵ Huckfeldt and Sprague, 293-5.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 281-299.

with respect to welfare and social service.¹⁷ In the 1950's and 1960's particularly in Britain, class was regarded as the most salient source of political conflict, and of party support and voting.¹⁸

The sociological model has been criticised on a number of grounds. First, it fails to provide explanations for behaviour which lacks a sociological or group aspect.¹⁹ It thus ignores the impact of short term factors like government performance, the role of the individual and self-interest. Sociological studies fail to test the relative influence of sociological variables against other factors such as performance evaluations and cognitive skills.²⁰

Second, the model lost credibility when growing empirical evidence showed that the link between sociological factors and party support was diminishing. The model was unable to explain the decline of social cleavage voting, particularly the class, educational and religious cleavages.²¹ By the 1980's class dealignment showed that the impact of socio-economic interests on voting among the British public had declined.²² Instead, by the 1990's political parties in Britain were competing for votes across class lines, despite the supposedly rigid class-base of the society.²³

Some scholars argued that the model's demise was linked to the declining relevance of fixed social characteristics and cleavages in contemporary electorates. Fewer people fit neatly into traditional social categories. Political discourse also involves a wider range of issues and increasing exposure to other information sources. One's social position and characteristics are thus simply less relevant as cues to electoral decision-making. As Dalton and Wattenberg put it, 'It is not that cleavages have become entirely irrelevant. They have lost their hold among many voters. And for those voters with continuing cleavage ties, social identities are being fragmented across a range of class, religious, ethnic, and other reference groups.'²⁴

Others argued however, that social cues were still important but now operate in more complex ways than previously thought. Traditional terms, such as 'class', required reconceptualisation before they could once again become meaningful explanatory variables. Some predicted that as older cleavages declined, new cleavages would rise to replace them,

¹⁷ David Robertson, *Class and the British Electorate* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984), 14.

¹⁸ David Butler and Donald Stokes, *Political change in Britain* (London: Macmillan, 1969); Lauri Karvonen and Stein Kuhnle, *Party Systems and Voter Alignments Revisited* (London: Routledge, 2001), 6; Robertson, 32.

¹⁹ Dalton and Wattenberg, "The Not So Simple Act of Voting", 198.

²⁰ Franklin, Mackie and Valen. Their study does not correlate or control for other variables.

²¹ Dalton and Wattenberg, "The Not So Simple Act of Voting", 198. The exception to the rule is the race and ethnicity cleavages in advanced industrial democracies, in which one can identify pockets of solid partisan support.

²² Richard Rose and Ian McAllister, *The Loyalties of Voters* (Sage publications, London, 1990), 86. Also see Rose and McAllister, 62-69 for further discussion on class-based voting and alternative measures.

²³ *Ibid.*, 88.

²⁴ Dalton and Wattenberg, "The Not So Simple Act of Voting", 202. Also see Franklin, Mackie and Valen, 420.

bringing about an eventual partisan realignment where new social divisions structure the vote.²⁵ Other scholars like Mainwaring argued that sociological voting had little significance in many of the Latin American third wave democracies.²⁶ As he stated, 'The party systems of many third world democracies are not consistently structured to a high degree by social cleavages. This is not because of the lack of major social cleavages, but rather because these cleavages do not always determine party preference and voting behaviour'.²⁷ Finally, traditional sociological explanations lost appeal when scholars started to show that sociological voting could be explained as a result of rational and cognitive calculations.²⁸

Thus, the shortcomings of the sociological approach continue to motivate scholars to explore alternative explanations for voting behaviour.

2.2 Socio-psychological 'party identification' approach

The emphasis on sociological factors was soon displaced by a focus on personal rather than social factors in voting. In the 1960's, the Michigan model of voting conceptualised the vote as a function of short-term attitudes towards candidates and parties and long-term predispositions embedded in 'party identification'. Voting behaviour was seen to be based on a sense of psychological attachment with political parties. Party identification is thus characterised as a long-term positive 'psychological orientation', and 'an enduring attachment' that guides electoral behaviour.²⁹

The voting decision is influenced by three basic attitudes: candidate evaluations, issue opinions, and most importantly, voter loyalties to political parties or 'party identification'.³⁰ The Michigan school did not deny that social-structural variables are relevant to voting behaviour. Rather, it relegated them to a background role, proximally and causally distant from the vote at the wide end of the 'funnel of causality'.³¹ At the wide end of the funnel are broad social characteristics and conditions that structure political conflict and influence political attitudes, but are themselves temporally and proximally removed from the voting decision. They precede and therefore guide and inform partisan attitudes and choices. As the funnel narrows group loyalties and values link more explicitly to political attitudes that involve individual beliefs. As Campbell et al explain, 'as events approach the narrow end of the funnel, they are

²⁵ Ronald Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles among Western Publics* (Princeton N.J: Princeton University Press, 1977).

²⁶ Scott P. Mainwaring, *Rethinking Party Systems in the Third Wave of Democratization: The Case of Brazil* (California: Stanford University Press, 1999), 42.

²⁷ Ibid., 46.

²⁸ Downs; Popkin; Posner, 91; Chandra, *Why Ethnic Parties Succeed*.

²⁹ Angus Campbell, Phillip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller and Donald E. Stokes, *The American voter* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1960), 24-37.

³⁰ The party identification approach was developed at the University of Michigan and was published by Campbell et al 1960.

³¹ Campbell et al, 24-37.

more completely relevant, personal and political'.³² Party identification is therefore motivated by both sociological and attitudinal factors. Sociological factors influence political attitudes. Partisan attitudes, in turn, inform the vote.³³

Sociological factors shape partisanship through, first, early political socialisation – voters develop a psychological attachment to a party mainly on the basis of family influence. Once political loyalties are forged through the family, these attachments are later reinforced by group membership and social experiences.

Attitudes such as perceptions of government performance, policy issues and party leaders, as well as personal interests tend to be shaped by one's party identification. Evaluations and political events are thus interpreted to match with these pre-existing political loyalties. In other words, party identification acts as a filter by raising a 'perceptual screen' through which individuals judge what is favorable to their partisan orientation. This biased processing of information insulates party attachments from political events.³⁴ The stronger the bond, the more exaggerated the process of selection and perceptual distortion.³⁵ This suggests that most voters already know how to vote before an election and that campaigns, party candidates and the media have little influence over the behaviour of party identifiers.

These early studies saw party identification as largely stable and unchanging.³⁶ This partisan alignment tends to create partisan stability and continuity in patterns of voting behaviour. Party identification provides a political anchor by offering parties a consistent base of support, thereby encouraging stability in electoral results. Instead of having to understand and evaluate complex political issues party identification provides voters with a ready guide or shortcut for judging most political phenomena, voting decisions, and interpreting issues and candidacies. Deviations in voting from one's partisan affiliation are the result of short term factors specific to candidates and current events and issues. Voters tend to return to their socialized party identification at the next election.

As conceptualized by Campbell et al party identification possesses clearly defined properties. Partisanship is intergenerational since it is transmitted from parent to child. It is stable and intensifies over time. It influences political attitudes such as candidate evaluations, issue opinions and the vote. Yet, it is independent of the vote choice since a voter can defect in the short term. In sum, party identification was seen as a long-term affective attachment to a

³² Ibid., 29.

³³ Dalton, *Citizen Politics*, 174.

³⁴ Green Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 7.

³⁵ Campbell et al, 133.

³⁶ Campbell et al did describe how changes to partisanship might occur and stated that the relation of party identification to attitudes is two-directional and therefore causal and dynamic over time; when attitudes agree with identification they help to conserve the partisan tie, when they disagree with allegiances they are potential agents of change, 134.

particular party, displaying properties of independence, stability, and intensification, and influencing other political attitudes and behaviour.³⁷

Party identification has provided a reliable measurement instrument for voting and other political attitudes, particularly in survey research. The party identification approach presented scholars with a new methodological approach based on nationwide, representative cross sectional surveys. This was in contrast to the Lazarsfeld et al panel studies based on interviews within a single community.³⁸

This approach has also been strongly criticized. Many scholars question the conceptual status of party identification, arguing that it is too close to the actual vote decision to be theoretically and conceptually independent.³⁹ Second, it has been noted that this concept does not 'travel well' to countries outside the USA.⁴⁰ Perhaps the major weakness of this model is the growing evidence of partisan dealignment, suggesting that other determinants of the vote assumed a relatively greater importance.⁴¹ Increased electoral instability has meant that the party identification model is now less successful in predicting voting choice. Party ties have eroded as people move away from parties' altogether leading to the growth of a new kind of non-partisans or 'apartisans' who Dalton describes as 'sophisticated and active citizens who remain unattached to any political party'.⁴² British electoral studies illustrate the decline of the models' explanatory powers - whereas in the 1950's and 60's the British electorate was aligned in partisan and class terms by the 1970s' the model was increasingly unable to account for changes in voting behaviour. Consequently the concept endures ongoing criticism concerning its applicability and utility as a long-term attitude.⁴³

Yet, the consequences of dealignment for the party identification model are far from resolved. Schmitt argues that data show no single de-alignment trend among the Western European electorates.⁴⁴ Instead, he argues, decreases in partisanship relate to nationally specific developments. Also, increases in non-alignment were 'peripheral' since they came mainly from those who merely sympathized with a party; those who were 'fairly' or 'very' attached to

³⁷ Flanagan et al., 14.

³⁸ Richard Gunther, Jose Ramon Montero and Hans-Jurgen Puhle, *Democracy, Intermediation, and Voting on Four Continents* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 9.

³⁹ Lawrence Le Duc, "The Dynamic Properties of Party Identification: A Four nation Comparison," *European Journal of Political Research* 9, 1981: 257-68, 267; Jacques Thomassen, "Party Identification as a Cross-national Concept: Its meaning in the Netherlands," in *Party Identification and Beyond*, ed. Ian Budge, Ivor Crewe and Dennis Farlie, 83-102 (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1976); Butler, David and Donald Stokes. *Political change in Britain* (London: Macmillan, 1969); For an overview of the arguments see Richardson, 22; Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 164.

⁴⁰ Herbert Weisberg, "Political partisanship," in *Measures of political attitudes* edited by John Robinson, Phillip Shaver, and Lawrence Wrightsman, 681-736 (New York: Academic Press, 1999), 724.

⁴¹ Richardson, 22; Dalton and Wattenberg, *Parties without Partisans*, 23.

⁴² Dalton and Wattenberg, "The Not So Simple Act of Voting", 206.

⁴³ Green Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, provide a detailed discussion.

⁴⁴ Hermann Schmitt, "On party attachment in Western Europe and the utility of Eurobarometer data," in *Elections and Voting Behaviour: New challenges, new perspectives*, ed. Pippa Norris, 3-20 (Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing, 1998), 3. He analyses twenty-five Eurobarometer surveys between 1974 and 1988.

a party remained stable partisans over time. While some countries (such as the UK and Italy) experienced peripheral de-alignment others experienced realignment (France) or stable alignment (Germany).⁴⁵ Richardson argues that long-term partisan ties continued to anchor the vote among parts of the European electorate between the 1960's and 1980's.⁴⁶ Bartolini and Mair find that electorates were significantly more stable than the contemporary emphasis on change suggested.⁴⁷ In fact, 'the most striking impression to have emerged from the overview of levels of electoral volatility across this century of mass politics in Western Europe is one of stability and persistence.'⁴⁸ And finally, Green et al find that the extent and pace of partisan change is smaller and slower than previously suggested, leading them to reject the dealignment thesis.⁴⁹

The party identification model has enjoyed a revival in recent years. Green et al find that party identification is still driven by social-psychological factors. Second, their empirical evidence suggests that party identification continues to be a useful methodology in voting behaviour. They maintain that party identification is still a good predictor of vote choice, it coincides with evaluations and opinions but remains distinct from them, and can therefore be characterised as both enduring and meaningful.⁵⁰ The ongoing significance of party attachments is clear when they state, 'Party identification is anything but an ephemeral doorstep opinion'.⁵¹ 'People continue to identify as partisans, continue to vote on the basis of these identifications, and seem to cheer for one of the parties.'⁵² However, they depart from traditional notions of party identification by rejecting the 'selective perception' hypothesis. Instead, they argue that voters do update their partisanship.⁵³ Partisan perceptual bias does not prevent partisans from updating their evaluations in light of new information.⁵⁴

2.3 Rational choice 'economic' approach

Led by the work of Anthony Downs, in the 1960's a rival theoretical approach to the Michigan model emerged which built on the notion of performance evaluations and limited information. The main hypothesis of rational choice theory is that voters care about and respond to the economic and political performance of the incumbent party. As citizens go to the polls they take into account the past performance of government and their future expectations and then

⁴⁵ Ibid., 18. Post realignment is characterised by a decline of those closely attached while sympathisers increase or remain stable. Conversely, stable alignment is evident when there are stable or rising scores of both closely attached partisans and sympathisers.

⁴⁶ Richardson, 38.

⁴⁷ Bartolini and Mair, 121.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 127.

⁴⁹ Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 87.

⁵⁰ Green Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 4, 19, 164-202

⁵¹ Ibid., 50

⁵² Ibid., 20.

⁵³ Ibid., 111.

⁵⁴ A variety of sources were used to test such as Gallup Polls, CBS New York Times Polls, Time/CNN Polls, and Harris surveys, 128-136.

punish or reward political parties accordingly.⁵⁵ Rational choice models of voting behavior shift attention away from psychological processes, socialization and the behavior of social groups and instead, focus on the self-interest of the individual. Instead, voters are rational actors who base electoral choices on calculations that will serve their self-interest.⁵⁶ Rather than being habitual, or a manifestation of attachments and long-term allegiances, voting is seen as instrumental – or a means to an end.⁵⁷

Following in this tradition successive scholars set out to expand on this approach. Fiorina argues that citizens monitor party promises and performance over time, and use their observations to update their party identification.⁵⁸ Achen, characterising voters as rational actors who efficiently update their party affiliations on the basis of new information, argues that voters learn over time which party performs best in office.⁵⁹ As evidence accumulates voters become certain about which party best suits their interests. Popkin asserts that voters reason about political parties, candidates, and issues and make inferences about their observations. Voters connect information to government performance by asking 'What has government done for me lately?'⁶⁰

Rational choice theorists agree that voters use their issue opinions, news of party platforms, and evaluations of candidate and government performance to inform voting choice. The performance of parties refers to the way in which voters judge how the governing party handles major issues such as inflation, unemployment, and social welfare. The economic component emphasizes the idea that when economic conditions appear to improve or worsen, a voter is more or less inclined to vote for the incumbent. The political aspect concentrates on the behaviour and images of political actors. Regardless of their partisan dispositions voters pass judgment on public affairs and its effect on their daily lives.

Substantive debates arose within the rational choice school concerning the role of different types of performance evaluations. The first distinction is between egocentric and sociotropic evaluations. Early economic studies of voting made simplifying assumptions about how voters connect their personal economic conditions or personal finances with their votes in the form of 'pocket-book voting'. Popkin argued however, that voters do not project directly from their own pocketbooks or even their personal problems. Instead voters distinguish between personal economic conditions and larger economic trends and bring to bear only those personal

⁵⁵ Downs, 40-9; Morris Fiorina, *Retrospective Voting in American Presidential Elections* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 25.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 38. The voting decision is based on the voter's perception of 'expected utility', which Downs explains as the difference (party differential) between the utility income received (benefits) from incumbents and what a voter would have received if opposition were in power.

⁵⁷ Heywood, 267.

⁵⁸ Fiorina, 80.

⁵⁹ Christopher H. Achen, "Social psychology, demographic variables, and linear regression: Breaking the Iron Triangle in Voting Research," *Political Behaviour*, 14, 3 (1992): 195-211.

⁶⁰ Popkin, 31.

problems they believe are part of the political agenda, and those problems with which they believe government should be helping.⁶¹ Empirical studies appear to confirm that assessments of national economic conditions have a bigger impact on voting than changes in personal economic well-being.⁶² However, Sigelman et al find that sociotropic and self-interested voting operate side by side.⁶³ There is, they conclude, an underlying tendency for people to reward or punish the incumbent president when things have been going well or badly for them financially. However, this underlying tendency is overridden by the complexity of the electoral setting.⁶⁴

The second distinction relates to whether voters base their vote on retrospective evaluations of past economic performance or prospective expectations of the economy's future.⁶⁵ If retrospective evaluations are important voters reward or punish the incumbent government. If evaluations are prospective, voters decide on basis of policy promises. Yet, both approaches look at elections as an occasion for voters to control policy decisions. Much of the research assumes retrospective voting although Downs, Fiorina and Lewis-Beck argue that retrospective and prospective elements can coexist as the voter looks ahead and chooses between alternative futures, while taking cognizance of past trends.⁶⁶

A third debate within rational choice voting theory distinguishes between simple versus mediated evaluations. As Fiorina explains, simple retrospective evaluations (SRE's) are based on personal direct experience and only consider one aspect of the economy such as unemployment or income. Mediated retrospective evaluations (MRE's) require the voter to consider two or more economic factors in his evaluation.⁶⁷ The simple-mediated distinction is based on the object of concern - a simple object being unemployment and a complicated object being as government's handling of employment.⁶⁸ Voters connect their own personal economic situations to government only when they can connect changes in their personal financial situation to broader economic trends and government policies.⁶⁹ As Popkin explains, 'Voters who see political reasons for changes in their pocketbooks will reward and punish political leaders; voters with only personal explanations for their situations will not.'⁷⁰ Lewis-Beck also argues that simple egocentric economic evaluations are insufficient for

⁶¹ Popkin, 31.

⁶² Ibid., 32. Lee Sigelman, Carol Sigelman and David Bullock, "Reconsidering Pocket book voting: An Experimental Approach," *Political Behaviour* 13, 2 (1991): 129-149, 129.

⁶³ Sigelman, Sigelman and Bullock, 140.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 143.

⁶⁵ Fiorina, 15, Popkin, 33.

⁶⁶ Michael Lewis-Beck, "Comparative Economic Voting: Britain, France, Germany and Italy," in *Elections and Voting Behaviour: New challenges, new perspectives*, ed. Pippa Norris (Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing, 1998), 167; Fiorina, 12-4; 197-200; Downs, 40; Green Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 115.

⁶⁷ Fiorina, chapter 6, 107, 128-9.

⁶⁸ Ibid., chapter 6, 80.

⁶⁹ Popkin, 32; Sigelman, Sigelman and Bullock, 140.

⁷⁰ Popkin, 32.

understanding the impact of one's personal circumstances on voting.⁷¹ Only when one's personal financial situation is considered in relation to the role of government policy does it show an effect, albeit indirectly. If voters perceive government as partly responsible for changes in their economic circumstances they will act to reward or punish government accordingly.

In addition to evaluations of 'economic goods' voters also evaluate the delivery of 'political goods' which include assessments of government performance in various policy areas, presidential performance, trust in and approval of the job performance of other political actors and evaluations of political institutions. Within political performance evaluations a key distinction (especially for new democracies) concerns government versus regime. Regime evaluations tap people's satisfaction with democracy, and are distinct from evaluations of government performance.⁷² Since voters should distinguish their governments from overall regimes these evaluations should remain a distinct and more permanent judgment.

These dimensions of voter evaluations provide a framework with which to examine what voters do and in doing so provides a basis for theory. As Lewis-Beck asserts, 'Such a voter looks backward and forward, at the economies of self, community and government, forming reasoned and not-so-reasoned opinions that decide his or her party preference.'⁷³

Most rational choice models contend that partisanship is shaped by evaluations of party performance and platforms rather than psychological orientations and attitudes to parties and candidates. Fluctuations in party identification are a response to changes in political and economic conditions and evaluations.⁷⁴ Lewis-Beck concludes in his study of four European nations that economic conditions appear as an important vote determinant, overtaking the influence of social cleavages and party identification in some cases, 'Without doubt, economic circumstances affect British, French, German, and Italian voters. The perception of better (worse) economic performance and policy increases (decreases) their likelihood of voting for an incumbent party.'⁷⁵

Second, partisanship is a changeable orientation. Morris Fiorina's analysis of American data found that people move to and from their respective political parties in response to their evaluations of political and economic conditions and in response to their evolving evaluations

⁷¹ Lewis-Beck, "Comparative Economic Voting", 175.

⁷² Michael Bratton, Robert Mattes and E. Gyimah-Boadi, *Public opinion, Democracy and Market Reform in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 81.

⁷³ Lewis-Beck, "Comparative Economic Voting", 160.

⁷⁴ John E. Jackson, "Issues, Party Choices, and Presidential Votes," *American Journal of Political Science* 19 (1975): 161-85; Charles H. Franklin and John E. Jackson, "The Dynamics of Party Identification," *American Political Science Review* 77 (1983): 957-73 use individual level survey data to show that partisanship is moulded by ideological proximity to the parties. Fiorina uses panel surveys to argue that partisanship shifts with retrospective evaluations.

⁷⁵ Lewis-Beck, "Comparative Economic Voting", 180. He uses 1983 Eurobarometer data. Economic evaluations exceed the impact of party identification in Britain and roughly equal it in Germany.

of the performance of the parties and their candidates.⁷⁶ Partisanship is neither impervious to change nor devoid of political content. It is subject to short-term changes in the political environment and is constantly updated and modified by current voter evaluations. Partisanship is a running tally of current party performance.⁷⁷ In Popkin's words, 'there is mutual adjustment between political evaluations, party identification, and voting.'⁷⁸

Third, it acts as a 'standing choice' or default value for voters, and is a substitute for more complete information about parties and candidates.⁷⁹ Voters rely on 'information shortcuts' because they lack incentive to gather complete information about politics. Their decisions are also constrained by uncertainty as 'they are not always aware of what the government is or could be doing.'⁸⁰ Performance-based voting therefore offers voters a reasonable 'information short-cut'. In this way, partisanship is also 'a rational habit' since voters do not have to inform themselves afresh at each election thereby saving resources.⁸¹

Much of the literature on performance-based voting focuses on advanced industrial Western democracies. Yet, accumulating evidence suggests that evaluations inform partisanship in new democracies and developing countries. Brader and Tucker's study of post soviet Russia argue that party attachments have a rational basis since voters choose parties in a manner that connects their policy and ideological interests to the position of parties, 'voters display loyalty to parties whose performance and platforms reasonably correspond to the voters' interests and beliefs.'⁸²

Studies also show that the impact of performance-based evaluations differs across nations. The extent and strength of their impact depend on a variety of factors. First, a government's reputation for effectiveness and responsiveness matters. Negative reputations tend to reduce economic voting and visa versa. Second, multi-party variations matter. Multi-party systems and coalition governments tend to dilute economic voting.⁸³ This leads Powell and Whitten to argue that any analyses of economic voting should incorporate the political factors that shape the electoral consequences of economic performance.⁸⁴ They find that the context of government's political responsibility matters. Where responsibility is at its most blurred the

⁷⁶ Fiorina, 84-130; Popkin, 54-5.

⁷⁷ Popkin, 54-5; Fiorina, 199-200; Achen, 'Social psychology', 202.

⁷⁸ Popkin, 55.

⁷⁹ V.O. Key, *The Responsible Electorate* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press, 1967).

⁸⁰ Downs, 80. Downs defines uncertainty as 'any lack of sure knowledge about the course of past, present, future, or hypothetical events, Downs, 707.

⁸¹ Ibid., 85.

⁸² Ted Brader and Joshua A Tucker. "The Emergence of Mass Partisanship in Russia, 1993-1996," *American Journal of Political Science*, 45, 1 (2001): 78.

⁸³ Diluted for two reasons: the possibilities for vote switching within the coalition are higher and the number of switches from incumbent coalition to opposition could be less because of the diffusion of government responsibility: voter does not perceive any one of the parties to be responsible for economic problems and thus fail to switch to opposition. Lewis-Beck, "Comparative Economic Voting", 178.

⁸⁴ G. Bingham Powell and Guy Whitten, "A cross-national analysis of economic voting: Taking account of the political context," In *Elections and Voting Behaviour: New challenges, new perspectives*, ed. Pippa Norris (Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing, 1998), 185.

economic effects on voting are weak; where responsibility is at its most focused the effects are strong and consistent.⁸⁵ In addition, the ideological image of the incumbent government matters when considering the effects of economic factors (particularly unemployment and inflation) on voting. Lower inflation was found to enhance support for right-wing government and left and centre governments were helped by above average unemployment records and punished by worse than average unemployment.⁸⁶

Differentiation also exists between developed and developing countries. Pacek and Radcliff find that voters in developing contexts punish incumbents for poor economic performance but do not reward good performance, which deviates from the conventional reward-punishment pattern in developed nations where both economic recession and growth have electoral consequences. As they report, 'A shrinking economy (in a developing country) imposes enormous electoral costs on incumbent governments, while growth provides no benefits.'⁸⁷ This deviation may be due, firstly, to 'negative voting' where citizens are more prone to expressing dissatisfaction than approval; second, the nature of the economy which influences the segments of the population that respond to economic decline⁸⁸; and third, the way in which the economy affects turnout in developing countries, where economic downturn elevates turnout while growth depresses it.

A number of further contestations remain. Which economic factors matter most? Should we concentrate on inflation, income levels, or unemployment statistics?⁸⁹ Do voters take into account their evaluations over a long time frame (a year or more) or a short time frame (months or weeks)? Should we therefore focus on economic conditions over years or close to election campaigns? In addition, the relative influence of economic variables in relation to other party support variables is debated. As Lewis-Beck states, 'The results of the various countries show that the economic situation has a predictable influence on the election outcome, but how strong this influence is and which economic factors are crucial is difficult to tell.'⁹⁰

⁸⁵ Powell and Whitten, 204.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 203.

⁸⁷ Alexander Pacek and Benjamin Radcliff, "The Political Economy of Competitive Elections in the Developing World," in *Elections and Voting Behaviour: New challenges, new perspectives*, ed. Pippa Norris, 209-223 (Aldershot: Dartmouth Publishing, 1998), 221.

⁸⁸ Economic growth/decline may affect rural and urban populations differently. Growth may improve the lot of the urban poor more than rural poor (who are left out of aggregate growth). In contrast, recessions may be more widely felt by both constituencies and will have greater electoral impact because the portion of citizens with a stake in punishing government is greater than the portion having an interest in rewarding government when things are good.

⁸⁹ Edward R Tufte, *Political control of the economy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978). Tufte argues that voter response to economic performance depends on real disposable income (*Political Control of the economy*, Princeton, 1978, p. 29). Other indicators might include inflation, unemployment or business opportunities, see Fiorina, 29. As yet there is no consensus of whether or how such variables affect the vote: Pacek and Radcliff, 214.

⁹⁰ Lewis-Beck, "Comparative Economic Voting", 153.

However, the major weakness of rational choice theories is that they abstract the individual voter from his or her social and cultural context.⁹¹ In other words, these models ignore the fact that one's ability to evaluate policy issues or party performance or calculate self-interest is also structured by the social context and group loyalties.

2.4 Party images approach

Besides performance-related evaluations of government voters also resort to a second form of low information reasoning: their broader images of the attributes and traits of parties and candidates.⁹² Party images can be understood as the mental pictures that voters have of parties.⁹³ Rose and McAllister note that 'party images are psychological rather than logical structures; images consist of impressions that voters associate with particular parties.'⁹⁴

The elements of party images refer to the intrinsic values or attributes associated with a party. A party can be thought to have worthy qualities and be regarded as a 'caring' or 'competent' party, or a 'moderate' or 'progressive' party. It may also be regarded as an 'inclusive' or 'unifying' party in a divisive context. Party attributes can also include the personal and demographic characteristics of a party or candidates such as race, ethnicity, language and accent, religion, gender, dress and local ties.⁹⁵

Party images are distinguishable from other types of evaluations. They are likely to be less ephemeral and more stable than voter evaluations of government performance, candidates or policy positions.⁹⁶ Some theories that emphasize the importance of party images assume that voters have little interest in how well the government of the day handles major issues.⁹⁷ Yet, this is not necessarily the case. An 'image' can act as an informational shortcut that allows voters to infer what parties probably stand for, or how they would behave. Furthermore, party images are not as stable or as deep-rooted as one's partisanship.⁹⁸ Neither can they be directly accounted for through group loyalties. Butler and Stokes highlight the independent impact of party images on electoral behaviour when they state that the behaviour of the British electorate in the 1960's was 'shaped by generalized attitudes and beliefs about the parties far more than by any specific policy issues.'⁹⁹ Rose and McAllister also found a strong correlation between how a person votes and how they view the parties which lead them to conclude that in the 1987 British elections party images were more

⁹¹ Heywood, 268.

⁹² Rose and McAllister, *The Loyalties of Voters*, 125.

⁹³ Richard Trilling, *Party image and electoral behaviour*. New York: John Wiley, 1976, 2.

⁹⁴ Rose and McAllister, *The Loyalties of Voters*, 132.

⁹⁵ Popkin; 11; Rose and McAllister, *The Loyalties of Voters*, chapter 7; Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*.

⁹⁶ Donald R. Matthews and James W. Prothro, *Negroes and the New Southern Politics* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1966), 378; Popkin, 59.

⁹⁷ Rose and McAllister, *The Loyalties of Voters*, 125.

⁹⁸ Matthews and Prothro, 378.

⁹⁹ Butler and Stokes, *Political change in Britain*, 1st ed. 1969, 359.

important performance considerations than economic or other issues on voting.¹⁰⁰ Matthews and Prothro suggested that people who vote for a presidential candidate tend to have a positive image of the party that nominated him.¹⁰¹

Taken together, these attributes take on either a positive or negative connotation for voters as people use them to judge, among other things, whether parties are exclusive or inclusive. Since, as Ferree found in the South African case, inclusivity shapes the credibility and trustworthiness of a party these images are important information cues for voters.¹⁰² These qualities can reveal important information about how a party will perform in office and whether it is representative of the voter's interests or congruent with his or her identity. The electorate can, in a fairly short time span, come to associate certain qualities with specific parties, which then has a substantial influence on its voting choices.¹⁰³

Especially when information is limited and outcomes are uncertain, party attributes can act as important information short-cuts or heuristic political cues that help voters complete their assessments.¹⁰⁴ Moreover, when party characteristics are closely aligned with the interests of the voter, they provide a basis for reasonable, accessible, and economic estimates of candidate behaviour.¹⁰⁵ Voters can also learn about a party's policies by extrapolating from the personal characteristics of politicians and their supporters.¹⁰⁶ An 'image' of a party can be a shortcut that allows voters to infer what parties probably stand for, or how they would behave. Dalton notes that 'social characteristics are an indirect measure of attitudinal differences between groups of voters and voter perceptions of which party best represents these policy positions.'¹⁰⁷ Green et al find that candidates and parties can be understood if their demographic traits are known... and judged by who their supporters are.¹⁰⁸ Further, Popkin notes that voters may assess a party's issue stance, particularly on distributive issues, based on its demographic representivity.¹⁰⁹ In South Africa for instance, a black voter asking which party is most likely to prioritize social upliftment for himself, his family and his community might quite rationally reason that a 'black' party is more likely to achieve this, thereby weakening potential support for parties who are perceived to be 'white'. In other words, by thinking about *who* and *what* political parties stand for voters can learn much about politics from social cues.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁰ Rose and McAllister, *The Loyalties of Voters*, 134.

¹⁰¹ Matthews and Prothro, 399.

¹⁰² Ferree, "The Microfoundations of Ethnic Voting."

¹⁰³ Butler and Stokes, *Political change in Britain*, 1st ed. 1969, 359.

¹⁰⁴ Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*, 28; Downs; Popkin, 59.

¹⁰⁵ Popkin, 63.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹⁰⁷ Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*, 151.

¹⁰⁸ Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 71.

¹⁰⁹ Popkin, 59-64.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 7 (my italics).

The sociological cues that inform party images can be expected to take on particular significance in divided or polarised societies, where party images are often a response to and reflect conflict and cleavages with the political system. Where cleavage-style electoral competition exists voters learn about parties, develop images and evaluate party policies of them in ways that resonate with the wider political situation.¹¹¹ Citizens develop positive affective feelings towards the favoured party, and possibly developing negative feelings towards the non-favoured parties. Kanchan Chandra's work on ethnic parties and voter behaviour in India proposes a connection between limited information and the use of ethnic cues to inform partisanship. Ethnic cues act as information shortcuts to many Indian voters because they provide easy, costless and data for the voter.¹¹² The abundance of costless ethnic data (compared to costly non-ethnic data such as class status labels) makes ethnic signals easier to read. Voters formulate party preferences by counting 'ethnic' heads in political parties. As she explains, 'Voters in patronage-democracies choose between parties by conducting ethnic head counts rather than by comparing policy platforms or ideological positions. They formulate preferences across parties by counting the heads of co-ethnics across party personnel, preferring that party that provides greatest representation to their co-ethnics'.¹¹³ The implications for voting behaviour are clear - the 'who' in terms of ethnic identity of party leaders is more important to the voter rather than the 'what' (policy).

Rose and Mishler discuss the effects that negative party images can have on the new democracies of post-Communist countries.¹¹⁴ Negative partisans can name a party they would never vote for but have no positive party identification.¹¹⁵ They are motivated by negative feelings and images of other parties rather than positive attachments or affinity towards their 'supported' party. Closed partisans positively identify with one party and also identify a party they would never vote for whereas open partisans are positively committed to a party and do not consider there is any competing party they would never vote for.

The realisation that voters may actually focus on these qualities to gain important information about how a party or candidate will perform in office has led to a revision of scholarly thinking in recent literature. Whereas early democratic theorists traditionally regarded voting based on demographic or personality- based characteristics as "irrational" recent studies now assert that party images are in fact rational assessments performed by voters.¹¹⁶ Miller, Wattenberg

¹¹¹ Richardson, 23.

¹¹² Chandra, *Why Ethnic Parties Succeed*, 11.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹¹⁴ Richard Rose and William Mishler, "Negative and Positive Partisanship in Post-Communist Countries," *Studies in Public Policy* No. 286, Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, 1997.

¹¹⁵ Negative partisans have high level of cognitive mobilisation and are essentially cognitive partisans. However, due to the low levels of cognitive mobilisation in the South African electorate I do not investigate levels of cognitive mobilisation among negative partisans.

¹¹⁶ Russell Dalton, *Citizen Politics: Public Opinion and Political Parties in Advanced Democracies*, 3rd Ed. (New Jersey: Chatham House Publishers, 2002), 208. Dalton and Wattenberg, "The Not So Simple Act of Voting", 208.

and Malanchuk present data to support a rational voter interpretation of candidate evaluations. They argue that 'candidate assessments actually concentrated on instrumental concerns...integrity, reliability, and competence.' And they conclude that 'such criteria are hardly irrational.'¹¹⁷ Chandra's Indian voters also use rational and sociological aspects of party images - they invest in a sociological identity that offers the best available means by which to obtain desired benefits and not because the identification is valuable in itself. They pursue their objectives, however defined, by selecting those means that maximise their chance of obtaining them.¹¹⁸ The use of party images as 'information shortcuts' suggest that this approach shares the instrumentalism of rational choice theory and performance voting although the relationship between interests and behaviour is less direct.¹¹⁹

When party images reinforce partisanship the latter is likely to remain stable.¹²⁰ However, when party images conflict with past identifications, partisanship can change. Richard Trilling shows how changing images of parties and the changing class structure of American society have affected partisanship and concludes that 'party images play an intermediary and crucial role in the transformations of individual party identifications.'¹²¹ Popkin argues that while changes to partisanship are generally slow, often even glacial, changes to voters' assessments of what groups the parties stand for can be rapid.¹²² Green et al also argue that party images can and do change, although accompanying changes in partisanship unfold gradually. Occasionally a party alters the social group composition of its leadership and public persona, which can effect gradual changes in perceptions about which social groups a party represents.¹²³

2.5 Social context approach

In addition to party attributes, another information cue for voters is from one's immediate social context where voters rely on the opinions of others as a reliable and cheap alternative information shortcut in evaluating the information they have.¹²⁴ This approach argues that perceptions of reality are shape by the social context in which one receives filters and interprets information.¹²⁵ It focuses on the character of community settings. The social networks and contextual effects literature argue that individuals are likely to adopt the political views of those around them.¹²⁶ Important political cues are derived from face-to-face contacts with spouses, family, friends, neighbors and work colleagues and immediate community

¹¹⁷ Arthur H Miller, Martin P. Wattenberg and Oksana Malanchuk, "Schematic Assessments of Presidential Candidates," *The American Political Science Review* 80, 2 (1986): 521-540, 536.

¹¹⁸ Chandra, *Why Ethnic Parties Succeed*, 11.

¹¹⁹ Karen E. Ferree, "Explaining South Africa's Racial Census," *The Journal of Politics* 68, 4 (2006): 805.

¹²⁰ Popkin, 59.

¹²¹ Trilling, 212, chapter 5.

¹²² Popkin, 56.

¹²³ Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 13.

¹²⁴ Popkin, 44; Beck, Dalton, Greene, and Huckfeldt, 57; Gunther, Montero and Puhle, 183; Downs, 222.

¹²⁵ Mattes and Gouws, 126.

¹²⁶ Dalton, Flanagan and Beck, *Electoral change*, 17.

networks. The stronger the convergence of similar political influences from such sources the more likely the voter is to follow suit.

In other words, what we know about politics is to a large extent is heavily influenced by our immediate social networks and context. Social networks provide a context where inter-personal contacts and flows of communication create complimentary political messages, which in turn, encourage uniformity in the behaviour of the immediate group. Partisanship can therefore be influenced by an individual's immediate social network. As Beck et al argue, 'Political choices are affected to a significant degree by the flow of information from the decision maker's immediate social context'.¹²⁷

The model further assumes that if social networks are structured by a particular class, ethnic, religious and other social cleavages, voters are receptive to these cleavage biases. Where a dominant politically salient social group (class or racial group) exists in a community there is good reason to suppose that pressures emanating from this group will influence an individual's political behaviour.¹²⁸ In other words, the more homogenous the social group context, the more effective will be communal group norms in influencing political attitudes and partisan attachments. Evidence from Japan and Sweden shows that as communities become increasingly heterogeneous and transient their capacity to mobilize votes for the dominant party weakened.¹²⁹ Thus the theory predicts that as the partisan cues emanating from a voters community diversify, partisan volatility should increase.

Social networks thus provide a context where inter-personal contacts and flows of communication create complimentary political messages, which in turn, encourage uniformity in the behaviour of the immediate group. Robert Putnam describes how 'we learn about politics through casual conversation'.¹³⁰ As he states, 'In a world of civic networks, both formal and informal, our views are formed through interchange with friends and neighbors. Social capital allows political information to spread'.¹³¹ Partisanship can therefore be influenced by an individual's immediate social network.

Several studies demonstrate how one's immediate social and informational context, and in particular, contacts with discussion partners, can shape individuals political choices and the vote.¹³² Beck et al show how interpersonal discussion networks are primary intermediary influences on political behaviour, and are typically dominated by people with whom we have

¹²⁷ Beck, Dalton, Greene and Huckfeldt, 69.

¹²⁸ Rose and McAllister, *The Loyalties of Voters*, 109.

¹²⁹ Dalton, Flanagan and Beck, *Electoral change*, 18.

¹³⁰ Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000), 343.

¹³¹ Putnam, 343.

¹³² Beck, Dalton, Greene and Huckfeldt, 57; Pedro Magalhaes, "Voting and Intermediation: Informational Biases and Electoral Choices in Comparative Perspective", in *Democracy, Intermediation, and Voting on Four Continents*, ed. Richard Gunther, Jose Ramon Montero, and Hans-Jurgen Puhle, 254-208 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), chapter six.

close relationships with such as family and friends.¹³³ They conclude that ‘...voters do not operate in the social vacuum that much of the contemporary literature seems to assume. Rather, voters’ enduring personal characteristics interact with the messages they are receiving from the established social context in which they operate.’¹³⁴ In a study of half a dozen democracies across the world Richardson and Beck also found interpersonal discussion networks, particularly one’s spouse, to be important transmitters of partisan messages, often congruent with the respondents own partisan preferences.¹³⁵ People’s immediate social group memberships and face-to face interactions were also found to influence the Japanese electorate.¹³⁶ Rather than voting patterns being explained by social cleavages, ‘it is the tangible associational linkages between specific partisan networks and the formal organisations and informal small groups found within these different contexts that account for the observed behaviour.’¹³⁷ Rose and McAllister also agree that the influence of the social setting affects one’s partisanship. However, they caution that the strong correlation between a person’s vote and the political preferences of individuals with whom politics is discussed, is not proof of causation.¹³⁸ Insofar as people tend to discuss politics with others who are likeminded rather than bring up subjects likely to cause disagreement, political conversations will only reinforce pre-existing partisan commitments.

2.6 Cognitive awareness approach

A cognitive awareness approach argues that as socio-economic development and modernisation occurs in Western Europe and the United States, improvements in the political skills and resources of contemporary electorates contributes to growth in the public’s overall level of political sophistication, or what is described as a process of ‘cognitive mobilisation’.¹³⁹ Cognitive mobilization involves two separate developments. First, the public’s ability to process political information has increased, through the higher levels of education and

¹³³ Beck, Dalton, Greene and Huckfeldt, 61.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 69.

¹³⁵ Bradley Richardson and Paul Allen Beck, “The Flow of Political Information: Personal Discussants, the Media, and Partisanship,” in *Democracy, Intermediation, and Voting on Four Continents* Gunther, ed. Richard Gunther et al. 183-207 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 205. Countries include the United States, United Kingdom, Spain, Italy, Bulgaria, West Germany, Chile, Greece, Hungary, Uruguay, Hong Kong, Japan.

¹³⁶ Flanagan et al., 16.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 402.

¹³⁸ Rose and McAllister, *The Loyalties of Voters*, 123.

¹³⁹ Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution*; Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*; Russell Dalton, “Partisan mobilisation, cognitive mobilisation and the changing American electorate,” (Center for the Study of Democracy, University of California, 2004) <http://repositories.cdlib.org/csd/04-11>; Popkin; Dalton and Wattenberg, *Parties without Partisans*. Dalton pioneered the concept of cognitive mobilisation. The approach emerged from ‘schema theory’, which researches the abilities of voters and the demands involved political decision-making. The schema concept refers to cognitive hierarchical structures of information and beliefs, stored for later retrieval under category labels. This filing cabinet approach to schema has been expanded to include causal structures. Citizens organise existing knowledge and process information using schema. The detail and amount of information incorporated within structures may vary but existence of structures provides voters with a method of managing information and making political judgements. Therefore, even if citizens are not sophisticated on all issues they have logical and structured beliefs within specific categories or domains that help them manage political decisions. See Dalton, “Cognitive Mobilisation and Partisan Dealignment”.

political sophistication among the electorate. Second, the cost of acquiring political information has decreased, through the expansion of the mass media.¹⁴⁰ Voting is therefore influenced by what people *know* as well as by who they are. Voters reason about political parties, candidates, and issues and connect information to government performance.

Some scholars argue that these social trends lead to the cognitive mobilisation of some voters as an alternative to partisan mobilisation.¹⁴¹ In other words, some citizens possess the level of political skills and resources necessary to become self-sufficient in politics without reliance of affective, habitual party cues or other surrogates.¹⁴² Although many voters continue to rely on the decisional cues emanating from partisan ties, the need for such cues declines as the political skills of the voters increase and information costs decrease.¹⁴³ Dalton and Wattenberg refer to this development as the 'individualisation of politics'.¹⁴⁴

As a result, cognitive mobilisation is also said to have reduced the effect of structural factors like class, race or religion on the vote. Greater levels of education and information tend to dilute the influence of parochial groups, whilst providing voters with news about government and politics. Cognitively mobilised voters are better able to acquire and process political information and attribute responsibility to incumbent performance. In other words, larger numbers of voters are more likely to connect information about government performance with existing economic and social conditions. Thus cognitively mobilized voters are able to engage politically without relying on external partisan cues. Consequently, the long-term dealignment, or weakening partisan ties, across numerous Western democracies may be linked to a parallel process of cognitive mobilization.¹⁴⁵ Social change, resulting from increases in education and mass information, has effectively reshaped levels of partisanship among contemporary electorates by breaking down long standing partisan loyalties. The growth in cognitive mobilisation among Western mass publics has also led to increases in issue voting and new more demanding forms of political activity.¹⁴⁶

Information cues are shortcuts that voters use to supply themselves with necessary information to fill gaps and complete their mental pictures of politics. Popkin describes this ability to reason about politics as 'low-information rationality'.¹⁴⁷ He argues that people do not have incentives to acquire and absorb all the information to which they are exposed, and that

¹⁴⁰ Dalton, "Partisan mobilisation", 3.

¹⁴¹ Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*; Dalton, "Partisan mobilisation".

¹⁴² Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*, 18. Dalton and Wattenberg, *Parties without Partisans*, 11.

¹⁴³ Dalton, "Cognitive Mobilisation and Partisan Dealignment", 265.

¹⁴⁴ Dalton and Wattenberg, "The Not So Simple Act of Voting", 212.

¹⁴⁵ Dalton and Wattenberg, *Parties without Partisans*, 32; Dalton, "Partisan mobilisation", 2. This alternative explanation for dealignment contradicts other research some of which questions the reality of partisan dealignment. See Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 50.

¹⁴⁶ Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*, 24.

¹⁴⁷ Popkin, 9.

most voters do not actively seek political information to improve their voting decisions.¹⁴⁸ Whatever their levels of education or political interest, to make up for the gaps in their knowledge about politics, voters use information shortcuts and cost-saving devices to evaluate information and assess parties, policies and candidates.¹⁴⁹ Cognitive theorists argue that the reliance on cues and information shortcuts result from a lack of socio-economic development, formal education and access to print news media. As Popkin states, 'The more educated the electorate, the greater is its ability to follow news about national and international politics; the more issues the electorate follows, the more varied the images of the parties will be, and the more the choice of issue matters.'¹⁵⁰

Shortcuts are numerous and include party identification, political endorsements, demographic characteristics and party imagery.¹⁵¹ For instance, Richard Trilling argues that 'party images play an intermediary and crucial role in the transformations of individual party identifications.'¹⁵² Party identification also acts as a powerful information shortcut when voters resort to their 'default value' when they have limited information on performance or the effects of proposed policies.¹⁵³ As Popkin states, 'Party identification, viewed from the perspective of low-information rationality, is an informational shortcut or default value, a substitute for more complete information about parties and candidates.'¹⁵⁴ Additional cues can be sourced from one's immediate social context where voters rely on the opinions of others as a shortcut in evaluating the information they have.¹⁵⁵

The need for information cues should decline as the cognitive skills of the public increase.¹⁵⁶ As Dalton states, 'Instead of depending on elites and reference groups, citizens are now better able to deal with the complexities of politics and make their own political decisions'.¹⁵⁷ He argues that the tremendous socio-economic changes in American society over the past half century may have lessened the need for party cues by some citizens.¹⁵⁸ Therefore, in situations where political skills and resources are limited there is likely to be greater reliance on informational shortcuts.¹⁵⁹ Scholarship demonstrates that the process of cognitive awareness has produced an electorate that is divided in their basis of mobilization. Depending on their cognitive ability, voters differ in the way they make up their minds. Better educated and the politically sophisticated voters place more weight on issues and performance evaluations as a basis of their electoral decision making, whereas less

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 16.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 44, 70; Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*, 28-9. Downs.

¹⁵⁰ Popkin; 70.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 17.

¹⁵² Trilling, 212.

¹⁵³ Popkin, 14; 51-2; Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*, 29.

¹⁵⁴ Popkin, 14.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 44.

¹⁵⁶ W. Phillips Shively, "The Development of Party Identification among Adults: Exploration of a Functional Model," *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 73, No. 4 (1979): 1039-054.

¹⁵⁷ Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*, 18.

¹⁵⁸ Dalton, "Partisan mobilisation", 2.

¹⁵⁹ Popkin, 16.

sophisticated voters rely more on partisanship and other social cues.¹⁶⁰ As such, cognitive mobilization exercises a 'mediating effect' on partisanship, by influencing certain information sources that voters rely on such as evaluations of performance or party/candidate images.¹⁶¹

Since evaluations require some cognitive ability to become operational the partisan choices of better-informed voters should be more broad based, with evaluative factors and cognitive reasoning competing with other information shortcuts. For voters with limited cognitive skills and less access to information, the high costs of gathering information are bound to make low cost information cues more important. Thus, low-cost information cues that require relatively less effort should dominate the electoral choices of less-informed citizens. Social group references provide one common source of political cues that are used to simplify political decisions. As Dalton states, 'For many less educated citizens, group references may reflect a broad political orientation that they have difficulty explaining in the terminology that would classify them as sophisticated ideologies. When the social conflicts in which a voter are involved are clear, and the parties take clear positions with regard to these conflict, then social characteristics can provide sufficient cues for orientating oneself to politics.'¹⁶² Dalton further notes that 'Social groups can be an important reference point in orienting the individual to political issues and providing information about politics. In other words, social characteristics indicate some of the political cues to which an individual is exposed.'¹⁶³

Several empirical studies from the United States support this hypothesis. Beck et al's study found the social context to be a strong influence on the politically less informed or interested voter.¹⁶⁴ Popkin and Dimock found that American citizens with low levels of institutional and political information and knowledge are more likely to rely on candidate-centered cues instead of political evaluations. They conclude that 'candidate-centered politics is a consequence of low levels of political information in the citizenry'.¹⁶⁵

Again, among the Hong Kong electorate, the amount of political information a voter possesses is related to vote choice. Kuan and Lau find that, 'compared with their less-informed brethren, better-informed voters are younger, better educated, more inclined

¹⁶⁰ Paul Sniderman, Richard Brody and Philip Tetlock, *Reasoning and Choice*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Dalton, "Partisan mobilisation", 7.

¹⁶¹ Moderating or 'interaction effects' are said to exist when a relationship between the two variables differs substantially for the categories of the test variable. Therefore there is a marked contrast in findings for different categories of the test variable. See Alan Bryman and Duncan Cramer, *Quantitative data analysis for social scientists* (London: Routledge, 1994), 222-9; David De Vaus, *Surveys in Social Research*. 5th ed. (London: Routledge, 2002), 300.

¹⁶² Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*, 28.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 151.

¹⁶⁴ Beck, Dalton, Greene and Huckfeldt, 67.

¹⁶⁵ Samuel L. Popkin, and Michael A. Dimock, "Cognitive Engagement and Citizen World Views" Paper prepared for presentation at the PEGS Conference on Citizen Competence and the Design of Democratic Institutions, February 1995, 5.
<http://www.bsos.umd.edu/pegs/popkin.txt>

towards democracy, and more critical of the government.¹⁶⁶ Moreover, voters with more political information are more likely to have a greater cognitive ability to differentiate between parties and their policies. The vote of the better-informed or 'cognized' electorate was broadly-based with evaluative factors overtaking partisanship in importance.¹⁶⁷ Political information has a mediating role, 'by affecting the ways other variables come into play'.¹⁶⁸

Partisanship dominates the electoral choices of less-informed citizens, since evaluations require some cognitive ability to become operational. The vote of the better-informed voters is broadly based, with evaluative factors and cognitive reasoning overtaking partisanship in importance. So, depending on the degree of their cognitive ability voters differ in the ways they make up their minds in voting.

Yet the American literature presents a contrary argument which suggests that information cues or shortcuts are as, if not more important, for cognitively mobilised voters. Among the cognitively mobilised, information cues can act as substitutes when there is too little information, while on the other hand, they also act as substitute when voters are confronted with too much information. In fact, scholars found that college-educated voters are the most likely to judge parties and candidates by their personal attributes.¹⁶⁹ In other words, high information voters are as likely, or indeed more likely, to make use of candidate or party attributes as low information voters. Popkin also argues that *all* voters use information shortcuts and cost-saving devices to address the gaps in their knowledge about politics, whatever their levels of education or political interest (my italics).¹⁷⁰

Much like the other theoretical models on voter behaviour, the cognitive awareness approach conceptualises partisanship in a particular way. Whereas the sociological approach views partisanship as an affectively-based socialised political orientation (socialised in early life and relatively immune to subsequent change), a cognitively-based understanding of partisanship is said to reflect current political beliefs, electoral experiences and levels of political knowledge and skills.¹⁷¹ Miyake argues that Japanese voters reflect two dimensions: affective and cognitive partisanship.¹⁷² In addition, Richardson maintains partisanship is an integrated schema consisting of both affective and cognitive components when he argues,

'Partisanship today is much more likely to be derived from people's individual processing of political information than in the past. This being the case, mutually consistent affective loyalties, cognitive images, and long-term partisan value

¹⁶⁶ Hsin-chi Kuan and Siu-kai Lau, "Cognitive mobilisation and electoral support for the Democratic Party in Hong Kong," *Electoral Studies* 21 (2002): 561-582. Cognitive ability is measured using political information.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 575.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 575.

¹⁶⁹ Miller, Wattenberg and Malanchuk, 521; Dalton, *Citizen Politics*, 3rd ed, 209.

¹⁷⁰ Popkin, 44, 70. Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*, 28-9; Downs.

¹⁷¹ Dalton and Wattenberg, "The Not So Simple Act of Voting", 197.

¹⁷² Ichiro Miyake, "Types of Partisanship, Partisan attitudes, and Voting Choices," in *The Japanese Voter*, ed. Flanagan et al. 226-264 (New Haven: Yale University Press 1991).

*preferences are much more likely to be formed as part of a unified synchronic response to parties and other components of electoral politics than by a diachronic process in which affective loyalties precede and dominate all other elements of partisanship.*¹⁷³

Accepting the idea that there is a cognitive base to partisanship suggests that the electorate is an 'echo chamber', which responds to change in response to political environment.

Several studies have developed typologies of citizens that capture multi-dimensional effects of cognitive mobilisation and partisanship. One such typology has been developed by Dalton.¹⁷⁴ While some voters remain oriented to politics based on their partisan attachment, cognitive mobilisation produces another group of politically interested and well-educated voters who orient themselves to politics on their own. This combination of both traits produces a framework that categorises voters by whether they are partisan or non-partisan on one hand, and whether they are 'cognitively mobilised' or not, on the other. This typology is illustrated in Table 2.1

Table 2.1: Cognitive skills vs. level of partisanship

Cognitive mobilisation		Strength of Partisanship	
		<i>Independent</i>	<i>Party Identification</i>
	<i>High</i>	Apartisan	Cognitive Partisan
	<i>Low</i>	Apolitical	Ritual Partisan

The cross-classification of the two dimensions in the framework yield the following four categories that represent distinct mobilisation patterns. The important feature of this typology is that it distinguishes between different types of citizens who are normally combined when either mobilization dimension is considered separately.¹⁷⁵

- Cognitive partisans score highly on both mobilization dimensions. They have strong party attachments but they are psychologically involved in politics even when party cues are lacking. Both the partisan and cognitive dimensions influence their perceptions and behaviors.
- Apartisans are not attached to any political party but are cognitively mobilised with high levels of political involvement and sophistication and possess the skills and resources necessary to orient themselves to politics without depending on party labels. They are the new 'independents' but they are independents of a much different sort than the Apoliticals. Apartisans are comprised of politically sophisticated citizens while apoliticals are on the periphery of politics. They rely on issue voting and demand more responsiveness to public opinion. These Apartisans are nearly the

¹⁷³ Richardson, 24.

¹⁷⁴ Dalton, *Citizen Politics*, 2nd ed, 215

¹⁷⁵ Dalton, "Partisan mobilisation", 5.

polar opposite of the traditional image of non-partisans presented in *The American Voter*. They are better educated, knowledgeable about politics, and politically engaged, even if they remain someone distant from political parties.

- Ritual partisans are mobilised by their strong party attachments and are not cognitively mobilised. They support their preferred party and participate in party-related activities such as voting or campaigns. However, their party support should be almost a habitual activity, and political involvement or understanding is less likely to extend to areas where party cues are lacking.
- Apoliticals are neither attached to a political party nor are they cognitively mobilised in politics; this group conforms to the independents originally described by Campbell et al.¹⁷⁶ Apoliticals are located at the periphery of politics—they should be less involved in politics, politically less sophisticated, and less concerned about political issues and the candidates of the day.

Such typologies enrich our understanding of partisanship by showing the multiple dimensions of partisanship. Partisanship is no longer understood as a single dimensional affective tie. For instance, the growth in cognitive mobilisation can lead to growth in apartisans (those who are unattached to any political party but are involved in politics) or generate 'negative partisans' (who are motivated by 'negative out-group feelings'). 'Negative partisans' are essentially cognitive partisans because their loyalties are less positive and stable and do not endure as affective party identifiers do. They lack the emotional commitment or 'perceptual screen' that serves as a barrier to shifts in evaluations.¹⁷⁷ So, cognitive awareness can create volatility and instability in voting behaviour since partisanship can be affected by recent events.¹⁷⁸

In newer democracies where affect-based partisanship has not developed the notion of cognitive mobilization appears prevalent. A strong cognitive understanding of party images, rather than affective party ties guides partisanship among Japanese voters.¹⁷⁹ Russian and Ukrainian citizens have also demonstrated an ability to place cognitive structure on their many political parties in a short period of time.¹⁸⁰ These citizens perceive that interparty differences are based on substantial policy differences (left parties are perceived by voters to reflect the old Soviet style approach to the economy while parties at the opposite end are seen as favouring a market driven economy and individualism). Moreover, partisans tend to have

¹⁷⁶ Campbell et al, 143-45. Non-partisans (independents) were at the edge of the electoral process, were uninvolved in elections, unsophisticated about politics and these factors would negatively affect participatory democracy. However, the new 'apartisan' later dispelled concerns outlined in early literature, which held a negative view of non-partisans.

¹⁷⁷ Miyake.

¹⁷⁸ Rose and Mishler.

¹⁷⁹ Flanagan et al., 377.

¹⁸⁰ Arthur Miller and Thomas Klobucar, "The Development of Party Identification in Post-Soviet Societies," *American Journal of Political Science* 44, 4 (2000): 667-685, 680.

higher educational levels, suggesting that 'the more complex the party systems the more important are information processing resources in determining the development of partisan identification.'¹⁸¹ Finding evidence of cognitive mobilisation in these countries runs against conventional wisdom that one cannot expect cognitive or political sophistication in post-Communist democracies where politics is personalised and political systems fragmented.¹⁸²

To summarise this section, generations of political scientists have grappled with the question of electoral behaviour but have so far failed to develop a universally accepted theory of voting. Instead, voting appears to be shaped by a multitude of complex factors some of which may be rational or irrational, conscious or unconscious, self-serving or selfless. Each model contributes towards a deeper understanding of voter motivations but each theory is partial and must be qualified by the consideration of competing theories.

2.7 Current explanations of South African voting behaviour

This section outlines the literature on South African voting behaviour and relates it to the international literature discussed above. Despite only three general democratic elections in South Africa much has already been published, with studies offering descriptive and analytical discussions on elections and voting behaviour. The main contestation centers around the role of race either as an affirmation of group identity and solidarity, or as an indirect influence on the voter by acting as an information shortcut, or whether, in fact, race and interests simply overlap.¹⁸³ Theoretical explanations thus range from sociological descriptions that focus on the strength of social cleavages in structuring partisanship, with race and ethnicity viewed as central explanatory variables¹⁸⁴ to more rational choice-based explanations.¹⁸⁵

The early analyses of election results focus on the pressures of group identity on voting behaviour. Donald Horowitz argues that party systems in societies that are deeply divided along ascriptive lines tend to be dominated by ethnic parties. Parties normally derive their support from a single ethnic group and voting is determined by group membership.¹⁸⁶ Horowitz feared that after the establishment of democracy in South Africa, race, as the pre-eminent political division, would give way to African ethnic identities, as ethnic heterogeneity

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 671.

¹⁸² Sceptics include scholars such as: Kitschelt, Herbert. *Continuity and change in contemporary capitalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, 27.

¹⁸³ Ferree, "Explaining South Africa's Racial Census"; Karen Ferree, "The Microfoundations of Ethnic Voting: Evidence from South Africa." Afrobarometer Working paper 2004.

¹⁸⁴ Giliomee, "National Party's Campaign; Giliomee, "South Africa's Emerging Dominant"; Giliomee and Simkins, *Awkward Embrace*; Horowitz, *Democratic South Africa*; Johnson, 'The 1994 Election'; Lijphart, *Electoral Systems*; Lijphart, *Democracy in plural societies*; Sadie; Schlemmer, "South Africa's First Open Election"; Schlemmer, "Democracy or Democratic Hegemony?"

¹⁸⁵ Some analysts argue that values, interests and evaluations also influence partisanship. See Mattes, *The Election Book*; Mattes and Gouws; Mattes and Piombo; M. Eldridge and J Seekings, *An Uphill Battle: Voter Attitudes and ANC Strategy in the 1994 South African Elections* (University of Cape Town: Centre for African Studies paper, 1995).

¹⁸⁶ Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Horowitz, *Democratic South Africa?*

became politically significant for voters.¹⁸⁷ As he stated, 'When white domination is past, a different set of incentives will take over. Ethnic divisions will become more important, coexisting with and, for some purposes, even superseding racial divisions'.¹⁸⁸

Other sociological explanations interpret voting as a result of pressures and intolerance from the social group to vote in a group-based way. Schlemmer has argued that the outcomes of subsequent elections since 1994 have shown that 'political parties are primarily characterised by the racial identity of their support'.¹⁸⁹ At the core of the problem is a tradition of "solidarity" voting and solidarity politics.¹⁹⁰ Team solidarity along racial lines undermines individual and policy-related interests, and thus the potential swing effects of the floating vote. The ANC is thus cushioned by its solidarity vote and therefore does not face a power-threatening situation. For Schlemmer the only way out of the malady of one-party dominance based on racial numerical supremacy is for political pluralism to take root in the African electorate.¹⁹¹ Yet, as early as 1994 Schlemmer's survey work probed the bases of party choice and major reasons for supporting a political party and he found that reasons were not over-determined by race or ethnicity: they appeared concerned with credibility, trust, performance and delivery of socio-economic needs. While he found the surveys findings reassuring for pluralism he warned that during the heat of elections, issues of policy might be displaced by the symbolism of race politics.¹⁹²

Giliomee and Simkins believed that voters' primordial ties with South Africa's political parties are so strong that the chances for electoral re-alignment are small.¹⁹³ Any expectation that race-based voting was a temporary phenomenon, and that voters would shed their racial and ethnic concerns and become policy and issue-oriented, was unrealistic.

This led some scholars to describe the elections as a 'racial' or 'ethnic census' because of the broad correlation between race and party support in that most black African voters voted for the ANC whilst most whites, coloureds and Indians voted for minority parties such as the NP (to become NNP) and DP (to become DA).¹⁹⁴

Others argued that South Africa's electoral outcomes were largely an expression and reflection of identity politics.¹⁹⁵ While Friedman rejected the racial census claim, he argues

¹⁸⁷ Horowitz, *Democratic South Africa*, 45.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 46.

¹⁸⁹ Schlemmer, "Democracy or Democratic Hegemony?", 282.

¹⁹⁰ Lawrence Schlemmer, 'State of parties and health of democracy', in *Focus* 26 (2002), 2-5. <http://www.hsf.org.za/publications/focus-issues/issues-21-30/issue-26/survey-state-of-parties-and-health-of-democracy/>.

¹⁹¹ Schlemmer, "Democracy or Democratic Hegemony?", 283.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 290.

¹⁹³ Giliomee and Simkins, *Awkward Embrace*, 341.

¹⁹⁴ Johnson, *The 1994 Election*, 319.

¹⁹⁵ Steven Friedman, "A Voice for Some: South Africa's Ten Years of Democracy," in *Electoral Politics in South Africa: Assessing the First Democratic Decade*, ed. Jessica Piombo & Lia Nijzink, 3-22 (New

that 'identity' as a social self-definition drives voter choice in terms of who voters believe they are and their assessment of which party can best provide a vehicle for who they are. In this context, weighing the programmes and policies of parties hardly plays any role at all.¹⁹⁶ As he states, 'Race remains the primary identity, but language, religion, and gender may play a role.'¹⁹⁷

The main weaknesses of the racial census approach however, is that it offers a 'crude view of voters who mechanically record their race on ballot papers rather than exercise any discretion'.¹⁹⁸ It also fails to explain precisely why voters voted along racial lines. In other words, it offers no explicit theory of voting behaviour.¹⁹⁹

As a response, a growing body of literature has critiqued the simplistic race-based interpretations and attempted to unearth different explanations and empirical evidence for behaviour of South African voters. Mattes' study of an IDASA 1994 nationwide post election survey shows that voters did not vote in solid ethnic or racial blocs, that few saw themselves voting along racial or ethnic lines and few perceived their chosen parties as being exclusive in ethnic or racial terms.²⁰⁰ Eldridge and Seekings showed how the 'racial census' argument underestimated the role of election strategies and issue-oriented voting in 1994 in the Western Cape.²⁰¹ Mattes and Gouws critique the overwhelming presumption that South African elections are a racial census by highlighting several methodological and theoretical problems. In particular, they remind us that the lack of appropriate data prevents such conclusions from being drawn. Most scholars use group level voting patterns to infer individual level motivations but neither aggregate voting data, nor individual or group level demographic information can help to differentiate an ethnic vote from a non-ethnic vote.²⁰² Habib and Naidu question the racial census argument by pointing to the increase in a floating electorate.²⁰³

Class has been proposed as an alternative sociological explanation to race. As early as the 1994 elections, Eldridge and Seekings found patterns between class and electoral support. In the Western Cape, they found strong performance by the ANC in coloured areas which were

York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Steven Friedman, 'Why we vote: the issue of identity,' Election synopsis, ed. Maxine Reitzes, Idasa, HSRC, CPS, CPP publication. Vol 1, no. 2 (2004): 2-4; Steven Friedman, 'Who we are: voter participation, rationality and the 1999 election', *Politikon*, 26, 2 (1999): 213-223.

¹⁹⁶ Friedman, 'A Voice for some', 5; Friedman, 'Who we are', 213-223; Friedman, 'Why we vote', 3.

¹⁹⁷ Friedman, 'A Voice for some', 5.

¹⁹⁸ Matt Eldridge and Jeremy Seekings, "Mandela's Lost Province: The African National Congress and the Western Cape Electorate in the 1994 South African Elections", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 22, 4 (1996): 517-540.

¹⁹⁹ Mattes, *The Election Book*; Eldridge and Seekings, 518-540.

²⁰⁰ Mattes, *The Election Book*.

²⁰¹ Eldridge and Seekings, 517-540.

²⁰² Mattes and Gouws, 123.

²⁰³ Adam Habib and Sanusha Naidu, 'Are South Africa's elections a racial census?' Election synopsis, 1, 2 (2004): 5.

solidly middle-class, while the NP attracted working class coloured support.²⁰⁴ Later Seekings reaffirmed that in the Western Cape working class coloured voters tended to support the NNP (before its demise) and subsequently the DA, whilst middle-class Coloured voters were divided, with many supporting the ANC.²⁰⁵ Habib and Naidu also concluded that class played a role in Indian areas in Kwa-Zulu Natal.²⁰⁶ In their analysis of the 2004 election they suggest that class or perhaps some intricate mix of race and class informed voting patterns.²⁰⁷ Overall however, where class has been explored studies show that its impact on voting is limited, mostly regionalised, and prominent among minority groups.

Rational choice explanations (particularly the economic model) have also been found to resonate among voters. Survey data shows that citizen evaluations of government performance, political parties, party leaders and socio-economic trends are helpful in understanding voting behaviour and party affiliation.²⁰⁸

There is also some support for the application of the partisanship concept among South African voters. Mattes et al treat partisanship as the dependent variable when analysing voting in South Africa's 1999 election and find that voter evaluations successfully predict the partisan tendencies for a vast majority of voters.²⁰⁹ Norris and Mattes also treat partisanship as the dependent variable in their study of twelve African countries, including South Africa, and find it to be a useful analytical tool.²¹⁰ Mattes and Piombo also found that partisanship shows a degree of continuity in electoral outcomes, in that voter's do not make up their minds anew at each election.²¹¹

Furthermore, voter evaluations of party images appear to affect voting behaviour. In particular, the racial credentials of parties appear to matter since voters judge a party by who is excluded from it, rather than who is represented by it.²¹² Race and ethnicity function as a useful summary statistic by providing an important and useful cue for electoral choices. Different race groups hold different perceptions about the racial and ethnic exclusivity or inclusivity of South Africa's main parties, 'thus, while policy preferences are not polarised by

²⁰⁴ Eldridge and Seekings, 517-540.

²⁰⁵ Jeremy Seekings, "Partisan Realignment in Cape Town 1994-2004," *Journal of African Elections* 5, 1 (2006): 176-203, 4.

²⁰⁶ Habib Adam and Sanusha Naidu. "Election '99: Was there a 'coloured' and 'Indian' vote?" *Politikon*. 26, no. 2 (1999): 189-200.

²⁰⁷ Habib and Naidu, 'Are South Africa's elections a racial census?', 5.

²⁰⁸ Mattes and Piombo, 103; Robert Mattes, Helen Taylor and Cherrel Africa, "Judgement and choice in the 1999 South African election," *Politikon*. 26, 2 (1999): 235-247; Robert Mattes, "Voter information, government evaluations, and party images in the first democratic decade," in *Electoral Politics in South Africa: Assessing the First Democratic Decade*, ed. Jessica Piombo and Lia Nijzink, 40-63. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.

²⁰⁹ Mattes, Taylor and Africa.

²¹⁰ Pippa Norris and Robert Mattes, "Does Ethnicity Determine Support for the Governing Party? The Structural and Attitudinal Basis of Partisan Identification in Twelve African Nations," Centre for Social Science Research (CSSR) Working Paper No. 36, University of Cape Town. April 2003.

²¹¹ Mattes and Piombo.

²¹² Mattes, *The Election Book*; Ferree, "Microfoundations of Ethnic Voting".

race in South Africa, the racial credentials of party do appear to be'.²¹³ Habib and Naidu point to the limited appeal of opposition party images as well as their electoral strategies and policies as an explanation for a rise in floating voters. They explain, 'because of their historical legacy and current electoral positioning and strategies, parliamentary opposition parties are seen as articulating the interests of particular racial and ethnic groups. Instead of these parties weaving an electoral program that attracts the support of diverse communities, they developed electoral strategies and programs that appealed to narrow sections of the electorate.'²¹⁴

Much of the revisionist literature weaves a common explanation together - to understand the South African voter we need to reconsider the intersecting roles of individual interests and group interests. Especially in a divided society like South Africa, it is likely that issues and interests run parallel to factors such as race or ethnicity.²¹⁵ The evidence so far points to new aspects of the South African voter that have hitherto been ignored in much of the sociological literature.

First, South African voters appear to display forms of rational and cognitive behaviour when making partisan choices in the form of 'low information reasoning'. They use the sociological context as an information source to inform them about which party is most likely to reflect their interests. A rational basis to race-based voting may therefore be found in the fact that group-based characteristics such as race and individual interests intersect and reinforce each other. Mattes' work on the 1994 election shows how party images provide voters with useful racial cues that inform them about whether a party is representative of their interests.²¹⁶ Mattes and Piombo conclude that race has an indirect or mediating casual impact (rather than a direct impact) on the voting decision.²¹⁷ Race tends to shape voting patterns because voters from different race groups form different evaluations of the same important factors. Race shapes *what* voters think, not the *way* they think about issues. This has come about as a result of radical differences in living conditions across racial lines, which has lead to homogeneity of economic and political interests within racial groups. Thus scholars point to the influence on voting outcomes of racially-biased information networks and social contexts within which voters reside.²¹⁸ So, far from acting as an expression of group based loyalty or identity, race may instead provide a useful information shortcut that tells voters where their economic and social interests lie. In a similar vein, Posner argues that ethnic voting in Zambia is instrumental and rational. Ethnicity simply provides a sociological information cue to the voter

²¹³ Ferree, "Microfoundations of Ethnic Voting".

²¹⁴ Habib and Naidu, 'Are South Africa's elections a racial census?', 6.

²¹⁵ Mattes and Gouws, 125.

²¹⁶ Mattes, *The Election Book*, 62.

²¹⁷ Mattes and Piombo.

²¹⁸ Mattes and Gouws, 126-7.

informing him of his best interests.²¹⁹ Ethnicity is not important because of the 'passions it inspires or tradition it embodies but because of the information it conveys...'²²⁰

Second, it may be that partisan affiliations are not as deeply-rooted and predetermined as once thought. Jung's work on South Africa concludes that the political salience of both ascriptive and associational identities is dependent on construction by external factors and is therefore subject to change.²²¹ Posner also argues that (ethnic) identities are fluid and situational, strategic, and instrumental. The political salience of a specific identity is a product, not of affective ties to that identity, but one of deliberate choice. As Posner argues, 'rather than being hot-wired with a single ethnic identity, individuals possess repertoires of identities that wax and wane with changes in context.'²²² This, in turn, implies that new political identities, such as class, can become politicised and mobilised as new, modernising developments occur in South African society.²²³ The nature of identities has real implications for voting behaviour. If Posner and Jung's constructivist conception of identities hold true, it suggests that changes in contexts and institutions can bring about changes in the salience of political identities. This creates conditions for changes to the motivations of voters as one set of cleavages come to replace another.

Together the existing literature shows that South African voters appear to be influenced by a multitude of factors. Some regard race and ethnicity simply as an affirmation of identity.²²⁴ Others argue that sociological factors like race indirectly influence voters by acting as an information shortcut.²²⁵ In addition, some analysts have recently presented rational choice-based explanations for voter behaviour, suggesting that economic interests, government evaluations and cognitive skills may also influence partisanship.²²⁶ Some scholars have also contributed to knowledge about regional or ethnic particularities in political outcomes.²²⁷ Others concentrate on specific electoral outcomes such as local government elections.²²⁸ New explanations about the role of race in South Africa are emerging, and voters seem to hold partisan predispositions, which are updated regularly. Social and economic change may also be affecting on the way voters respond to politics.

²¹⁹ Posner.

²²⁰ Ibid., 104.

²²¹ Jung.

²²² Posner, 11.

²²³ Jung, 11.

²²⁴ Giliomee, "National Party's Campaign; Giliomee, "South Africa's Emerging Dominant"; Giliomee and Simkins, *Awkward Embrace*; Horowitz, *Democratic South Africa*; Steven Friedman, "A Voice for Some: South Africa's Ten Years of Democracy," in *Electoral Politics in South Africa: Assessing the First Democratic Decade*, ed. Jessica Piombo & Lia Nijzink, 3-22 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Johnson, 'The 1994 Election'; Lijphart, *Electoral Systems*; Lijphart, *Democracy in plural societies*; Sadie; Schlemmer, "South Africa's First Open Election"; Schlemmer, "Democracy or Democratic Hegemony?"

²²⁵ Mattes, *The Election Book*.

²²⁶ Eldridge and Seekings. Mattes and Gouws; Mattes and Piombo; Mattes, Taylor and Africa; Ferree, "Explaining South Africa's Racial Census."

²²⁷ Adam Habib and Sanusha Naidu, "Election '99: Was there a 'coloured' and 'Indian' vote?" *Politikon*, 26, 2 (1999): 189-200; Seekings, "Partisan Realignment in Cape Town" on voting patterns in Cape Town.

²²⁸ Schoeman and Puttergill.

Closer inspection of the South African research however, uncovers a number of unanswered questions and analytical inadequacies. Understandably, analyses of voting in Africa and South Africa have limited the focus to explaining sociological factors such as race and ethnicity. But while sociological explanations are expected to be strong in South Africa, they have not been tested fully. Indeed, the reality is that most of the protagonists of the 'racial census' approach have not demonstrated that ascriptive identities such as race drive voting choice, or how this is the case. Demographics are helpful instrumental variables in demonstrating correlation but are unhelpful in explaining causation.²²⁹ Demographic variables have no direct or inherent theoretical interpretation. We saw that there are different assumptions that underpin the sociological model but only a few have been explicitly put forth as theoretical explanations, and even fewer have been tested. Moreover, there has been little work, if any, on comparing the various types of sociological explanations. If sociological factors are important to voting behaviour, then which factors (race, class or age) are most important? And why? Is race-based voting driven by group loyalty, where it acts as a referent group for the voter? Or is race more instrumentalist by acting as an information cue? As yet, the rejectionist studies largely fail to produce sufficient evidence to explain how race acts as an intervening variable to inform voter behaviour.

Second, partly due to the emphasis on sociological explanations, other theoretical explanations are either disregarded or underdeveloped. Comparatively speaking, there is little in the way of systematic quantitative analysis of voting theories using survey data. Few studies attempt systematically to interrogate multiple competing theoretical voting models. Scholars must still establish whether and how sociological arguments fit into the interplay of other explanatory factors. And we do not yet know the strength and relative mix of the various theoretical models, and the extent to which they have changed over time.

With little consensus on the subject, much remains to be done before fundamental questions can be resolved. Do South African voters regularly update their partisan preferences using their evaluations of the governing party and its performance? Does the economy matter, and if so do people learn from their personal experiences or look to the national economic situation when they judge government. Are voters forward or backward looking in terms of their evaluations of political, social and economic delivery in South Africa? Does anticipation for 'a better life' overshadow the enduring hardships that many South Africans currently suffer? Or, is the South African voter beginning to calculate the relative material improvements to their lives using retrospective evaluations.

²²⁹ Achen, *Social psychology*, 206-7.

Chapter 3

The Central Argument

Three important empirical and theoretical observations underpin my central argument. The first concerns social change. The decade following apartheid was characterised by increases in inequality (particularly amongst black Africans), increased unemployment, slow economic growth, and increasing levels of HIV infection rates. These factors served to entrench a black African underclass, especially in rural areas. However, expanding educational and economic opportunities produced a large, increasingly affluent, multiracial middle class. So, whereas race had been the primary social divider, class stratification increasingly became a major societal cleavage. Whilst one segment of the population benefited materially through occupational and income mobility, others slipped deeper into poverty. These societal transformations may have also affected the way people perceive and identify themselves vis-à-vis other citizens, giving way to new sets of salient social, economic and political identities. Although the ANC government that came to power in 1994 committed itself to addressing the racial and economic imbalances of the past through policy and other measures, its success in delivering a more equitable and secure society is mixed.

The second observation concerns social cleavages and their implications for voting behaviour. Most party systems reflect long forgotten cleavage structures. Under certain conditions however, rapid social and economic transformation can 'unfreeze' and change previously stable cleavage structures. Subsequently, changes in cleavage structures can have important consequences for voting behaviour.¹

The third observation concerns the impact that social change can have on voter behaviour. Partisanship reflects of a number of different experiences and beliefs. Voter behaviour is shaped by one's position in the social structure - voting is as much conditioned by who one is as by what one believes. Voters also care about and respond to the economic and political performance of the incumbent party. As citizens go to the polls they take into account the past performance of government and their future expectations and then punish or reward political parties accordingly. People also use the mental images, or impressions, they have of parties and candidates as they judge the trustworthiness or inclusivity of a particular party. In addition, people take cues from their immediate social context to inform their partisan choices. Finally, as people acquire new information and their ability to process political information increases, the way in which politics is mentally processed can change. The cognitive abilities of voters can mediate the political information that affects partisan choice.

¹ Franklin, Mackie and Valen, 49. Also see Downs; Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution*; Popkin; Dalton and Wattenberg, *Parties without Partisans*.

Pulling these divergent empirical and theoretical observations together, I argue that the remarkable level of social transformation in South Africa will have profound effects on the existing cleavage structures that affect voter behaviour. In other words, social change is bound to affect the motivations that underlie individual voter behaviour. The apparent variations in the size of South Africa's main partisan coalitions (shown in Chapter One) may therefore be directly related to changes at the micro level, as new societal processes and modernising forces affect voter perceptions. Subtle shifts in party support at the aggregate level should be suitably explained by examining trends in partisanship, the partisan responses of social groups and individual level behaviour.

This chapter lays out the main hypotheses for each research question and, in doing so, builds upon and gives depth to these general propositions.

3.1 What is the level of partisanship among the electorate over time?

I expect to find that overall levels of partisanship will remain stable during the early years of democracy. In other words, I expect the electoral period after 1994 to show aggregate partisan consistency and equilibrium, mostly a result of a relatively well-institutionalized party system. Many of the country's political parties have a history, either as political liberation movements or as competing political parties, with significant mass support bases.

In later years however, I expect to see signs of dealignment emerge across the entire electorate (over and above short-term fluctuations). This is a period during which I expect the party affiliated portion of the electorate to shrink as a result of modernisation processes, where rising educational levels and the growing availability of political information has increased the cognitive skills and resources of voters, giving rise to a groups of voters, or 'apartisans' who rely less on partisanship.²

But I also expect to find that dealignment is linked to growing dissatisfaction with the performance of the incumbent party (or any particular party) and with the larger democratic process. However, instead of disillusioned ANC defectors shifting their partisan support to another political party, they will move into the independents category largely as a result of wide-spread perceptions among voters that 'other' parties are either exclusive of their interests, or as a result of uncertainty about whether 'other' parties represent their interest. Therefore, I do not expect to find much inter-party movement, or realignments, across party lines.

² Similar effects are observed in Western democracies as a consequence of modernisation processes. See Dalton and Wattenberg, *Parties without Partisans*, 22 – 32.

As the number of voters who feel close to a particular party declines I expect to find increasing numbers of 'floating voters', or 'independents', who are not overtly loyal to one particular political party, nor guided by long-standing partisan ties when deciding which party to support at elections.³

3.2 What is the direction of partisanship among the electorate over time?

The ratios of independents from the ANC and opposition blocks are expected to increase over time. The proliferation and fragmentation of opposition parties since 1994 will have weakened their attraction for many opposition voters. In addition, the ANC is likely loose support as socio-economic inequality worsens among the black population.

3.3 Has the social and demographic composition of the ANC partisan coalition changed over time?

To be clear, I expect to find no reason to expect that the racial composition of the party support bases has changed. But within these racial boundaries, especially within the black electorate, I expect to find some significant changes to the social composition of the ANC's partisan coalition since 1994, in terms of support given by key demographic and cleavage groups. The key demographic factors that are expected to have an 'impact' on ANC partisanship are: race, age, class, and urban-rural location.

In terms of *race* I expect to find that it strongly correlates with partisanship, reinforcing the notion that ANC support comes mainly from the black African population. The racial composition of the ANC's partisan coalition is not expected to change significantly since 1994. I also expect to see a reduction in the overall show of support given by all racial groups, but expect a relatively higher proportion of partisans among black South Africans than among other minority racial groups. Given the demographic composition of South Africa however, increases in non-partisans, or independents, among the black electorate will become significant.

In terms of *age* I expect to identify the emergence of a new, younger cohort of ANC identifiers over time. As younger voters come to dominate the electorate (due to rapid population growth) younger people will begin to reshape the size and strength of ANC party support as their proportional share increases compared to older ANC identifiers. The ANC's partisan coalition will increasingly become younger over time.

³ Independent and floating are not necessarily synonymous: independents may be hostile to some or all competing parties, rather than undecided or uncommitted between them. Floating implies the latter, not the former.

However, I also expect social change to affect the strength of partisanship. Among the younger ANC identifiers partisanship will be at its weakest while older ANC identifiers will display stronger levels of partisanship. As the strength of ANC support declines amongst the youngest ANC supporters over time it will have the effect of reducing the number of voters who are core (strong) supporters. However, it will not necessarily reduce absolute numbers of ANC partisans since there are bound to be high numbers of partisans among the youth who make up the greatest proportion of the voting age population.

In terms of *class* I expect signs of growing class differentiation within the black electorate affect the strength and direction of partisanship as voters start to reward or punish the ANC government for their personal economic gains or losses. I hypothesize that voters who are material beneficiaries of social change, with significant improvements in their education and class mobility, will show greater support and stronger partisan attachments the ruling ANC government and its basket of social and economic policies, compared to their poorer counterparts.

In contrast, I expect the partisan attitudes of the underclass, or those voters deeply affected by poverty and unemployment, to show increasing signs of dissatisfaction with government performance as their expectations of a better material life begin to dissipate. I expect that the uneven delivery of services, such as housing, to communities will begin to affect working class support for the ANC.⁴ I expect urban residents within the underclass to show greater signs of dissatisfaction with government than their rural counterparts.

It is less certain how workers will express themselves in partisan terms. Improved employment opportunities for some will not mean improved opportunities for all. While workers in formal employment generally benefited from rising real wages, there was also considerable flux in incomes as some workers lost jobs.⁵ Two scenarios are likely. My expectations differ depending on the extent to which working class voters become politicized and develop a class consciousness. As worker perceptions about economic conditions deteriorate they become disillusioned with the ANC's centrist economic policy. If this happens, workers who have not enjoyed improvements in their material well-being will decrease their ANC partisan support.

On the other hand, other segments of the working class are expected to express their political satisfaction as social spending and economic gains impact positively on employed households. Seekings and Natrass point out that within this broad category, many workers

⁴ It is interesting to note that the relationship between housing (home ownership) and voting is higher than that for any other occupationally based measure of class in Britain for decades Rose and McAllister, *The Loyalties of Voters*, 77.

⁵ Seekings and Natrass, 336.

have enjoyed the relative benefits of the ANC's choice of social and economic policies.⁶ As a group they do not necessarily hold similar perceptions about their class status, nor act as a homogenous bloc of voters. In his study of class and income in post-apartheid Cape Town, Seekings found that two of the classes in the middle position had different perceptions about their class status.⁷

Therefore, by 2006, the ANC's core support may begin to rely more on the new middle class (the main beneficiaries of post-apartheid redistributive and centrist economic policy), less on blue-collar workers (once the traditional core of ANC support), and least on the poorest citizens found within the 'underclass'. Poorer voters may therefore represent the first source of fluidity within the electorate.

Apart from the established effects of class in advanced industrial democracies, particularly among the British public, growing class effects are noted in nascent democracies like post-soviet Russia.⁸ Russian voters increasingly link their divergent economic experiences of marketisation to their support for parties based on whether those parties support market reform or not.⁹ In some respects, post-Soviet Russia and South Africa have similar social and economic experiences. Both have undergone a 'revolutionary transformation' since the early 1990's in order to consolidate new economic and political systems.¹⁰ Both were economically isolated, and have undergone significant market liberalization and felt the effects of globalization, all of which have affected different parts of society differentially; economically the experience has been beneficial to some and costly to others. If Russian voters are responding to the effects of new class formations, it is quite plausible that similar implications hold for South Africans.

In terms of *urban-rural location* I expect to find that a voter's location in urban or rural settings will shape the ways which he evaluates government's performance. I hypothesize that the urban-based poor, who may have higher expectations in terms of employment and social delivery, but have gleaned relatively less in real material improvements since 1994, will begin to withdraw their support for the ANC. On the other hand, the rural poor may perceive greater relative improvements in their quality of life due to social grants and the delivery of basic social services and despite high levels of poverty and unemployment, and therefore remain stronger, more loyal partisans.

⁶ Ibid., 336-7. The 'working classes' are broad category of wage earners that range from the semi-professional class (teachers and nurses) to core working class (semiskilled and unskilled workers) and the marginal working class (farm and domestic workers), 247.

⁷ Seekings, "Perceptions of class and income", 21.

⁸ David Butler and Donald Stokes, *Political change in Britain* 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan, 1974); Stephen Whitefield and Geoffrey Evans, "Class, markets and partisanship in post-Soviet Russia: 1993-96," *Electoral Studies* 18 (1999): 155-178, 162.

⁹ Ibid., 158.

¹⁰ Michael McFaul, *Russia's 1996 presidential election: The End of Polarized Politics* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1997), 3. See for a discussion of Russia's 'revolutionary transformation'.

Ironically, the ANC's most vital sources of support may therefore lie with one of the most marginalised section of the electorate (the rural poor) and their greatest beneficiaries (the emergent middle classes), both of which have benefited in a disproportional manner from the re-allocation of resources since the end of apartheid. There should be a discernible shift away from broad-based African support, as support drops among the poor and working class black Africans in urban areas but picks up amongst poor rural voters.

Few scholars have identified several demographic dynamics of the ANC's internal coalition, including its predominance within the African urban working class and its Coloured base in the Western Cape.¹¹ Yet pressing questions remain. Is there an increasing and noticeable class basis to ANC support? Are older voters more loyal to the ANC than younger voters? Do rural voters offer greater support than urban voters? And what about other racial groups – is the ANC attracting support from other racial groups after twelve years of democratic government?

Finally, I note that changes in individual level behaviour are not necessarily conditions of changes in aggregate patterns. The extent and pace of social change has also produced changes to the overall aggregate demographic makeup of South African society, resulting in to the sizes of various groups. So, observed electoral realignments within the ANC's partisan coalition may also be a result of changes in the relative size of one or more social groups or economic strata causing shifts to patterns of partisan support.¹²

3.4 What are the micro motivations of individual voters, and have they changed over time?

Evaluations of government performance

Given the four models of voter behaviour I outlined in Chapter Two I expect evaluations of government performance to be a major driver of partisanship. Fluctuations in partisanship should match changes in voter evaluations of government economic and political performance. I therefore expect voters to express increasingly their economic experiences through partisan support.¹³

The economic performance of the ANC government has produced mixed results. On one hand, there is increased economic polarisation between social classes. Whilst some voters

¹¹ Tom Lodge, 'The African National Congress'. In *Election '99 South Africa*, ed. Andrew Reynolds, 65-87 (Cape Town: David Phillip, 1999), 85.

¹² For example, a change in the proportion of middle-class individuals in the population results in observed changes to the aggregate support for parties who attract a significant middle-class vote, but is not expected to show up as changes in the effect of being middle-class on the voting choice of individuals. Franklin, Mackie and Valen, 384.

¹³ Several authors have asserted that government performance is, and should become, increasingly important to voter choice in South Africa, namely Mattes, *The Election Book*; and Mattes, Taylor and Africa; and Mattes, "Voter information". However, to this author's knowledge no study has tested this theoretical proposition in a longitudinal study of this nature.

have benefited from the new democratic dispensation, a majority of ANC supporters remain poor and/or unemployed. In addition, job losses in the public and private sectors have affected employment security. Yet, citizens have experienced unprecedented delivery in terms of welfare and essential services under the ANC government. Voters who perceive government as partly responsible for the positive changes to their personal economic circumstances will reward the ANC government. However, if voters perceive government as partly responsible for the negative changes to their personal economic situation they will act to punish government accordingly by either moving their partisan support, or abstaining from declaring partisan affiliation to the ANC.

In addition to their personal economic situations, voters will also look to the wider (sociotropic) economic conditions of the country and evaluate how the ANC's policies have affected the economy's macroeconomic outlook. Generally speaking, the ANC has made some astute policy choices since coming to power in 1994 and the macro economy has improved.¹⁴ However, the government's fiscally conservative, neo-liberal economic GEAR (Growth, Employment and Redistribution) policy has also come under criticism by 'the left' for not implementing a sufficiently pro-poor agenda.

I expect to find evidence of both pocketbook and sociotropic economic evaluations.¹⁵ All voters will hope to experience an improvement in their personal economic situations in the medium to long term. However, I suspect that, as time passes, the economically disenfranchised, or poorest voters, will increasingly base their evaluations on their own personal economic situation rather than on the performance of the broader economy.

Like voters everywhere, South Africans are not passive recipients of economic experiences and are likely to reorient their political behaviour as a result of their evaluations. Taken together, economic evaluations of the national economy plus one's personal economic situation, growing class divisions among African voters, as well as mounting ideological perceptions about government's economic policy choices will start to influence the way voters choose among parties.

I also expect to find that South African voters take into account their expectations for economy's future even as they look to past economic performance for clues that may promise an improved personal status in the future. Thus, voters will take note of prospective elements as they absorb the implications of future ANC policy directives for their personal well-being. Interest in the consequences of future policy comes from a sense of uncertainty about the

¹⁴ Judith Streak, 'Development Challenge in the aftermath of GEAR,' Budget Information Service (BIS) unpublished paper, Institute of Democracy in South Africa, Cape Town, 2003. Improvements relate to the fiscal deficit, GDP growth, inflation and creating conducive conditions for private and public investment.

¹⁵ Dalton and Wattenberg, "The Not So Simple Act of Voting", 208. Lewis-Beck, "Comparative Economic Voting", 163-6; Fiorina, 27; Popkin 1991: 33.

overall status of the economy, the government's handling of crucial issues such as job creation, land reform and general economic transformation. Therefore, I expect South African voters resemble Fiorina and Achen's notion of the voter whose partisanship is influenced by both retrospective and prospective evaluations.

I hypothesize that voters will place emphasis on political over economic performance. Information sourced from political evaluations is probably easier to assimilate and evaluate than that of economic performance and its relationship to one's personal economic situation. Most voters have been exposed to the blatant criticism leveled at the ANC through the media for its controversial stance on HIV/Aids; its position of quiet diplomacy on the political situation in Zimbabwe, alleged corrupt involvement in the expensive Arms Deal and the executive's management of parliamentary oversight thereof. Voters should respond to these events by basing their judgements of the ANC on their evaluations of the performance of the democratic political regime, government institutions and the job performance of leaders such as the President. Thus, I expect to find a strong association between these evaluations and ANC support.

Positive evaluations of government's policy performance of economic and social services will affect partisan support for the incumbents. Evaluations of social service policy should make a greater impact than economic policy simply because the delivery of social goods such as housing and health are, once again, more tangible goods to evaluate for a voter than outcomes of macro-economic policy, like economic growth or inflationary targets. It is easier to link the (non) delivery of social goods to one's partisan choice.

Another important reason to expect short-term factors like evaluations increasingly to shape and affect partisanship relates to the likelihood that the aura of success attached to any liberation party will gradually fade as an electoral asset. The type of overwhelming support the ANC currently receives is informed by trust and legitimacy inherited from its political history, particularly its role in a successful liberation struggle against apartheid. This type of support that the governing party attracts differs from the type of support linked to policy choices or style of leadership. It also differs from the type of unconditional support motivated by group-based loyalties such as race and ethnicity. However, this type of institutional support is not unconditional. The ANC's role in the transition to democracy can arguably be seen as one very important instance of performance, against which it will take many smaller failures to erode. As performance evaluations and party platforms start to evolve in response to new pressures within a normalising political environment, the credibility that once assisted the ANC to attract strong electoral support will increasingly wither away.

Indeed, the international literature points to the cases of Portugal, Greece and Spain where the supposed freezing effects of founding elections on voters (where voter preferences

remain relatively constant for a while) did not hold.¹⁶ Rapid voter fluidity occurred because the political fortunes of incumbents became closely linked to macroeconomic performance – voters simply started to punish incumbents for their mismanagement of economic affairs.¹⁷

Moreover, founding democratic elections, as experienced in South Africa during 1994, are often characterised by ‘tactical voting’ where some people vote for parties that most decisively reject the previous regime, while others will prefer those that offer the best bulwark against such as radical rejection. Importantly, ‘this jockeying around may be quite disconnected from longer-term class, sectoral, ethnic and other interests.’¹⁸

The implication is that elections will come to be regarded by voters as an opportunity to evaluate government’s current policies and performance and to reward or punish incumbents as they see appropriate. As time progresses voters will begin to care about and respond to the economic and political performance of the incumbent party. And as voters go to the polls they will take into account the past performance of government and their future expectations and then punish or reward the ANC accordingly.

Sociological factors

The way voters choose among parties and candidates will be shaped by the sociological, and particularly the racial context, in which they find themselves. Historically, South African society has been, and still is, heavily defined and divided by race.¹⁹

However, I expect race to have an indirect, or moderating effect, on partisanship by providing an information cue about a host of important factors, such as government performance and party images. In this instance, my hypotheses on race build on existing work and ideas and primarily offer better empirical tests of existing theory.²⁰ While race should demonstrate a strong bivariate association with partisanship I do not expect it to directly shape the way voters make decisions, nor serve as the key explanatory variable. Race exerts its influence as an information ‘cue’ by shaping what voters think about issues, and in this way informs partisan preferences. As Achen reminds us, demographics are helpful instrumental variables in explaining correlation but are unhelpful in explaining causation.²¹ Demographic variables have no proper theoretical interpretation. Demographics are clues, not hypotheses. We need

¹⁶ O'Donnell and Schmitter, 62.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., 61.

¹⁹ Whilst race is not recognised as a scientific category, for historical reasons socially constructed racial identities continue to be socially relevant in South Africa due to apartheid. Further, whilst I am aware that race cannot be described as a structural variable in the way that class is understood, and that a variety of interpretations for the term race are possible (such as marker for cultural values or identity) this thesis treats race as a sociological variable.

²⁰ The following scholars have interrogated the racial census argument and some have explicitly argued that race acts as a mediating factor: Mattes, *The Election Book*; Eldridge and Seekings, 517-540; Mattes and Gouws, 123; Mattes and Piombo.

²¹ Achen, *Social psychology*, 206-7.

to know not that race matters to voters but what it is about race that makes voters choose differently.²²

To this end I argue that sociological voting can be explained as a result of rational and cognitive calculations.²³ The sociological context does matter, but only as far as it acts as an information source. Race tends to shape *what* voters think, not the *way* they think about issues as a result of relative homogeneity of economic and political interests within racial groups. In other words, overlapping class and racial identities may partly account for continuing racial polarisation of party politics. And, despite an increased class consciousness, the acquiescence of poor voters may be due to future expectations of mobility.²⁴ Therefore, the influence of race on voters can be partly explained by other theoretical models (specifically the rational choice and cognitive awareness models).

Political parties are also instrumental in ensuring that racial cues act as useful directives to voters by helping them make a connection between their interests and electoral options. The ANC has played the race card effectively in elections, thus preserving a racial cross-class coalition. Davis argues that in the 1999 election the ANC managed to increase its vote share by appealing to a segment defined in racial terms. In particular, it reminded the voters that it was the party that had fought and won the struggle against apartheid and that it alone represented the interests of black voters.²⁵ The ANC has also taken political advantage of its pro-poor policies.²⁶ So, the resilience of race, and not class, in electoral politics is aided by political rhetoric, transformatory legislation, redistributive policies, and patronage. While some of these facets of a post-apartheid South Africa may be both justifiable and necessary, they continue to affect voter perceptions by sending out racial cues that reinforce the belief that group and individual prospects or interests correlate. The irony of the non-racial democratisation process lies in the extent to which apartheid identities are used to mobilise voters to the polls.

Apart from the mediating effect that race plays, new cleavages should emerge (as a result of post-apartheid social transformation), creating common group interests around class, age and the urban-rural divide and exerting some influence on partisanship. Much like the rise of the capitalist/worker dynamic during the Industrial Revolution across Europe, which created the basis for a new politics based on class, I argue that the emergence of new class divides in South Africa offer a potential platform for an economic and class-based 'revolution'. Particularly within the black African race group, I expect to find significant class-based

²² Ibid., 209.

²³ Huckfeldt and Sprague, 281-299. This hypothesis borrows from one of a number of micro theories that explain sociological voting, which are outlined in Chapter Six.

²⁴ Seekings and Nattrass, 372.

²⁵ Gavin Davis, "Proportional Representation and Racial Campaigning in South Africa." *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics*, 10 (2004), 319.

²⁶ Seekings and Nattrass, 371.

variations. In other words, rapid social transformation will affect voting behaviour, by reshaping the cleavage structures created by apartheid.

While one's position in the social structure is expected to influence partisanship, I expect to find that the overall predictive capacity of the sociological model declines slightly over time, as social influences on partisanship give way to evaluations of government performance.

Party images

As discussed in Chapter Two, a handful of scholars have demonstrated that the racial images of political parties affect South African voters.²⁷ In line with this thinking, I also expect voter perceptions of the inclusiveness and trustworthiness of political parties to play an important role in explaining partisan support. The common view is that voters in a divided society such as South Africa actively seek out parties that represent their own identity group, often to the exclusion of other groups. I also expect to find that most voters will avoid supporting any one party that they feel might exclude them from their support base. Perceptions of party inclusiveness are therefore expected to be necessary but not sufficient conditions for support.

In particular, the racial inclusiveness of political parties will have important influences on voter perceptions of how well parties represent them. Yet, I expect to find that partisan attachments are not driven by ethnic or racial identities per se, but rather because voters perceive that South African political parties remain committed to and reflect 'group-based' political interests. First and foremost, the nature of past political conflicts in South Africa has racialised the current political landscape. Additionally, the ANC has demonstrated its ability to consolidate relatively diverse interest groups into a dominant political coalition, often borrowing from or relying on the politicized racial divisions and conflicts of the past to maintain electoral support. Current campaigning methods and strategies provide many voters with easy racial cues about which party represents which group, further simplifying partisan decision-making. Davis shows that racial mobilisation remains a key electoral strategy for the main parties.²⁸ In addition, campaign strategies and messages often employ emotionally compelling symbols linked to the liberation struggle or racially defined social issues such as crime. As Popkin says, 'data presented in an emotionally compelling way may be given greater consideration and more weight than data that is statistically more valid, but emotionally neutral'.²⁹

Voters then use sociological cues quite rationally to decide which parties are not representative of their particular interests. As Popkin says, a reasoning voter thinks about what the party stands for.³⁰ When people believe that their group membership may shape their individual prospects, group-based cues are likely to be informative and valuable to

²⁷ Mattes, *The Election Book*; Ferree, "The Microfoundations of Ethnic Voting".

²⁸ Davis, "Proportional Representation", 302.

²⁹ Popkin, 16.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 7.

voters.³¹ And, when party characteristics are closely aligned with the interests of the voter, they provide a basis for reasonable, accessible, and economic estimates of candidate behaviour.³²

Voters can also learn much about a party's policies by extrapolating from the personal characteristics of politicians and their supporters.³³ Dalton notes that 'social characteristics are an indirect measure of attitudinal differences between groups of voters and voter perceptions of which party best represents these policy positions.'³⁴ Further, Popkin notes that voters may assess a party's issue stance, particularly on distributive issues, based on its demographic representivity.³⁵ In South Africa for instance, a black voter asking which party is most likely to prioritize social upliftment for himself, his family and his community may be more likely to identify with and support a 'black' party, thereby weakening potential support for parties who are perceived to be 'white'. In other words, by thinking about *who* and *what* political parties stand for voters learn much about politics from social cues.³⁶

The increasing influence of performance evaluations and new social cleavages will be suppressed somewhat by the strong and enduring influence of racialised party images. Voters' images of political parties are unlikely to have changed much during the first twelve years of democracy. Voters' perceptions of what groups political parties stand for should be similar to those expressed in 1994. This is precisely because, despite several noteworthy attempts, most political parties have been slow to successfully transform their party images.³⁷

The social context

I also expect one's immediate social context to influence partisanship. Perceptions of reality are shaped by the social context in which one receives filters and interprets information.³⁸ Voting is thus influenced by where you live as well as by who you are and what you think.³⁹ Where clearly defined and stratified salient social groups (along class or racial lines) exist in a community political scientists argue that pressures emanating from this group will exert additional influence on individual political behaviour. One of the effects of the apartheid Group Areas policy is that the informational networks of vast majorities of black, white, coloured or Indian voters have been contained for the greatest part wholly within particular cultural

³¹ Posner, 91; Chandra, *Why Ethnic Parties Succeed*, 11; Ferree, "Explaining South Africa's Racial Census", 805.

³² Popkin, 63.

³³ *Ibid.*, 15.

³⁴ Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*, 151.

³⁵ Popkin, 59-64.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 7 (my italics).

³⁷ Some opposition parties have attempted to transform their images, most obviously the National Party which tried to reinvent itself as the New National Party. The ANC also presents itself as an inclusive, national, non-racial party.

³⁸ Mattes and Gouws, 126.

³⁹ Rose and McAllister, *The Loyalties of Voters*, 109; Richardson and Beck, "The Flow of Political Information", 192.

milieus, each of which was fairly consistent internally and offered few cross-pressures.⁴⁰ South Africa remains deeply geographically stratified along racial and class lines which embed voters into homogenous social micro contexts. Mattes, Giliomee and James found at the onset of the democratic era, that important social characteristics revealed a significant amount of social and economic 'distance' between various racial groups.⁴¹ They further state, 'In a society as starkly divided as South Africa, race has historically determined a person's social location. Citizens of different races were confronted with very different persuasion and information networks. When one combined this with the very different economic positions of the black, coloured and white communities, it translated into very different overall 'world-views', as well as different specific attitudes.'⁴² Thus, when voters from different racial communities go to the polls they are likely to take very different political experiences and beliefs with them.

Despite increasing cross-cultural social interaction I expect to find that the majority of South African voters remain deeply embedded in racially defined information networks and that common characteristics of one's immediate social context can persuasively reinforce low information reasoning, and thereby inform partisan preferences. South African voters are less likely than citizens in other countries to hear mixed partisan messages and most likely to be exposed to partisan congruence from their personal discussants by being exposed to information that systematically favors one party or another. If the social context has a direct impact on the respondent's partisanship by providing new information and electoral cues then it seems likely that it will relate closely to those of intermediaries s/he is closest to, such as one's spouse and friends.

I also expect to find a link between the social context and party images. Specifically, I suggest that congruent 'homogenous' partisan relationships affect way people view the inclusiveness of political parties – people in highly congruent relationships (where the partisanship of the respondent and his regular discussants match) will have a more firm idea about the inclusiveness or exclusiveness of parties. However, respondents in incongruent situations, or pluralistic relationships, (where the partisanship of the respondent and his regular discussants do not match) are more likely to see political parties in a more ambivalent light. I therefore suggest that the interaction between social networks and party images will give way to an unforeseen irony - in a divided society, diverse or heterogeneous social networks will lead to greater uncertainty about party inclusiveness.

⁴⁰ Mattes and Gouws, 126.

⁴¹ Robert Mattes, Hermann Giliomee and Wilmot James, "The Election in the Western Cape," in *Launching Democracy in South Africa* ed. R.W. Johnson and Lawrence Schlemmer, 108-167 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 111.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 149.

Cognitive mobilisation

Several interrelated hypotheses deal with the effects of cognitive mobilisation on the South African voter. First, I expect to find significant variations in the cognitive abilities of South African voters. In a divided society where access to education and news information remain highly unequal, only educated sections of the population, whose access to political news information is higher, are expected to show signs of cognitive mobilisation. Since preconditions for increases in cognitive mobilisation include modernization and inclusive educational policies, both of which are underway in South Africa, I also expect to see increases over time in the proportion of the electorate who are cognitively mobilized.

Second, the voter's need for information cues will decline as cognitive mobilisation increases. Less cognitively mobilised voters will show a greater reliance on information cues and shortcuts while cognitively mobilised voters will be less reliant on cues. In other words, the use of information short cuts is more influential and persuasive among voters whose cognitive skills and access to information are lower.

Third, depending on the level of cognitive ability I expect to find significant variation in the types of cues used by voters. Where voters are more 'sophisticated' they will show greater reliance on evaluative factors. Cognitive voters will be more capable of cognition driven reasoning and therefore more dependent on evaluative factors and less dependent on social reference cues. These voters are also most likely to be more disposed to changes to their partisanship.⁴³ While other factors may remain powerful determinants we will find that cognitive mobilisation does broaden the basis on which voters make up their minds. On the other hand, there will be greater dependency on social (especially racial) cues that emanate from party images and the social context among less cognized voters. The influence of the social context and party attributes as information cues should be considered in conjunction with unequal levels of education across the population. Low education levels (due to the poor quality of education under apartheid) may lead many voters to rely on multiple information shortcuts to help them negotiate complex political information. Overall, cognitive mobilisation plays an important, but indirect role, in forming and sustaining partisanship.

If Dalton and Inglehart's assumptions are correct it is possible that South Africa presents a likely case of cognitive mobilisation. Increased levels of access to media and education suggest that the South African electorate is more politically informed than ever before. The government's massive electrification projects should enable more people to watch television news.⁴⁴ The partial de-regulation of South Africa's airwaves, the introduction of E-TV channel

⁴³ Dalton and Wattenberg, *Parties without Partisans*; Popkin.

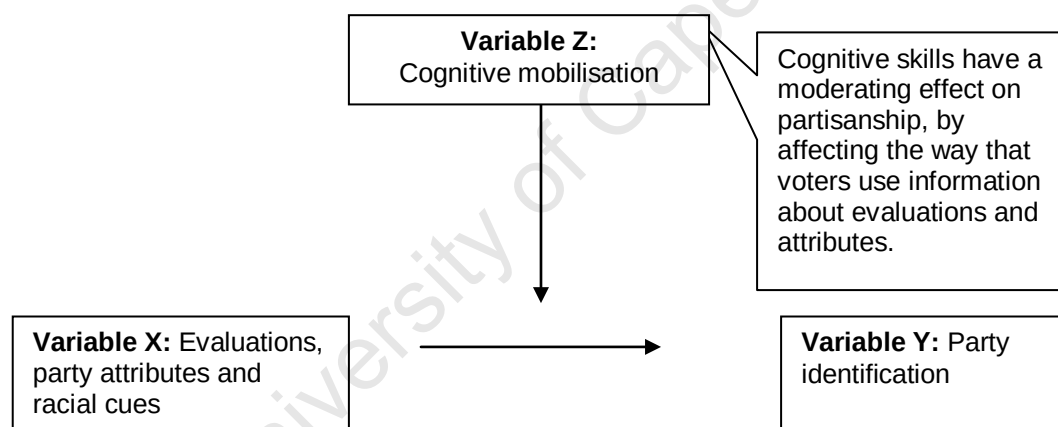
⁴⁴ The level of electrification in South Africa has risen from 36% in 1994 to 72% at the end of 2004. The number of rural households electrified countrywide has risen from 12% in 1994 to 52% in 2005. The electrification programme has resulted in the electrification of 3.3 million homes since the beginning of

and widespread community radio would diversify the types of political information to which voters are exposed.⁴⁵ Such developments would be expected to bring down the costs of obtaining political information.⁴⁶

The skills required to access and process complex political and campaign information should also be met by government's intensified efforts to improve access to formal schooling and matriculation rates.⁴⁷ This, and the fact that more people have the opportunity to attend tertiary institutions, should have gradually increased the number of citizens with the requisite cognitive skills to deal with complex political information.

The major thrust of my argument is that cognitive mobilisation will mediate how voters process different types of information. As such, I treat cognitive mobilization moderating or 'interaction' variable in the statistical analyses.⁴⁸ Figure 3.1 illustrates how cognitive mobilisation can play an indirect role in voter behaviour by affecting how information shortcuts are used.

Figure 3.1: The moderating effects of cognitive mobilisation on partisanship



the electrification programme in 1991 up until the end of March 2006; http://www.eskom.co.za/live/content.php?Item_ID=2786 [Accessed 01 February 2008]. Since 1994 the government's emphasis was on achieving high connection rates. Current policy includes the introduction of free electricity for poor households and is aimed at achieving universal access to electricity by 2012, A. Marquard et al, "South Africa's Electrification Programme: An Overview And Assessment." Working paper, Management Programme in Infrastructure, Reform and Regulation, Graduate School of Business, University of Cape Town, 2007, 35.

⁴⁵ Access to media and information has increased and diversified since 1994. By the 2004, election media usage had risen: over 23 million watched television at least once a week and over 27 million listened to the radio. Davis, "Media coverage", 232.

⁴⁶ Mattes, "Voter information", 43.

⁴⁷ Seekings and Nattrass, 359. There have been massive increases in enrolment and spending on education, although quality of education remains poor in some schools. Subotzky, 364. Enrolment of African students in higher education was transformed from 29 percent in 1988, to 60 percent in 2002.

⁴⁸ Moderating or 'interaction effects' are said to exist when a relationship between the two variables differs substantially for the categories of the test variable. Therefore there is a marked contrast in findings for different categories of the test variable. See Bryman and Cramer, 222-9.

Chapter 4

Research Design and Methodology

This chapter sets out the research design and methodological strategies used to test the major theoretical models of voting behaviour. I start with an overview of the level and type of analysis and a discussion of survey data as well as the advantages and disadvantages of using survey data to analyse voting behaviour.

A subsequent section introduces the dependent variable and discusses the theoretical and methodological validity of partisanship, my conceptualisation, operationalisation, and choice of statistical techniques. In particular, the applicability or validity of the dependent variable is scrutinized as it relates to a non-Western, developing and democratizing context, such as South Africa. I also discuss the independent variables and their comparability to variables selected in similar studies.

4.1 Research design: Level and type of analysis

1. What is the level of partisanship among the entire electorate over time?

To observe trends and patterns in partisanship over time I examine cross-sectional time series measures of levels of partisanship among the total electorate.

2. What is the direction of partisan support among the entire electorate over time?

To observe the ratios of ANC supporters versus opposition supporters versus independents across the electorate I examine cross-sectional time series of partisanship with specific political parties, namely the ANC and opposition block.¹

3. Has the social composition of the ANC partisan coalition changed over time?

To observe the social composition of the ANC's partisan coalition I examine cross-sectional time series of ANC partisanship disaggregated by key structural variables. Cross-sectional patterns of structural variables tell us whether the key partisan cleavages or demographic characteristics are static or dynamic among specific social groups. I also focus on trends in the strength of partisan attachments of social groups to map changes to the ANC's core support.

¹ This study notes that there has been a reduction in party identification and an increase in non-voting within the South African electorate. However, the study is more interested in predicting the partisan profiles of key demographic groups and strength of partisanship (closeness to a party). A separate analysis of non-voters presents a challenge for another study.

The first three questions consist mainly of descriptive research, which provides a base and stimulus for the fourth research question.

4. *What are the micro motivations of individual voters, and have they changed over time?*

My fourth question is an explanatory one. Using several major theoretical models of voter behaviour, I conduct a micro-level analysis of the behavioural motivations of individual voters over time. I ask whether key motivations have changed between 1994 and 2006 and search for the longer causes of any observed changes. I also explore the relative mix and intersection of these models of partisanship. To do this I examine repeated regression analyses of cross-sections over time.

This study therefore consists of a longitudinal analysis of change in first, the aggregate patterns of party support (level and direction of partisanship) among the entire electorate, second, social groups within the ANC's partisan coalition, and third, to the motivations of individual voters by comparing different electorates over twelve years (1994-2006), using a series of cross-sectional survey studies.

4.2 Survey Data

The development of national survey instruments and ensuing quantitative analysis of electoral behaviour has only recently developed in South Africa, constrained mainly by the availability of expertise and data. As Seekings explains, during the apartheid regime 'the study of white citizens was poorly developed, with few, if any, quantitative research on African citizens'.² He goes on to describe South African election studies as a 'disconnected' tradition, developing in apparent ignorance of the work being published in international journals, including theories of partisan identification.³

The transition to democracy saw a transformation in the demand for and use of quantitative data, with important shifts in the study of elections and voting behaviour and a new emphasis on polling data to develop new kinds of analysis using well-known concepts such as partisan identification and issue voting.⁴ The holding of inclusive non-racial democratic elections in 1994 provided opportunity to consider the opinion of previously excluded voters and by the 1999 election the use of opinion polls had further developed ways of testing models of voting behaviour.⁵

² Jeremy Seekings, "The Uneven Development of Quantitative Social Science in South Africa," *Social Dynamics* 27, 1 (2001): 1-36, 5

³ *Ibid.*, 5

⁴ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁵ For example, the Opinion 99 Consortium.

The public opinion surveys used in this study were designed precisely for electoral research purposes and most were fielded around the time of national, provincial and local elections in South Africa. Moreover, their designs reflect well-established traditions of electoral research originating at both Columbia University and the University of Michigan, which have been used extensively in similar survey-based research projects worldwide. Consequently, the surveys used here employ indicators have been tested rigorously in other country studies.

In particular, the Afrobarometer series is based on the international Barometer surveys. In line with these regional survey instruments, the Afrobarometer's design takes into consideration South Africa's peculiarities and contextual constraints, whilst still employing international best practise and experience in its choice of variables and overall design.⁶ The Afrobarometer project is driven by several organisations, namely the Center for Democratic Development (CDD) in Ghana, the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Idasa) and Michigan State University.⁷ It therefore benefits from both domestic and foreign links and expertise.

The study draws evidence from the following national public opinion surveys listed below:⁸

1. Idasa National Post Election Survey (1994)
2. Idasa Local Government Elections Study (1995)
3. Idasa Political Culture Study (1997)
4. Opinion '99 (1999)
5. Afrobarometer Round 1 (2000)
6. Afrobarometer Round 2 (2002)
7. Afrobarometer Round 2.5 (2004)
8. Afrobarometer Round 3 (2006)
9. Comparative National Elections Project [CNEP] (2004)

Advantages and disadvantages of survey research

Survey research provides appropriate cross-sectional data for a study of this nature by allowing allows us to obtain attitudinal information repeatedly over time directly from different individuals who are selected according to scientific procedure of sampling to provide a basis for making inferences about some larger population to which they belong.⁹ This is crucial for a study that requires individual level data to draw conclusions about voting behaviour, particularly in a divided society like South Africa. With surveys being repeated over time with

⁶ For instance, Afrobarometer takes cognisance of the issues raised by scholars about the placement of items in a survey. In particular, the Barometer series place the vote items and economic items far apart to ensure that the relationship between economic conditions and the vote in the survey data is not inflated because of the close proximity of the items in the questionnaire. See Lewis-Beck, "Comparative Economic Voting", 160.

⁷ See www.afrobarometer.org

⁸ Refer to Appendix 1 for details of each national survey.

⁹ J.B. Manheim and R.C. Rich, *Empirical Political Analysis* (New York: Longman, 1995), 129.

a high level of consistency between questions, sequences of measures can be created that make it possible to incorporate a time trend into the analysis. In fact, large nationally representative surveys can be very effective for studying trends over time and are therefore longitudinal by nature.¹⁰

Another advantage of survey analysis is that it allows one to perform descriptive research, by describing the characteristics of a large set of cases, and explanatory research by looking at variation in a certain variable across cases and examining other characteristics systematically linked to the variation to draw causal inferences. Moreover, because surveys collect data systematically, comparative analysis of the same variables in different populations can be made over time. In contrast, other styles of research, such as the case-study method and experimental method, do not possess the distinguishing feature of 'co variation' (that variation in one variable is matched with variation in another) and thus lack the statistical methods developed for survey analysis.¹¹

Public opinion surveys also provide a much greater number of cases than that normally obtained with panel or in-depth interviews. A large sample is essential if one wants to make intergenerational comparisons or control for social factors.¹² Large samples also enable representivity and inference, which is important if one is studying a nation or society. This is particularly necessary for South Africa where the sample should be representative of the stratification in the society like race, class, income level, province, education and so on.

A drawback of using survey data in a study of this nature means that one relies on a series of cross-sectional surveys, each of which interview different people over time instead of re-interviewing the same group of people over time, as found in panel studies. Cross-sectional measures therefore have an inherent inadequacy because the data cannot reveal whether changes in the aggregate data apply to same or different individuals. In other words, changes in the aggregate data may be not due to changes occurring to the same individuals over time. Instead, it may be due to a 'churning' effect, using World Bank parlance, where people are trading or swapping positions, such as economic or class positioning. Changes in data may also be due to changes in the composition of the population because of issues such as emigration, population growth and generational replacement. To the extent that aggregate changes do reflect individual opinion change, the magnitude of opinion change remains unclear. As Green et al state, one cannot tell whether all voters changed their opinions or a few voters changed their opinions dramatically.¹³ However, my purpose is not to attempt to

¹⁰ Angela Dale and Richard Davies, *Analyzing Social and Political Change: A Casebook of Methods* (London: Sage Publications, 1994), 7-9.

¹¹ De Vaus, 7.

¹² Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution*, 27.

¹³ Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 91-2.

explain the vote of every individual in South Africa, but instead to account for the behaviour of the overall electorate.

A longitudinal study involving in-depth interviews could also prove suitable to tap the motivations of voters as they involve detailed discussions with respondents about particular topics and the interviewer may probe the respondent for more accurate, specific information. It has also been argued that survey research only observes the tip of the iceberg and that observation is limited to a particular time and context.¹⁴ However, the costs of in-depth interviews in terms of time and money are prohibitive and a large sample, making generalizations to a broader population almost impossible to obtain.

Another consideration relates to problems with samples from election surveys held in post-authoritarian periods. Regular electoral issues such as economic performance are not always serious electoral issues in early elections that follow after democratisation. As Pacek and Radcliff state, 'Post-authoritarian periods are dominated by the very process of democratisation itself.'¹⁵ These misgivings led Pacek and Radcliff to exclude the first post authoritarian electoral contests from their study so as to separate out the immediate effects of democratisation. There is a similar presumption amongst South African analysts that the 1994 election was unique since it was a 'liberation' or 'uhuru' election dominated by post-liberation issues like nation building and reconciliation. One can argue that the 1999 and 2004 elections therefore present the first real tests of what voters think of normal electoral issues such as government economic performance. Nevertheless, this study wants to measure the effects of democratisation, social change and the normalisation of politics on the voter. Thus, I employ a survey that encompasses the first democratic election in 1994. Moreover, the process of social change (hypothesized to affect voting patterns) had already commenced by the early 1990's and findings suggest that voter behaviour was not as 'unique' as expected in the 1994 elections.¹⁶

Finally, a drawback of using survey data in South Africa is that it is extremely difficult to obtain a truly representative sample, because of uneven response rates among different classes, with wealthier, mostly white citizens being difficult to interview.¹⁷ As a result, the sample in richer neighbourhoods (those that comprise mostly of white people) cannot always be considered to be reliably representative because of low access and response rates.¹⁸ However, all the surveys utilised are weighted to account for regional, racial and other demographic considerations (see section below).

¹⁴ Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution*, 26.

¹⁵ Pacek and Radcliff, 212.

¹⁶ Mattes, *The Election Book*.

¹⁷ Seekings and Nattrass, 302.

¹⁸ Seekings, "Perceptions of class and income", 5.

Validity and reliability

Scholars have developed standard ways of asking questions about a broad range of voting behaviour concepts. The development of these standard indicators has led to a process of consensus or 'harmonisation' in survey analysis on voting behaviour. The indicators selected here for operationalisation closely reflects choices made in well-known studies that aim to test the same concepts (see the following sections). As De Vaus suggests, 'where well established measures exists they should be used.'¹⁹ There is also similar or identical wording in each of the question items across all the surveys.

The validity (whether my indicators measure the correct concept) and the reliability (obtaining the same response repeatedly) of the independent and dependent variables therefore stem from a long and established tradition which has dealt at length with processes of conceptual clarification and indicator development and evaluation. Further consideration of theoretical and measurement validity are dealt with in the sections that discuss the conceptualisation and operationalisation of the variables.

Sampling and measurement error

Sampling and measurement error are reduced in a number of ways. First, the use of identical or similar item wording across surveys minimises measurement error. Second, the sampling frame, method of sampling and sample size are all sufficiently similar to make comparisons over time valid and reduce sampling and measurement error. Each sample is representative of the wider South African population. The survey samples were drawn using a multistage clustered random probability sample, which were disproportionally stratified by province, population group, and community size. Multistage cluster sampling involves a technique that obtains a final sample by drawing several different samples.²⁰ Multistage cluster sampling divides the country into clusters, which are then broken down into smaller areas, then addresses, households and individuals. Stratified sampling is designed to produce more representative and thus more accurate samples.²¹ Stratifying the samples by province, population group, and community size guarantees that each of these groups are represented in the sample, proportional to the wider South African population. A combination of the two types of sampling ensures thorough sampling practise. Multistage cluster sampling deals with drawbacks inherent in other sampling alternatives, which are of limited use on their own when sampling a geographically dispersed population and when no easily available sampling frames (a list of the population elements) exist. Stratification techniques ensure maximum representivity, whilst being able to reduce the number of clusters used (by dividing each level of cluster, district, area etc into the various strata and then employing random selection within each stratum). Interviewing consisted of personal, face-to-face interviews, questionnaires were translated in to local languages, and interviewers were fluent in local languages.

¹⁹ De Vaus, 50.

²⁰ Ibid., 75.

²¹ Ibid., 74.

The sample size of a survey affects two important inferential statistical concepts, that of sampling error and confidence intervals, which specify the degree of accuracy and certainty that one can have in their findings being relevant to a wider population. Sample size determines the degree of accuracy – the larger a sample size the more the chance for error is reduced. The sample sizes of all the surveys are sufficiently large to be able to infer trends and patterns in the data to the South African population as a whole. In other words, we have sufficient confidence to generalize our findings from the sample to the broader population.²² If we examine the sample sizes for the surveys used in this study the degree of accuracy falls around 2 percent at a 95 percent confidence level, assuming a heterogeneous population (50/50), which requires a larger sample than a homogenous population.²³ Considering that many national surveys are limited to 2000 samples (because after this point the extra cost of surveying have insufficient payoff in terms of accuracy) the surveys used here show ample sample sizes.²⁴ I report confidence intervals for some of the findings in subsequent chapters, especially when I examine trends over time, in order to demonstrate when changes over time are larger than the confidence intervals.

Weighting samples

Sample quality was also improved by applying statistical weighting adjustments during the analysis stage to minimise sample biases. This involves statistically increasing or decreasing the number of cases with particular characteristics so that the proportion of cases in the sample is adjusted to the proportion in the population. When the statistical tests are performed I utilise the weight variable included in each of the data-sets to ensure that the data is weighted up the universe, i.e. the South African voting public. When necessary the samples are weighted according to province, age, race, gender, type of area, language, income and education and projected onto the universe (South African citizens, 18 years and older).

Sub-group analysis

My data analysis requires the overall samples to be broken into a number of smaller sub-groups, which means that the sampling error and confidence interval for those sub-groups rise. For example, the samples will be split into partisans' and non-partisans. Partisans will then be split into ANC or opposition supporters. ANC partisans are further disaggregated or split into smaller sub-groups by structural characteristics (by age, gender, class) to test for sociological effects on partisanship. De Vaus suggests that as a rule of thumb, try to ensure that the subgroups have at least 50 to 100 cases in each.²⁵ I ensure that sufficient numbers exist in each subgroup using frequency tables and I report the number of cases in each

²² The sample sizes are as follows: 2517 (1994), 2674 (1995), 3500 (1997), 2200, 3493, 3,288 (1999), 2200 (Afrobarometer 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006), and 1200(CNEP 2004).

²³ De Vaus, 81-2.

²⁴ Ibid., 81.

²⁵ Ibid., 83.

logistic regression table. Where an insufficient number exist I report this and consequently leave results out of the analysis.

4.3 Dependent variable: Partisanship

This section examines some of the theoretical, conceptual and operationalisational aspects of the partisanship variable.

4.3.1 The theoretical significance of partisanship

Partisanship is a central concept in the field of voting behaviour and has been widely used as an indicator of partisan loyalty.²⁶ This is because political conflict in modern democracies is usually organised around political parties. Party support relies on the mass electorate and party identification questions are designed to measure that mass basis of support.²⁷ Early seminal works acknowledge its theoretical importance in voting behaviour in a wide variety of democratic systems. Almond and Verba wrote in *The Civic Culture*, 'Open and moderate partisanship, then, are essential to a stable democracy. They are the 'feeling correlates' of responsible majority and loyal opposition'.²⁸ In addition, Converse and Dupeux warned of the dangers to democracy when many citizens fail to identify with one of the established parties.²⁹

Despite its widespread use in the literature the 'partisanship' concept remains controversial. Originally partisanship was envisaged to display certain properties: that of stability, independence and intensification, and as an influence on other political attitudes and behaviour.³⁰ However, after cross-national studies produced results that conflicted with these traditional conceptualizations, scholars questioned whether the concept was in fact a long-term, stable attitude and a motivation independent from the voting act. This brought doubt as to its theoretical significance and explanatory power as a measurement variable, particularly outside of the United States.³¹ Its 'inherent' stability was questioned after the decline in partisanship, or dealignment, across many countries. As a result, many scholars argue that party identification has become less successful in predicting voting choice. Some questioned whether methodologies were unintentionally introducing instability into the findings or whether partisanship was in fact inherently unstable.³² The controversy over the stability of partisanship continues. Green et al dispute conventional views of dealignment. Using US data they argue that the distribution of partisanship over time (1952-1998) has remained stable,

²⁶ Dalton and Wattenberg, *Parties without Partisans*, 19-20. Dalton and Wattenberg, "The Not So Simple Act of Voting, 202. Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*.

²⁷ Weisberg, 681.

²⁸ Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963), 86.

²⁹ Philip Converse and George Dupeux, "Politization of the Electorate in France and the United States," in *Elections and the Political Order*, ed. Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller and Donald E. Stokes (New York: John Wiley, 1966), 269.

³⁰ Campbell et al.

³¹ Richardson, 22. Dalton and Wattenberg, *Parties without Partisans*, 23.

³² Weisberg, "Political partisanship", 687.

subject only to minor fluctuations.³³ In fact, US partisanship in 1996 looks very much as it did in 1972.³⁴ The majority of American voters continue to identify with a party. As they state, 'there are still enough partisans to make partisanship a viable topic of study.'³⁵

Doubts about the analytical independence of partisanship from the voting act arose when European studies (Britain, Germany or Netherlands) established strong correlations between party identification and vote choice, compared to American data which shows stable identification but instability in the vote US findings.³⁶ This led scholars to argue that voters elsewhere do not identify with political parties in the same way as American voters do.³⁷ This high level of volatility is also said to severely challenge the utility of the long-term partisanship concept.³⁸

Some scholars also suggested that identities such as social class, religion or language overshadowed or encompassed party identities in many countries. As Shively explains, 'if the social or economic conflicts in which a voter is involved are sufficiently clear; and if the position of parties or groups of parties with regard to these conflicts is sufficiently clear, then there is no need for the voter to develop lasting ties to any party per se'.³⁹ American parties do not reflect the deep-seated divisions that other party systems do and therefore represent a more psychologically salient and penetrating form of identification. These observations led some to surmise that traditional US-based measures may tap short-term voting intentions instead of long-term party attachments and therefore should not be used outside the US.⁴⁰

Scholars also found that partisanship questions are sensitive to the nature of the party system. The distinction between partisanship and the vote is more obvious in the US where voters are required to vote regularly, for many political offices. In contrast, in other countries, such as the UK, voters are only required to vote as infrequently as every five years. This may cause the vote and partisanship to appear indistinguishable. Second, question items should adapt to the political system being studied. For instance, translating the concept of

³³ They use evidence from a variety of sources and a number of different statistical approaches to demonstrate the persistence of US party identification. Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, chapter 3. Also see Donald Green, Bradley Palmquist and Eric Schickler, "Macropartisanship: A Republication and Critique," *American Political Science Review*, 92,4 (1998): 883-899.

³⁴ Using American National Elections Studies (NES) data the distribution of Independents in 1952 was 23.3%, in 1978 the Independents category had grown to 38.5%, but by 1996 Independents had shrunk again to 35.2%. See Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 14-5.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 14.

³⁶ Le Duc; Thomassen; Butler and Stokes, *Political change in Britain*, 1st Ed. For an overview of the arguments see Richardson, 22; Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 164.

³⁷ Le Duc, 267.

³⁸ Weisberg, "Political partisanship".

³⁹ W. Phillips Shively, "Party Identification, Party Choice, and Voting Stability: The Weimar Case," *American Political Science Review* Vol. 66 (1972): 1203-25, 1222-3.

⁴⁰ In particular, Michigan's standard measure: 'Do you consider yourself a Democrat, Republican, an Independent, or what?' Budge, Crewe and Farley, 1976.

'identification' can be problematic.⁴¹ There is no single partisanship question format that is used universally outside of the United States – the range of variation in question wording can be seen in the operationalisation section below. Some survey research even suggests that in the multiparty systems of Europe, enduring partisan ties can be better measured by using an ideological self-placement scale. Inglehart and Klingemann, for example, concluded that 'left-right self-placement corresponds very closely to political party identification everywhere except in Ireland.'⁴² Where there are many parties some evidence suggests that ideological identification may be the preferred conceptualisation of long-run partisanship.⁴³

Having failed straightforward 'export' to other countries, partisanship turned out to be a classic instance of a concept that does not 'travel' well.⁴⁴ The debate over the partisanship concept reflects a common dilemma faced by comparative researchers involving the use of concepts that are not standardized or are difficult to standardize in cross-national studies. An uncritical importation of a concept such as partisan identification to different society settings can be problematic for thorough analysis.

In defence of the use of partisanship, scholars continue to treat it as a major concept in electoral studies. Despite differences in the concepts conceptualisation and measurement across political contexts the concept has been applied in many democratic systems.⁴⁵ In earlier studies, scholars like Campbell et al pointed to its conceptual independence, arguing that while the impact of partisanship on vote choice is profound but not always predictable.⁴⁶ Green et al's recent study makes a strong argument for partisanship. First, they argue that although party identification is a powerful predictor of the vote it remains conceptually distinct from partisan evaluations and other political orientations and attitudes.⁴⁷ As they state about US data, 'Approximately 70 percent of the relationship between party identification and the vote persists even after controlling for an array of political opinions...the measure provides

⁴¹ Weisberg, "Political partisanship", 689.

⁴² Inglehart, Ronald and Hans Klingemann, 'Party identification, ideological preference and the Left-Right dimension among Western mass publics'. In *Party identification and beyond: representations of voting and party competition* edited by Ian Budge, Ivor Crewe, and Dennis Farlie, 243-73 (London: Wiley, 1976) 269.

⁴³ Michael Lewis-Beck, "Economics and the French Voter: A microanalysis", *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 47 (1983): 347-60; Annick Percheron and M Kent Jennings, "Political continuities in French families", *Comparative Politics*, 13 (1981): 421-36.

⁴⁴ Weisberg, "Political partisanship", 724.

⁴⁵ Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*; Le Duc; Richardson; Lewis-Beck; Thomassen; Butler and Stokes, *Political change in Britain*, 1st Ed; Dalton and Wattenberg, *Parties without Partisans*, 20; Philip E. Converse and Roy Pierce, *Political Representation in France* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986).

⁴⁶ Campbell et al, 140. They demonstrate the differential impact of party identification on voters with well-developed attitudes and poorly developed attitudes towards the current elements of politics. Those individuals with stronger evaluations have less predictable voting outcomes based on their party identification.

⁴⁷ They examine bivariate relationships between party identification and the vote and use multivariate regression analysis to incorporate other determinants of partisanship (ideological orientations, group interests and evaluations), which are held constant to ensure that the relationship is not a spurious reflection of these influences on party affiliation. For more on this methodological debate see Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 207-18.

enormous explanatory leverage without duplicating other constructs, such as performance evaluations or ideological location'.⁴⁸ Moreover, after examining data from Britain, Canada and Germany, they conclude that party identification outside the United States is not a mere reflection of current political evaluations of leaders and parties (short-term evaluations).⁴⁹

Second, they refute the evidence for weak partisanship by pointing to a number of methodological fallacies and discrepancies in existing data.⁵⁰ These scholars also find more commonalities than differences in cross-national partisanship, leading them to suggest that party identification functions in the same way elsewhere as in the United States - party affiliations persist over time and influences electoral choice.⁵¹

Richardson also compares the European and US party identification and finds that stable partisanship is a genuine 'identification' in Europe.⁵² The difference is attributable to the fact that Europeans are cleavage partisans and have stronger identification properties, which makes it a much stronger influence on voting. Miller and Shanks also argue that partisanship 'is the most enduring of political attitudes, responsible for shaping a wide variety of value and perceptions, and, therefore, an appropriate starting point for any analysis of a partisan political preference.'⁵³

Much of the debate on partisanship overlooks its central purpose. People need a 'standing decision' for most aspects of life in order to negotiate the array of choices and complexities of decision-making in every day life. Partisanship simply serves as an organising device for the voter's political evaluations and judgements, by providing a clear and low-cost information cue. It is an efficient decisional short-cut for voting. Understood as such, partisanship can still provide a common explanatory framework and be usefully applied across different political settings and therefore provides an appropriate starting point for any analysis of a partisan political preference. Numerous international studies continue to use the indicator to tap long-term commitment to parties with success. As Green et al conclude, the rumours of partisanship's death outside the US are greatly exaggerated. The concept remains a distinct and significant methodological variable in electoral studies.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 215.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 198.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 167-9; Eric Schickler and Donald Green, "The Stability of Party Identification in Western Democracies: Results from Eight Panel Surveys," *Comparative Political Studies* 30, 4 (1997): 450-483. Although measurement errors will be found in any party identification question, Green et al say that measurement error in multi-party systems will be more serious because there are more response options. Although there is no standard method for dealing with measurement error in a multiparty context, Green et al suggest analysing measures of party identification as a series of dichotomous variables to accommodate for non-linearity in the data: Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 181.

⁵¹ Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 201; Schickler and Green, 1997.

⁵² Richardson, 38.

⁵³ Warren Miller and Merrill Shanks, *The New American Voter* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1996), 117.

⁵⁴ Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*.

4.3.2 Applicability of partisanship in non-Western and developing countries

Partisanship has been established as a meaningful construct and a valid measurement variable for voting behaviour analyses in non-Western, developing and post-Soviet countries as well as fairly new party systems, such as Japan. The studies I cite below demonstrate that partisanship remains theoretically significant, empirically independent and cross-nationally transferable as a measurement concept. It is therefore inappropriate to conclude that partisanship is a phenomenon particular only to Western or European party system or that the concepts suitability is restricted to these nations.

Post-communist states

Early post-Soviet studies claimed that a substantial proportion of the Russian electorate 'lack any party identification' and that 'the majority are to a significant degree anti-party'.⁵⁵ Post-soviet voters were therefore understood to be largely indifferent or negative towards parties, attracted mainly by the personalities of party leaders, not cognizant of policy differences and unlikely to use partisanship as a voting cue.

Recent studies challenge this view. Brader and Tucker argue that nascent partisanship is visible among a sizeable plurality of the Russian electorate.⁵⁶ Russian voters that could be described as 'core party voters' displayed relatively high levels of partisan stability.⁵⁷ Moreover, they found that levels of partisanship are on the increase.⁵⁸ Miller and Klobucar also insist that partisanship is developing in Russian and Ukraine – where the majority of citizens identify with a party. Using 1998 survey data, they found that '55 percent of the Russian people and 59 percent of Ukrainians believe that there is a party that best represents their views', which led them to conclude that post-Soviet citizens are rapidly developing meaningful partisan attachments.⁵⁹

Developing countries (Latin America)

Scott Mainwaring questions the applicability of the partisanship concept in countries with weakly institutionalised party systems. These systems are characterised by weak party roots in society (weak party identification), instability in patterns of party competition, low levels of legitimacy of parties, and weak party organisation.⁶⁰ In this situation, relying on partisanship as a dependent variable therefore becomes inadequate. Although Mainwaring utilises the

⁵⁵ Stephen White, Richard Rose and Ian McAllister, *How Russia votes* (New Jersey: Chatham House, 1997), 135.

⁵⁶ Brader and Tucker, 78.

⁵⁷ Core party voters are voters whose vote intention, declared before the election, matched their voting choice. Ibid., 72.

⁵⁸ In 1993 core party voters comprised just 34% of the voting electorate, by 1995 nearly 54% of Russian voters comprised core party voters, which indicates that in these years the proportion of core voters in the electorate rose by 20%. Ibid., 72.

⁵⁹ Miller and Klobucar, 670, 684.

⁶⁰ Mainwaring, 26.

concept of party identification in his study of the Brazilian party system, he notes the rapid decline of partisanship among Brazilian voters from 81 percent in 1974 to 48 percent in 1994.⁶¹ He attributes the rapid decline in partisanship and rise in voting volatility to a process of disaffection with the major parties, an inability by new institutions to develop long-term loyalties with the electorate and the electoral legislation which creates incentives for voters to focus on individuals rather than parties.⁶² The lack of stable party preferences and the weak correlations between party identification and the vote causes Mainwaring to suggest that partisanship does not drive voting behaviour in Brazil and has therefore lost some of its meaning as a stable orientation that guides voting behaviour in this particular context.⁶³ While it may be problematic to apply partisanship to a country such as Brazil, another context may offer stronger scholarly possibilities. As we see in Chapter Five, South Africa matches European figures more closely than other emerging democracies and developing countries.⁶⁴ Unlike Brazil, South Africa's political parties have fairly stable societal roots, which have, thus far, structured over a decade of stable political competition. A well institutionalised party system in a young democracy therefore appears sufficient for a study of partisanship.

Asia

Despite the lack of traditional partisan ties among the Hong Kong electorate, Kuan and Lau found that partisan attachments are a powerful determinant of voting behaviour.⁶⁵ Of those that identify or feel close to a party a significant number rely on their partisanship to guide their voting behaviour.

Flanagan et al find that partisanship is a significant factor among the Japanese electorate. As they state, 'party loyalties or party images are the most important predictors of vote choice in Japan.'⁶⁶ Few Japanese voters fit the Michigan partisanship concept neatly due to the lack of emotive ties to their parties. Instead, the Japanese tend to emphasize evaluative elements found in partisanship. They are described as 'negative partisans' since they are high in political cognition but low in affective ties to a preferred party. Nevertheless, partisanship, as a cognitive construct, is on the rise and partisan attitudes are deeper and more widespread thanks to more political information and sophistication.⁶⁷

Eldersveld found that partisanship had utility and meaning in India.⁶⁸ There were strong signs of temporal consistency and stability among the 70 percent of the population who declared

⁶¹ Ibid., 114.

⁶² Ibid., 276.

⁶³ Ibid., 114.

⁶⁴ The percentages of respondents reporting having a party preference are recorded in Chapter five. The chapter also includes a comparative discussion of PID figures cross-nationally. For further comparative analysis see Mainwaring, 30-31.

⁶⁵ Kuan and Lau, 576. It must be noted that they find a low reported level of partisan attachment: 570.

⁶⁶ Flanagan et al., 411.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 438.

⁶⁸ Samuel J. Eldersveld, "Party identification in India in Comparative Perspective", *Comparative Political Studies* 6 (1973): 292.

themselves as party identifiers. Over 50 percent declared themselves to be strong identifiers. Moreover, partisanship penetrated all social sectors and was not confined to urban, western or well-educated sectors of the population. Instead, the strongest identifiers were found among traditional groups such as non-mobile peasants in villages.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Although not as widespread as European or US studies, theories of partisan identification have begun to develop in the region, with some scholars testing voter behaviour in African countries using the partisanship variable. Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi find that a small majority of Africans in sub-Saharan Africa say that they feel close to a political party (57 percent) whereas a large minority insists on remaining non-partisan.⁶⁹ However, partisan identification varies substantially across countries. Of those Africans who identify with a party, twice as many are incumbent supporters.⁷⁰ They find partisanship to be a useful predictor of job performance of elected leaders as well as regime performance.⁷¹ Furthermore, partisan identification is slightly more common among people who evince occupational rather than ethnic identities, suggesting that ethnic divisions are not the only basis of party affiliation.⁷² Norris and Mattes also find partisanship to be a useful analytical tool in their study of twelve African countries.⁷³ In his study of ethnic voting in Zambia, Daniel Posner examines vote choice for ethnic parties.⁷⁴ Closer to home, numerous studies have used partisanship to analyse voting behaviour in South Africa, often finding that an individual's partisan status affects performance evaluations among other things.⁷⁵

In summary, cross-national variations in the levels and types of partisanship do exist, but such variations appear to be a response to contextual factors or issues unique to those countries. As Converse argues, the particular historical path of the development of a party system can affect party loyalties.⁷⁶ Like all political attitudes, partisanship is a response to a particular set of political cues and alternatives.⁷⁷ Specific party or party system characteristics contribute to distinctive types of partisanship.⁷⁸ The strength of partisanship depends on consistency in party lines and individuals' socio-economic circumstances. If parties are inconsistent, if social mobility is high, or new issues become politically salient partisanship may fluctuate randomly.⁷⁹ Discontinuities and instability in partisanship may reflect a breakdown of intergenerational transmission or instability in the party system itself. Stable

⁶⁹ Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi, 257.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 259.

⁷¹ Ibid., 261.

⁷² Ibid., 257.

⁷³ Norris and Mattes.

⁷⁴ Posner, 218.

⁷⁵ Mattes, *The Election Book*; Mattes, Taylor and Africa.

⁷⁶ Philip E. Converse, *Continuity and change in American politics: Parties and issues in the 1968 elections* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Survey Research Center, 1969).

⁷⁷ Richardson, 23.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 21.

⁷⁹ Fiorina, 91.

partisanship on the other hand, can reflect long-term stability within the party system and/or sources of partisan learning including childhood socialisation.

4.3.3 The Conceptualisation of Partisanship

Although its theoretical significance and applicability has been established, the study must still turn to the issue of what is meant by partisanship. A clear conception of the dependent variable is necessary since it lies at the heart of the research. The purpose of conceptualisation or conceptual explication, according to Mouton and Marais, is to specify the central shades of meaning of a concept and the best way of doing this is by conducting a thorough study of the literature on those theories of which the concept forms an integral part.⁸⁰ Scholars present alternative ways of understanding partisanship. One is affective, the others evaluative, ideological and cognitive.

Understood as an affective identification, partisanship is believed to be formed through processes of socialisation and cleavage structuring and stabilises over time. Partisanship is a long-term attitude or loyalty that is largely independent of or insulated from short-term political influences.⁸¹

Understood as an evaluative identification, partisanship is believed to reflect short-term elements which can cause partisanship to change. It may be more of a 'standing decision' at any one point but that is not oblivious to political change, and thus will shift if provided with sufficient information and incentive.⁸²

Finally, understood through a process of cognitive identification, partisanship depends on a voter's access to information and skills. It is theoretically possible that for less cognised voters the nature of partisanship is both an affective tie and a shortcut. For more cognitively mobilised voters partisanship may stem from evaluations of government performance.⁸³ As Sniderman says, 'reasoning can be affect-driven and cognitive-driven at the same time.'⁸⁴ Japanese partisanship is said to have affective and cognitive dimensions, which goes beyond the traditional idea of partisanship as a single dimensional affective tie.⁸⁵

However, the analytical value of the 'partisan identification' concept is evident across all the competing theoretical explanations. These approaches differ only in their understandings of how partisanship or partisanship is 'learned' or 'acquired'. All agree that once acquired, it is a

⁸⁰ Johann Mouton and HC Marais, *Basic Concepts in the Methodology of the Social Sciences* (Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council Press, 1990), 64.

⁸¹ Campbell et al 1960.

⁸² Downs; Fiorina; Flanagan et al., 385.

⁸³ Popkin; Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*. Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution*.

⁸⁴ Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock, 22-23.

⁸⁵ Flanagan et al., 373.

central element in the voting decision. Differing understandings of partisanship are derived from different ways of explaining the sources of voters' attitudes and behaviour.

Since the purpose of this study is to test which of the contending voting theories should inform our understanding of partisanship in South Africa until the results tell us more it is difficult to take a firm conceptual position. At this point, I do not take sides in the debate. In fact, the empirical answers to my fourth research question are meant to tell us which understanding of partisanship is most valid in South Africa.

Nevertheless, I make certain assumptions about partisanship, which can be treated as tentative secondary hypotheses. First, I assume that partisanship is conceptually and analytically distinct from the vote decision. I therefore treat it as a dependent variable and test for associations with other predictor variables, such as government performance evaluations.

Second, I assume that partisanship is best characterised as a voter's 'standing decision' that is constantly updated based on a voter's evolving evaluations of performance, values and skills.⁸⁶ It is flexible – accumulated short term forces can make a difference over longer periods of time, which justifies measuring the influence of political and economic evaluations on partisanship. Partisanship has dynamic properties and is a changeable political orientation.

Third, I assume that partisanship is created initially largely through socialisation, but then maintained (or altered) through information. In other words, it is both a socialised political orientation and a summation of accumulated electoral experiences through one's adult life.⁸⁷ Short-term changes to partisanship can occur based on voter's evaluations of issues and policy, performance and economic management. Partisanship is neither impervious to change nor devoid of political content – it is a running tally of current party assessment. This invites mutual adjustment between political evaluations, party identification, and voting.⁸⁸

People therefore choose to identify with a political party (or with no party) in response to a number of factors, such as their evaluations of economic and political conditions, their values, the images of the parties and their candidates and the voter's cognitive abilities.

4.3.4 The Operationalisation of Partisanship

For any empirical study it is essential that the 'partisanship' concept is rendered measurable, or operationalised.⁸⁹ There are three main aspects of partisanship that can be measured.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ V.O. Key, *The Responsible Electorate* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press, 1967); Fiorina; Popkin; Achen, *Social psychology*; Mattes, Taylor and Africa.

⁸⁷ Dalton and Wattenberg, "The Not So Simple Act of Voting", 197.

⁸⁸ Popkin, 55.

⁸⁹ Mouton and Marais, 64. Operationalisation consists of the development of a measuring instrument by means of which it is possible to obtain accurate data about specific phenomena.

⁹⁰ Weisberg, "Political partisanship", 682.

The first is political independence, which measures whether an individual perceives himself/herself as a partisan or an independent (level of partisanship). The second aspect is the direction of partisanship, or the specific political party with which an individual identifies. The third aspect is the strength (or intensity) of that identification.

The original partisanship scale, developed in the 1950's by the University of Michigan researchers, measures all three aspects. It asks "Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or what"? Responses are usually slotted into a five-point scale that captures intensity of support in their direction, or independence in the mid range. Since then a number of different scales have been developed to operationalise and measure partisanship or 'party identification'.⁹¹

In this study, I use a measure based on the Michigan item, but adapted for a multiparty setting:

1. *'Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular party?'* [Level of partisanship].
2. *'Which party is that?'* [Direction of partisanship: Governing or opposition supporters].
3. *Do you feel very close, somewhat close, or not very close?'* [Strength of partisanship].

The first two questions work in tandem by asking respondents whether they perceive themselves as close to a party to assess whether they are a partisan or independent, and which party they feel closest to measures the direction of partisanship. The third item probes their degree of closeness to that party in order to measure intensity of partisanship.

The party closeness question was developed for use outside of the United States as an explicit attempt to adapt the party identification variable to countries where 'identification' might not be an appropriate concept, and for use in multi-party systems as well as two party systems.⁹² It has been found to be a good measure of long-term partisanship, useful for comparative analyses and is easily used in multi-party systems.⁹³ The open-ended format offered by the closeness scale also caters for the large number of parties in South Africa.⁹⁴ Numerous other studies use variants of the party closeness scale in an endeavor to adapt

⁹¹ A number of different measures focus on the direction of partisanship. These include thermometer-based measures, a scale of party closeness, and a party image scale and related variants. Moreover, some studies use behavioural measures (voting registration) rather than attitudinal measures to determine the direction of partisanship. For a useful overview of alternative measures see Weisberg, "Political partisanship".

⁹² Weisberg, "Political partisanship", 726.

⁹³ Ibid., 695.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 724. Open-ended formats are known for obtaining lower levels of identification than when parties are listed to choose from.

questions to the political system being studied (many being similar to the question items used in this study).⁹⁵

This version follows the Michigan tradition by measuring partisan direction, strength and independence and it has also been found to be consistent with the ANES (American National Elections Studies) party identification scale in that 'the two scales are equivalent in many aspects of the assessment of the direction and the intensity of partisanship.'⁹⁶ In fact, the party closeness scale is said to possess important advantages: among others, it is superior for cross-national comparisons, it clarifies the distinction between partisans and apoliticals, and it can rank respondents in a manner similar to the traditional party identification scale.⁹⁷

An additional advantage of the party closeness scale is that it directs attention of the respondent away from his voting intentions. In contrast, some questions probe a sense of belonging to a social group while other focus more on vote intentions. Green et al argue that items that confuse the two aspects may skew results since questions that draw a voter's attention away from group imagery may invite many non-identifiers to call themselves partisans incorrectly, because they respond to the question with their vote intentions in mind. They find that 'the link between vote intention and party identification is not overwhelming when the latter is measured in ways that focus the respondent's attention away from electoral support'⁹⁸.

Validity and Reliability: Partisanship

A valid measure is one which measures the concept it intended to measure. A reliable measurement is one that obtains the same results on repeated observations holding other things constant. Measurement error is said to exist when indicators lack validity and reliability.⁹⁹ There are different ways in which to assess validity.

Criterion validity:

This approach asks whether responses to the questions predict the things that the theory would lead us to expect. Partisanship's validity is thus measured by focusing on the 'transitivity' of its relationship to other related variables.¹⁰⁰ The validation of partisanship measures can be established by looking at their relationship with the actual vote choice.¹⁰¹ Paul Allen Beck argues that vote regularity over time is probably the most appropriate

⁹⁵ Converse and Pierce's study of partisanship in France; Rose and Mishler's study of partisanship in post-communist countries; Miller and Klobucar's study of post-Soviet societies; Khan and Lau's study of party identification in Hong Kong.

⁹⁶ Samuel Barnes, Kent Jennings, Ronald Inglehart and Barbara Farah. "Party Identification and Party Closeness in Comparative Perspective," *Political Behaviour*, 10, 3 (1988): 221.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 216.

⁹⁸ Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 179.

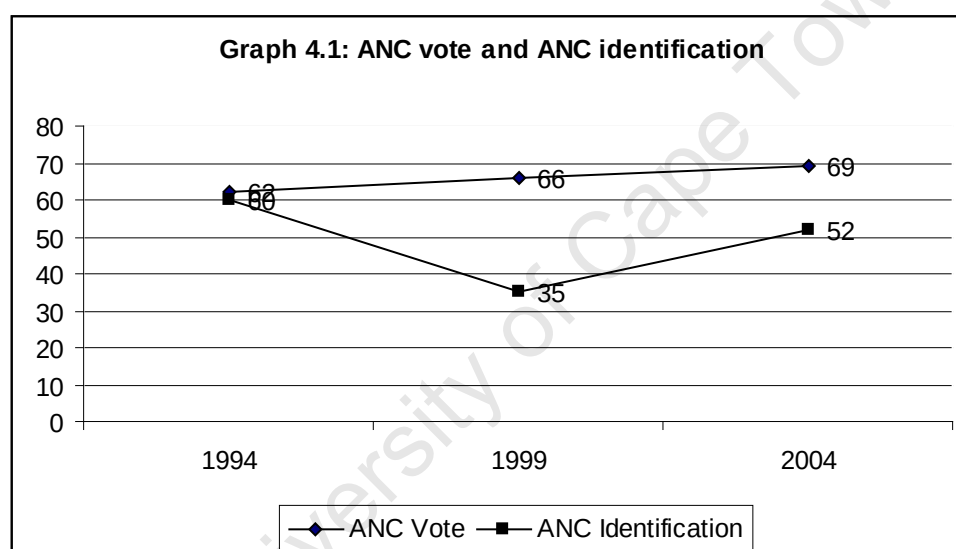
⁹⁹ De Vaus, 52-4.

¹⁰⁰ Weisberg, "Political partisanship", 683.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 683.

criterion variable for party identification because it is least influenced by powerful but temporary election-specific factors.¹⁰² Partisanship should have a high, but not perfect, correlation with the vote; this would demonstrate that it is highly predictive of the vote but remains analytically and empirically independent from the vote.

When I examine the relationship between ANC partisanship and the ANC vote over time it is clear that while there is a profound association between the two, they also remain distinct. This is shown in Graph 4.1. Correlation coefficients also confirm that the party identification item taps long-term identification and not vote choice. In 1995, the Tau-c correlation between party identification and the vote is .823***.¹⁰³ In 2006, the Tau-c correlation between party identification and the vote is .876***.¹⁰⁴ These findings compare with findings from the USA where the Tau-c correlation between party identification and the presidential vote has generally been around .70.¹⁰⁵



Performance evaluations are another useful group of related criterion variables with which to assess the validity of partisanship. Again, one looks for a reasonably high a correlation suggesting that they are related but not in a manner which suggests that partisanship is overly sensitive to short-term factors. As we will see in Chapter Seven, changes in economic and political evaluations correspond with fluctuations in partisanship. In other words, trends in evaluations of economic and political conditions are closely followed by similar fluctuations in partisanship. Moreover, partisanship almost always correlates positively with political and economic evaluations.

¹⁰² Paul Allen Beck, "Choice, Context, and Consequence: Beaten and Unbeaten Paths toward a Science of Electoral Behavior," in *Political Science: The Science of Politics* ed. Herbert F. Weisberg 241-283 (New York, Agathon Press, 1986), 254.

¹⁰³ The question item taps vote choice for the previous 1994 election.

¹⁰⁴ The question item taps vote choice 'if an election were held tomorrow'.

¹⁰⁵ Weisberg, "Political partisanship", 700.

Content validity

From a comparative perspective, all the South African surveys used the internationally standardised 'party closeness scale'. This scale is popular for several reasons stated above - it is particularly suited to a multi-party setting and it directs the respondent's attention away from vote choice.

Reliability

A reliable measure is one where we obtain the same result on repeated occasions. To assess the reliability of the dependent variable we can look at the aggregate levels of partisanship presented in Chapter Five. After the unique 1994 liberation elections, the levels of partisanship appear to be fairly consistent over time, which suggests that responses to the party identification item are fairly consistent over time, and not random. There are, however, several noticeable variations in aggregate levels of partisanship between surveys. Several factors may account for these variations in partisanship over time. First, partisanship should be responsive to changes in presidential approval and the economy (as discussed above).¹⁰⁶ The data in Chapter Seven will show trends in evaluations of economic and political conditions are closely followed by similar fluctuations in partisanship. Second, although the item wording for the party identification item is the same in most surveys, the item wording differs slightly in two surveys; the 1994 survey and the 2004 CNEP survey, seen in Table 4.1. This may give rise to slightly elevated or depressed levels of response in these years.

Table 4.1: Wording of Party Identification Items

Concept	Questions used in South African studies	Deviations in wording
Level of party identification	<i>Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular political party? Yes, No, Don't know.</i>	<i>1994: Regardless of how you actually voted in election day was there one particular political party which you felt especially close to? Which party? Just how close would you say you felt to this party? Did you feel extremely close, fairly close, only somewhat close?</i> <i>CNEP 2004: Do you usually think of yourself as a supporter of a particular political party? Which party is that? How strongly do you support this party? Very strongly; somewhat strongly; not very strongly, not strongly at all.</i>
Direction of party identification	<i>If yes, which party is that?</i>	
Strength of party identification	<i>Do you feel very close to this party, somewhat close, or not very close?</i>	

I conclude that the validity and reliability of the party identification indicator is acceptable. In addition, the sampling frames, methods of sampling and sample sizes across surveys are all sufficiently similar to make comparisons over time valid and reduce sampling error. Any flux found in the partisanship data can be attributed to other political, social and economic events.

¹⁰⁶ Weisberg, "Political partisanship", 683.

Causality

Finally, I include a note on causality. My analysis assumes that the direction of causality is as follows: structural factors, evaluations and perceptions of parties, as well as the cognitive skills of voters all shape partisanship. Although I cannot always exclude the possibility that causality works in the opposite direction, a number of well-reasoned arguments suggest otherwise. First, a potential problem with validity and causality is whether the results are biased by asking party identification questions before items tapping respondents' evaluations and perceptions of parties and government. To avoid biased responses the question order of each survey ensures that the party identification item is located towards the end of the interview after all performance evaluations and related items. Second, if causality did operate in the opposite direction one would expect to find that most, if not all of a party's partisan supporters were overwhelmingly satisfied with its performance. In other words, partisans would use a perceptual screen to filter out all negative information and sentiment to do with their preferred party and offer positive evaluations. To the contrary, as we will see in Chapter Seven, not all the ANC's self-declared supporters express satisfaction with its performance in government. Third, it is illogical and, in fact, impossible that causality can work in an opposite direction with respect to at least one set of important predictor variables, that of ascriptive structural variables. For example, partisanship cannot decide one's race or class position. Finally, numerous similar studies measuring the effects of social and attitudinal variables on partisanship adopt the same implied causality in the structure of the research design and testing.¹⁰⁷ Considering these reasons together it seems far less plausible to assume the reverse direction of causality.

4.3.5 Coding and statistical techniques

The statistics I use in this study are largely determined by the level of measurement of the dependent variable, which imposes certain limitations on one's choice of statistical techniques. The selected statistical techniques are also based on what comparative international studies regard as standard practice.

1. Level of partisanship

The first question '*Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular party?*' is used to sort partisans from non-partisans thereby presenting two (yes / no) categories.¹⁰⁸ The level of measurement of this variable is nominal (categorical) but can be treated as a dummy variable.

¹⁰⁷ Rose and McAllister, *The Loyalties of Voters*, 39. Franklin, Mackie and Valen, 30.

¹⁰⁸ The 'level of partisanship' variable includes only those respondents who declare themselves as partisans (yes) or independents (no). A very small amount of partisans who gave irrelevant responses such as 'refused to answer' or 'confidential' have been excluded in the analyses. However, respondents who answered 'Don't know' have been included in the 'non-partisan' category since it seems likely that if one is unsure about whether they feel close to a party, they are unlikely to be partisans. This study adopts the standard treatment to independence, which is to code as an independent anyone who answers 'no' to question one. Independents can indicate many theoretical possibilities and be measured as a category in various ways. However, this study is not overly concerned with this category and will

2. Direction of partisanship

Self-declared partisans can be further divided into those who support the ANC, and those who support opposition parties. The 'yes' category from question one taps the direction of partisanship using the item: *Which party is that?* A third category includes self-declared independents, or those respondents who declared they are 'not close to a party'. This generic three-category dependent variable is traditionally utilized in voting behaviour studies, and asks respondents whether they identify with the incumbent ANC party or an opposition party, or no party (independent category). I use this three-way dependent variable frequently in cross-tabulations found in Chapter Five.

For the bivariate analysis in Chapters Six to Nine I measure partisanship using the dependent variable ANC vs. non-ANC. In doing so, I include both independents and opposition supporters in the non-ANC category, coded as 0. ANC identifiers are coded as 1. This variable therefore predicts the odds of being an ANC identifier as opposed to a non-identifier or opposition identifier.¹⁰⁹ My reasons for combining opposition identifiers and independents in the bivariate analyses are two-fold: first, for the sake of parsimony and second, because my emphasis in the bivariate analyses is on whether or not voters identify with the incumbent party. In these tests, I am primarily interested in shifts to and from the ANC.

I overcome conceptual or methodological hazards attached to this approach in the multivariate analyses. For the multivariate logistic regression analyses I divide the

not enter into these discussions. The concept is mainly an American one, and questions about it are under utilised in non-US studies. Weisberg, "Political partisanship", 724.

¹⁰⁹ Scott Menard, *Applied Logistic Regression Analysis* (California: Sage Publications, 2002), 47. Logistic regression in SPSS predicts to the second category of the dependent variable (1) thus setting the first category (0) as the reference category. I provide the exponentiated value of Beta (known as odds ratio) in all the logistic regression tables in this thesis to obtain an interpretation in probabilities, as opposed to the Beta coefficient (log odds) which only indicates the effect of a one-unit change in an independent variable on the log odds. According to the literature on logistic regression, odds ratios provide a much more intuitive interpretation than Beta and are therefore the preferred coefficient. In other words, they are interpretable in a straightforward and commonsensical way. The odds ratio is the ratio of two odds. Odds ratios tell us about the amount and direction of change in the odds of some event happening by moving from one to another category. Odds ratios tell us whether a unit change in the independent variable produces an increase or reduction in the odds of being in the second category of the dependent variable. An odds ratio of one leaves the odds unchanged. A coefficient greater than one increases the odds, and a coefficient smaller than one decreases the odds. The coefficients show the ratio of odds for a one-unit increase in the independent variable for continuous variables. Odds ratios for each dummy variable compares to the reference group of that variable. Results can be expressed as percentage increases or decreases. Changes are multiplicative, not additive. See Fred Pampel, *Logistic Regression: A Primer* (California: Sage Publications, 2000), 39; Menard, 53-6. Secondly, the odds ratios provided are unstandardised odds ratios for several reasons. First, SPSS does not routinely compute standardised coefficients. Second, the literature identifies a number of serious complications that exist when standardising odds ratios. See Pampel, 32; Menard, 42. These scholars suggest using unstandardised coefficients, which allows one to compare the effects of the same variables across different samples. Franklin, Mackie and Valen, 22-4, also argue that standardised odds ratios are not appropriate when comparing across surveys since standardisation is carried out relative to the specific sample survey.

partisanship dependent variable into two dichotomous variables.¹¹⁰ Where my emphasis is on identification with the incumbent party or opposition, those who identify with the opposition are coded (0) and ANC identifiers as (1). This variable therefore predicts the odds of being an ANC identifier as opposed to an opposition identifier.

Where my emphasis is on examining differences between ANC identifiers or independents, independents are coded as (0) and ANC incumbents as (1). As I interpret the results using this dependent variable I therefore interpret the effect of independent variables on the probability of supporting the incumbent ANC government compared with being an independent.

Dichotomous coding has implications for the findings. In countries where the incumbent regime is made up of a coalition of parties, no distinction can be made between these parties. In South Africa, my coding cannot indicate identification with (and support for) other alliance members (Cosatu and SACP) rather than the ANC only.¹¹¹ Similarly, in countries that have a multiparty system as opposed to a two-party system (as in South Africa), the coding cannot distinguish support for different opposition parties. Lewis-Beck points out that a dichotomous coding scheme cannot be as comfortably applied to cases like Italy (which has an incumbent coalition and a number of opposition parties) compared to easier cases such as Britain, with its two main parties.¹¹² However, since I am only primarily concerned with movement to and from the ANC and not between opposition parties this constraint is of little relevance.

I compare the coefficients from these two dichotomous dependent variables to see whether there are significant differences between ANC and opposition supporters, and ANC supporters and independents.

3. *Strength of partisanship*

To test the strength of ANC partisan support in Chapter Five I use the item: *Do you feel very close, somewhat close, or not very close?* Each survey sample was filtered to include only ANC partisans. The variable is an ordinal scale variable and coded as follows: *not very close* (1); *somewhat close* (2); and *very close* (3).

While my analysis examines all voters, I focus particularly on the black electorate. Since black citizens make up the vast majority of voters, they are the most important section of the South African electorate.

¹¹⁰ Creating dummy variables for multivariate (logistic regression) analysis using a party identification variable is a well-known method to overcome the problem of measuring party identification in a multi-party context. Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 189.

¹¹¹ However, it is instructive to note that very few respondents have ever cited Cosatu or the SACP as their preferred party.

¹¹² Lewis-Beck, "Comparative Economic Voting".

Table 4.2 summarises the statistical tests, the dependent variable, coding and the survey sample for the various tests.

Table 4.2: Partisanship dependent variables and statistical tests

Statistical tests	Chapter	Dependent variable	Coding	Survey sample	
<i>Cross-tabulations</i>	Chapter 5	Direction of partisanship: 3-category	ANC (1) vs. Independents (2) vs. Opposition (3)	Entire electorate	ANC partisans
		Strength of partisanship	Not very close (1); somewhat close (2); very close (3)	ANC partisans	
<i>Bivariate analyses</i>	Chapters 6-9	Direction of partisanship: 2-category	Non-ANC (0) vs. ANC (1)	Entire electorate	Black African electorate
<i>Regression analyses</i>	Chapters 6-10	Direction of partisanship: 2-category	Opposition (0) vs. ANC (1)	Entire electorate	Black African electorate
		Direction of partisanship: 2-category	Independents (0) vs. ANC (1)	Entire electorate	Black African electorate

In the multivariate analyses binary logistic regression is the appropriate statistical choice for several reasons. Firstly, I was primarily interested in movement to and from the ANC which produced a binary/dichotomous dependent variable (with two categories). Statisticians agree that logistic regression is the model of choice for regression with a dichotomous dependent measure.¹¹³

Secondly, I wanted to make the results of the study comparable to similar studies done elsewhere. At the time of data analysis logistic regression was the preferred statistical choice among many voter behaviour specialists. The coefficients are therefore easily understood as a result of it being a popular technique. Many electoral studies have dichotomised the partisanship variable in a similar fashion with success.¹¹⁴

Moreover, any number of independent variables can be included in the regression. Whereas other statistical techniques, such as discriminant analysis, are not suited to a mixture of continuous or categorical variables, logistic regression allows for a mixture of both continuous and categorical independent variables.

Scholars sometimes treat the partisanship variable as an ordinal or interval scale, which offers the advantage of making partisanship more conducive to linear statistical models.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ See Advanced SPSS training manuals.

¹¹⁴ Franklin, Mackie and Valen, 435; Norris and Mattes, 14-17.

¹¹⁵ Barnes et al (1988) use a seven point scale: 219. Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, demonstrate how the party identification variable can be turned into an ordinal and interval scale, 2002: 193. Two branch questions are added to the party ID stem question (three categories: Rep, Dem and Independent) to allow the three-point scale to become a seven-point scale: 'Would you call yourself a strong (Republican/Democrat) or not very strong (Republican/Democrat)?' and for those who

Ordinal and interval scales enable analysts to differentiate between strong and weak partisans. However, coding methods that assume an equal interval scale have limitations. First, it assumes the gaps between categories of party identification to be equal, which in reality they may not be. Second, measures with 'equal intervals' such as the seven-point measure, are not invariant over time. There is considerable movement in the relative sizes of the categories. The relationship between partisanship and some aspect of political behaviour might appear to change over time when actually it is the measure that is changing.¹¹⁶ Consequently, analyses, which treat partisanship as an equal-interval scale, may be doubly misleading. It is worth noting that many studies fail to find significant differences between the results obtained from the different statistical techniques which employ continuous and binary dependent partisanship variables.¹¹⁷

4.4 Independent variables: Conceptualisation, operationalisation and statistical techniques

The major theoretical families of variables are outlined in the sections that follow. Testing across a number of competing theoretical models of voting behaviour is an accepted practise among scholars. Numerous studies use a similar approach to test groups of theoretical variables.¹¹⁸ In line with similar work elsewhere I use a wide range of bivariate and regression techniques to test the influence of numerous social, performance and other influences on partisanship.¹¹⁹ My choices of statistical techniques are outlined at appropriate points in each empirical chapter.

4.4.1 Sociological and demographic variables

I test the effects of the following sociological factors: race, age, class, ethnicity, and the urban-rural location. These variables (excluding ethnicity) are also used to explain changes to the composition of the ANC's partisan coalition. Although other sociological variables could be argued to be predictors of partisanship I limit the analysis to these variables.

identified themselves as Independents: 'Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican Party or democratic Party?' The scale is designed as follows: Strong Democrats, Weak Democrats, leaning Independents, Independent, Leaning Independent, Weak Republicans, Strong Republicans. Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 57; Rose and McAllister, *The Loyalties of Voters*, (Appendix) use an ordinal variables.

¹¹⁶ Fiorina, 103-5.

¹¹⁷ For example, Lewis-Beck's dichotomised 'party support' dependent variable is subject to both regression and logit analyses with similar results. Lewis-Beck, "Comparative Economic Voting", 157-9; Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, results show little difference if partisanship is treated as an ordinal or continuous variable.

¹¹⁸ For example, see Franklin, Mackie and Valen's (1992) study of numerous European nations which tests social characteristics, demographics, attitudinal concepts and policy preferences. Rose and McAllister, *The Loyalties of Voters*. Their 'Lifetime Learning Model' tests socio-economic interests, values and performance and party images to establish determinants of British voting behaviour.

¹¹⁹ Franklin, Mackie and Valen use regression analysis; Whitefield and Evans conduct a series of logistic regressions, 162; Rose and McAllister, *The Loyalties of Voters*, 42. They use hierarchical stepwise regression analysis. Numerous scholars test the impact of economic variables scholars on partisanship using bivariate cross-tabulations. See Fiorina; Lewis-Beck, "Comparative Economic Voting", 157-9.

Table 4.3: Sociological and demographic question items

Concept	Questions used in South African surveys	Word deviation
Race	Interviewer codes respondent's race by observation. <i>What is the respondent's race?</i>	
Ethnicity	2002, 2004, 2006: Ethnicity is measured by the language question: <i>Which South African language is your home language?</i> 1994; 1995, 1997, 1999, 2000 : <i>What language do you speak mostly at home?</i>	CNEP 2004: <i>Which language do you use most frequently at home?</i>
Age	CNEP 2004, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006: <i>How old were you at your last birthday?</i> 1994, 1995: <i>What was your age at your last birthday?</i> 1997: <i>Please tell me how old you are?</i>	1999: <i>Into which age group do you fall?</i> (4 year intervals)
Class	Class is measured by two questions that tap occupation and employment status: <i>What is your main/current/present occupation?</i> and <i>Do you have a job that pays a cash income?</i>	
Urban-rural	Urban/rural area was measured by the interviewer coding the area as either urban or rural	Surveys from 2002 onwards use urban-rural definition adopted by Statistics South Africa. Surveys prior to 2002 use the definition adopted by Markinor and the All Media Products Survey (AMPS).

In the bivariate and regression analyses the variables are specified as follows: class is coded as: (1) middle class, (2) workers, (3) unemployed, (4) other which includes housewives, students, disabled and pensioners/retired people. The urban/rural divide is coded: (1) urban, and (2) rural. Age is coded: (1) 18-29, (2) 30-44, (3) 45-59, (4) 60 plus. Age is measured as a continuous variable in the regression analyses. Race coded is as follows: (1) Black African, (2) white, (3) Coloured, (4) Indian. Race is coded as follows in the multivariate analysis: (1) Black (2) non-black. Ethnicity is coded as follows: (1) English, (2) Afrikaans, (3) Xhosa, (4) Zulu, (5) Tswana, (6) Sesotho, (7) other.

White refers to people classified as European or white by the apartheid state. Indian refers to people who were originally brought to or came to South Africa from the Indian subcontinent. Coloured refers mainly to people in the Western Cape, some of whom are descendents of the indigenous Khoi or san who inhabited the Cape before the arrival of either white or African people; others are the descendents of 'Malay' slaves brought from India and elsewhere, and others are descendents of relationships between white and African people.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ I borrow this classification from Seekings and Nattrass.

Ethnicity and race are related concepts in that both are usually defined in terms of shared genealogy. However, ethnicity also connotes shared cultural, linguistic, behavioural or religious traits. Ethnicity, or an ethnic group, is defined here as a population of human beings whose members identify with each other on the basis of their common cultural and linguistic traits.

Social stratification and the placing of voters on one or other side of a social cleavage can be problematic and this is especially true for measuring class status in South Africa. Defining the notion of class in an industrialising and post-colonial setting such as South Africa presents conceptual, methodological and operational problems.¹²¹ Often our approaches to class are inappropriately derived from the study of advanced industrial societies of the North.¹²² In addition, South African studies offer competing explanations of what constitutes class. Schlemmer's definition of South African class is quite restricted, whilst Seekings and Nattrass offer a more expansive concept.¹²³ Yet scholars seem to agree that the boundaries of class cannot be mapped with complete authority in that there is no single 'correct' way of mapping or measuring class. Scholars simply have to choose a map or schema that they find most compelling.¹²⁴

Taking into account theoretical considerations, the availability of survey data and the need for parsimony, and standard practice elsewhere, this study adopts occupational categories to measure class.¹²⁵ As Seekings and Nattrass point out, 'Given the overwhelming dependence of South African households on wages as a source of income, occupations must be the starting point for analyses of class in South Africa.'¹²⁶

I divide responses into four main categories using occupational and employment data. The categories are broadly based on Dalton's definition of class: the owner/employer category, the professional/supervisory category, the worker category, and the unemployed or 'underclass'.¹²⁷ The Owner/Employer category includes people who own a business or employ people, the self-employed, managing directors and commercial farmers. This constitutes what Dalton (writing about the established democracies of Europe and North America) has called the 'old middle class', or in Marxist terms, those who own the means of

¹²¹ Southall, "Political change", 521. Seekings and Nattrass, 246.

¹²² Seekings and Nattrass, 236.

¹²³ Schlemmer, "South Africa's new middle class", 116; Seekings and Nattrass, 309.

¹²⁴ Seekings and Nattrass, 236-7. For further discussion of constructing classes in Southern societies see Seekings and Nattrass, 240-1; Seekings, "Perceptions of class and income", 4; Schlemmer, "South Africa's new middle class", 115.

¹²⁵ While few surveys have a variable measuring class or income, all survey tap occupation and employment data. Other studies that use occupational class include Seekings and Nattrass; Seekings, "Perceptions of class and income".

¹²⁶ Seekings and Nattrass, 241.

¹²⁷ Dalton, *Citizen Politics*, 2nd ed.

production.¹²⁸ The Professional/Supervisory category includes office supervisors, industrial foremen, and professionals (lawyers, engineers, doctors). According to Dalton this constitutes the 'new middle class' since these people live middle class lifestyles but do not own the means of production. The Worker category includes non-manual and manual, skilled and unskilled workers, soldiers, police, other security workers and subsistence farmers. The final category includes those who are unemployed, never had a job or have not worked long enough to consider themselves as workers. The unemployed are not a homogenous group in that some are more systematically disadvantaged than others.¹²⁹ However, this category is also meant to tap into the 'underclass' as far as possible to ascertain whether the partisan attitudes and behaviour of the most marginalised economic voters differ substantively to their employed counterparts. I ensure that I tap the 'underclass' as far as possible by cross-checking the occupational variable with a second 'employment status' variable. I select only those respondents who state they are unemployed when asked about both their employment status and job occupation, rather than rely only on the occupational variable.

Limitations attached to occupational data mean that my class measure is very individualistic and pays little attention household income and property.¹³⁰ It does not account for the ways that people's class positions are defined through households as well as through their individual position in the labour market. Of course, the omission of data on household composition means that certain unemployed persons, such as housewives, students, pensioners or disabled people, may actually reside within a middle or upper class household, but be classified as unemployed. To avoid the tricky task of assigning 'mediated class location' to certain individuals such as housewives, students and the disabled many of whom are dependent members of a household and whose economic and class status is unclear (especially when cross-tabulated with other variables such as income), I exclude them from the above categories and assign them to a separate category titled 'other'.¹³¹ I effectively pay little attention to the results for this category while concentrating on the other three class categories. Nevertheless, when one uses occupational categories to determine class categories, results must still be interpreted cautiously.

Class is only useful if it is consequential.¹³² The importance of class should therefore be derived not only from theory but from observable relations between class and other variables. When I cross-tabulate the occupational status variable with the related variable household income I find a reasonable fit and correspondence.¹³³ When analysing class using

¹²⁸ Dalton, *Citizen Politics*, 2nd ed.

¹²⁹ Seekings and Natrass, 280.

¹³⁰ Seekings, "Perceptions of class and income". See further discussion.

¹³¹ For further discussion on 'Mediated class locations' see Seekings and Natrass, 244.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 260.

¹³³ Correlation coefficient of household income and class status: [Idasa Political Culture 1997 study – Eta .485; Cramer's V: .334***]; [Opinion '99 - Eta .385; Cramer's V .317***]; [Afrobarometer 2002: Eta .441; Cramer's V: .369***].

occupational categories in South Africa, Seekings and Nattrass also find a close correlation with a range of other variables, including income, living conditions, education and health.¹³⁴

Rather than using occupation as a measure of social class some scholars use indicators such as trade union membership (seen to identify a core working class), education (a more than minimum education is assumed to identify voters likely to have middle class values) and income (assumed to position people within a class structure).¹³⁵ Because occupational status, income and education are objective measures of class, and do not always affect one's class image, various studies have also employed subjective measures such as left/right self-placement and self-selected class identities.¹³⁶

My choice of sociological variables closely mirrors indicators used in other country studies, namely Britain and European countries, the United States, Canada, post-soviet Russia and Hong Kong. To measure the impact of social structure on voter behaviour in Western countries Franklin and Mackie place voters on one or other side of a social cleavage using Lipset and Rokkan's cleavage framework. The socio-demographic variables they use in their country studies include age, language, urban-rural, occupation and education.¹³⁷ Rose and McAllister measure the effects of family loyalties on voting behaviour using primary influences in the home (parental class and parental party, religion and gender) and intergenerational mobility (age/ generation, and education).¹³⁸ Their measure of class is also based on occupation.¹³⁹ Miller and Klobucar's study of Russia and Ukraine use a number of demographic variables such as age, income quartiles, religion, and ethnic group membership, gender and education to establish which characteristics partisans and non-partisans share in these two countries.¹⁴⁰ Kuan and Lau use the socio-economic variables sex, age, occupation, income, self-perceived class, religion, and education to assess how they structure vote choice in Hong Kong.

4.4.2 Government performance evaluations

A number of related questions measure economic evaluations. The first item asks people about their assessment of the overall direction of the country. The second set of questions test whether South African voters base their evaluations on the performance of the broader national economy (socio-tropic voting) rather than their own personal economic situation (egocentric voting). A third set of questions test whether voters use evaluations of past economic performance (retrospective evaluations) or whether voters rather rely on their expectations for economy's future (prospective evaluations). Finally, 'mediated' retrospective

¹³⁴ Seekings and Nattrass, 270.

¹³⁵ Franklin, Mackie and Valen, 18.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 161.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 432; Franklin and Mackie, 70.

¹³⁸ Rose and McAllister, *The Loyalties of Voters*, chapter 3.

¹³⁹ Ibid., chapter 4; 200.

¹⁴⁰ Miller and Klobucar, 670.

evaluations (MRE's) are tested using an indicator which solicits evaluations of government's economic policy in relation to people's economic circumstances.

I measure political evaluations using a number of questions items. I measure evaluations of various political institutions and actors by using questions relating to approval of job performance. Appraisals of political performance are gleaned from questions relating to levels of trust in various institutions such as parliament and the president. Approval of policy performance uses a question item that asks people about assessments of specific government performance in various areas. This item is divided into two variables. The first taps economic policy and includes responses to the following issues: the economy, jobs, prices, and the income gap. The second taps social services policy and includes responses to the following issues: health, education, welfare, and water.

An additional regime evaluation items tap popular judgments about satisfaction with the current democratic regime.

Table 4.4: Government performance evaluations question items

Concept	Questions used in South African surveys	Word deviation
Economic evaluations		
Overall direction of the country	<i>What about the overall direction of the country? Would you say that the country is: Going in the right direction, Going in the wrong direction, Don't know.</i>	1994: <i>Did you feel that overall conditions in South Africa had been getting worse, getting better or remained the same?</i> 1995: <i>Please tell me, whether over the past 12 months, overall conditions in South Africa have got worse, stayed the same, or got better?</i> 1997: <i>At the moment, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with overall conditions in South Africa?</i>
Sociotropic evaluations	2002, 2004, 2006: <i>In general, how would you describe: A. The present economic conditions of this country? Very good/ fairly good/ neither/ fairly bad/ very bad/ don't know.</i> 1997, 1999, 2000: <i>At the moment, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with overall economic conditions in South Africa?</i>	1994: <i>Did you feel that the general economic situation in South Africa had been getting worse, better or remained the same?</i> CNEP 2004: <i>How would you describe the country's economic situation at the time of the election?</i>
Egocentric evaluations	<i>In general, how would you describe your own present living conditions? Very good/ fairly good/ neither/ fairly bad/ very bad/</i>	1994: <i>Did you feel that your personal financial condition in South Africa had been getting worse, better or remained the same?</i>

	<i>don't know.</i>	1997, 1999: <i>At the moment, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your overall personal conditions in South Africa?</i> 2000: <i>Would you say your personal economic conditions are worse, the same, or better than other South Africans?</i>
Retrospective evaluations (sociotropic and egocentric)	<i>Looking back, how do you rate the following compared to twelve months ago? A. Economic conditions in this country? B. Your living conditions? Much worse, Worse, about the same. Better, much better, don't know.</i>	1995: <i>Please tell me, whether over the past 12 months, the state of economy in the country/ economic conditions in your local community has got worse, stayed the same, or got better?</i> 1997, 1999: <i>Would you say that overall economic conditions in SA/ personal conditions are better or worse now than one year ago, or are they about the same.</i> 2000: <i>How do economic conditions in SA now compare to one year ago? Much worse, Worse, about the same. Better, much better, don't know.</i>
Prospective evaluations	<i>Looking ahead, do you expect the following to be better or worse? A. Economic conditions in this country in twelve months time? B. Your living conditions in twelve months time? Much worse, worse, about the same. Better, much better, don't know.</i>	1995: <i>what about the next twelve months? Do you expect things in SA to get better, worse, or stay the same?</i> 1997: <i>Do you expect your personal conditions in SA to be better, or worse in twelve months time than they are now, or about the same?</i> 1999: <i>Do you expect your overall economic conditions in SA/ personal conditions to be better, about the same, or worse in twelve months?</i> 2000: <i>Do you expect economic conditions in SA in twelve months time to be worse, the same, better than they are now?</i>
Mediated retrospective evaluations	<i>The government's economic policies have helped most people, only a few have suffered.</i>	
Regime evaluations		
Satisfaction with democracy	<i>2000-2006: Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in South Africa? Very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, not at all satisfied, South Africa is not a democracy, don't know.</i>	1995: <i>On the whole, are you satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in South Africa?</i> 1997: <i>How satisfied are you with the way democracy works in South Africa? Very satisfied, satisfied,</i>

		<i>neither satisfied or dissatisfied, dissatisfied, very dissatisfied, don't know.</i>
Political evaluations		
Approval of job performance	2002-2006: <i>Do you approve or disapprove of the way that the following people have performed their jobs over the last twelve months or haven't you heard enough about them to say? A. President Mbeki; B. Members of Parliament; C. Members of the Provincial Legislative Assembly; D. Premier; E. Local government councillor.</i> 2000: <i>What about the way President Mbeki/ Parliament/ The Premier/ your local government has performed their job over the past twelve months? Strongly disapprove; disapprove; approve; strongly approve; haven't heard enough about them to know.</i>	1995, 1997: <i>We would like to know whether you approve or disapprove of the way each of the following has performed its job over the past year: President Nelson Mandela; Government of national Unity; the national Parliament; the government of this province. Strongly approve; approve, disapprove, strongly disapprove, don't know.</i> 1999: <i>How well do you think President Nelson Mandela/ the Premier of this province is performing their job? Very well; fairly well; not very well; not at all well; do not know.</i>
Trust in President and Parliament	2002-2006: <i>How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? The President/ Parliament? Not at all; a little bit; a lot; very great deal; don't know.</i> 2000: <i>How much of the time can you trust President Mbeki/ Parliament to do what is right? Never; only some of the time; most of the time; just about always; or haven't you heard enough about them to know?</i>	The equivalent item for 1995 asks about trust in National government: <i>About how much of the time do you think you can trust national government to do what is right? Just about always; most of the time; some of the time; never; don't know</i> 1997: <i>How much of the time can you trust national parliament/ state president to do what is right? Just about always; most of the time; only some of the time; never; don't know.</i>
Approval of economic & social services policy performance	2000-2006: <i>How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? Very badly; fairly badly; fairly well; very well; don't know/haven't heard enough.</i> Economic issues: <i>economy, jobs, prices, and the income gap</i> Social services issues: <i>health, education, welfare, and water</i>	The equivalent indicator for 1999 is an 11-point index/ scale that taps government performance in the specific policy areas. <i>How well would you say government is handling each of the following: very well; fairly well; not very well; not at all well; don't know.</i> Economic issues: <i>unemployment, economy</i> Social services issues: <i>education, health and social services</i>

Variables are coded so that low scores are equivalent to negative evaluations. The higher scores indicate positive evaluations of government performance. For both the bivariate and regression analyses the variable specification and coding is as follows: overall direction of the country: (1) wrong direction, (2) don't know, (3) right direction; sociotropic and egocentric

economic evaluations: (1) very bad, (2) fairly bad, (3) neither, (4) fairly good, (5) very good; retrospective and prospective economic evaluations: (1) Much worse, (2) worse, (3) same, (4) better (5) much better, and mediated evaluations: (1) Disagree strongly, (2) disagree, (3) agree, (4) agree strongly.

Satisfaction with democracy is coded as follows: (1) not at all satisfied, (2) not very satisfied, (3) fairly satisfied, (4) very satisfied. Approval of job performance: (1) strongly disapprove, (2) disapprove, (3) approve, (4) strongly approve. Trust in President and Parliament: (1) not at all, (2) just a little, (3) somewhat, (4) a lot. Approval of economic and social services policy performance: (1) very badly, (2) fairly badly, (3) fairly well, (4) very well.

My variables are closely reflected in other studies that examine economic and political evaluations. Lewis-Beck presents a sophisticated analysis of economic voting using eleven economic items.¹⁴¹ He prioritizes six items that represent the four key dimensions of economic voting which, he argues, should be adequately measured and included in a properly specified voting model, or the strength of economic voting will be underestimated. These items measure personal simple retrospective evaluations using a 'household financial situation' item,¹⁴² personal mediated retrospective evaluations using a 'government and household finances' item,¹⁴³ collective simple retrospective evaluations,¹⁴⁴ collective mediated retrospective evaluations,¹⁴⁵ prospective evaluations,¹⁴⁶ and finally, affective evaluations.¹⁴⁷

Comparing Lewis-Beck's items with those used in this study it is clear that retrospective, current and prospective evaluations are covered in my analysis, with each testing for personal (egocentric) and collective (socio-tropic) voting. While 'mediated' retrospective evaluations are tested, they are not probed directly. Some scholars warn that this may have implications for the study because personal retrospective evaluations are the least likely to show economic or pocketbook voting.¹⁴⁸ Economic voting is more detectable when respondent evaluations are mediated by taking the role of government into account. For instance, pocket

¹⁴¹ Lewis-Beck, "Comparative Economic Voting", 158-159.

¹⁴² *'How does the financial situation of your household now compare with what it was 12 months ago? Got a lot better, got a little better, stayed the same, got a little worse, got a lot worse?'*

¹⁴³ *'And now, compared with a year ago, would you say that the government's policies have had a good effect, a bad effect, or that they really have not made much difference with respect to the financial situation of your household?'*

¹⁴⁴ *'How do you think the general economic situation in this country has changed over the last twelve months?'*

¹⁴⁵ *'Compared with a year ago, would you say that the government's policies have had a good effect, a bad effect, or that they really have not made much difference with regard to the country's general economic situation?'*

¹⁴⁶ *'Do you think that, a year from now, the government's policies will have improved the country's general economic situation, will have made it worse, or that they will not have made much difference one way or another?'*

¹⁴⁷ *'Do you ever feel angry about the way the present government is handling the economy? Does it happen always, sometimes, seldom or never?'*

¹⁴⁸ Fiorina, 120, 128-9. Fiorina's results found a weak or non-existent relationship between individuals' perceptions of their changing financial situation and the vote. Also see Lewis-Beck, "Comparative Economic Voting", 182.

book voting is most likely to be observed when personal economic circumstance is assessed in conjunction with government's impact on it.

Fiorina taps evaluations of economic conditions using a personal financial item,¹⁴⁹ an evaluation of government economic policy,¹⁵⁰ and a generalised evaluation of domestic affairs,¹⁵¹ which show weak or moderate relationships to the vote decision. Other items include the 'most important problem' question. Rose and McAllister use a similar item to this study to assess specific government performance in various areas study.¹⁵² Fiorina also taps evaluations of presidential performance,¹⁵³ and uses political trust items.¹⁵⁴

Political evaluation items mirror those used in studies in North America, Western Europe and central and Eastern Europe, and South Korea.¹⁵⁵ Questions in these country studies tap regime performance,¹⁵⁶ institutional performance evaluations of the president and politicians.¹⁵⁷

4.4.3 Party Images and social networks

Evaluations of party images and attributes are measured using questions that ask people whether they see political parties as representative of the interests of all South Africans or exclusive and representative of only one specific group. Items also tap the extent to which voters trust parties.

To measure the impact on partisanship of information networks and the immediate social context I use the Comparative National Elections Project (CNEP) 2004 survey which includes a battery of items that measure people's information networks by asking respondents about regular political discussants, including their spouse, and their political affiliations. These items are used globally in the CNEP survey.

In the analyses the variable specification and coding is as follows: Party inclusiveness scale: (-1) exclusiveness (0) don't know (+1) inclusiveness. Party trustworthiness scale: (-1) untrustworthy (0) don't know (+1) trustworthy. The trust item in CNEP 2004 is as follows: (1)

¹⁴⁹ 'During the last few years has your financial situation been getting better, getting worse, or has it stayed the same?' Center for Political Studies (CPS) Election Studies.

¹⁵⁰ 'As to the economic policy of the government- I mean steps taken to fight inflation or unemployment – would you say the government is doing a good job, only fair, or a poor job?' from CPS.

¹⁵¹ 'In the past year or so would you say that things in general have been going along better than they were before, not as well as before, or have they stayed about the same?' CPS

¹⁵² 'How well or badly do you think the Conservative government handled each of the following issues?' Rose and McAllister, *The Loyalties of Voters*, 130.

¹⁵³ 'Do you approve or disapprove of the way – is handling his job as President?'

¹⁵⁴ Fiorina, 58. *Government run for all or few; are officials competent or incompetent; tax waste (little, some, lots); officials crooked (few, some, lots); trust government always, mostly, sometimes, never.*

¹⁵⁵ Pippa Norris, *Critical citizens: Global support for democratic governance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 16-21.

¹⁵⁶ Eurobarometer: "Are you very satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy is functioning in your country?"

¹⁵⁷ See comparable items in Norris, *Critical citizens*, 271-2.

Not at all, (2) not very much, (3) quite a lot, and (4) a great deal. The trust item in Opinion '99 is as follows: (1) never (2) some of the time (3) most of the time (4) just about always.

Frequency of political discussion: (1) never, (2) occasionally, (3) frequently. The spouses partisanship is coded (1) ANC, (2) opposition, (3) independent. The congruence scale is coded (1) homogenous partisan environment, (2) don't know, (3) pluralistic partisan environment.

Table 4.5: Party images and social network question items

Concept	Questions used in South African surveys	Word deviation
Party image evaluations		
Inclusiveness of parties	<i>Does X political party look after interests of all in South Africa or after the interests of one group only? Which group?</i>	
Trust in parties	<i>Please tell me how much of the time you feel you could trust X party to do what is right if it ran the government?</i>	CNEP 2004: <i>How much do you trust each of the following political parties, or haven't you heard enough about them to say?</i>
Social networks		
Frequency of discussion with regular political discussants	<i>How frequently did you talk about the candidates, parties or issues with your: A. Family B. Friends C. Neighbours D. Co-workers. How often do you talk to your spouse/partner about the recent election?</i>	
Political affiliations of regular political discussants	<i>Do you think that each of these groups supported the same party as you, supported another party, or is their support divided among several different parties, or don't you know enough about their views to say? A. Family B. Friends C. Neighbours D. Co-workers.</i>	

The party image items operationalised in Western countries tap a number of impressions. In British studies, Rose and McAllister use an item similar to the two Idasa and the CNEP party image items, which ask respondents to make a series of choices between pairs of terms that can describe parties. Two of these choices are relevant since they tap representivity, exclusivity and unity: one focuses on whether a party is good for all classes or for one; the other asks whether a party unites or divides the nation.¹⁵⁸ Butler and Stokes asked respondents to place the parties on scales designed to assess how the parties were seen in terms of simple image properties, such as 'old/ young', 'dull/ exciting' or 'out of date/ modern'.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁸ Rose and McAllister, *The Loyalties of Voters*, 133.

¹⁵⁹ Butler and Stokes, *Political change in Britain* 2nd ed. 1974, 341-347.

Open-ended questionnaires have been used to study party images in the United States. Respondents were asked to list what they like and dislike about both political parties.¹⁶⁰ Wattenberg also used open-ended questionnaires to establish what respondents liked and disliked about the major parties in comparing four countries' partisanship and party images.¹⁶¹

4.4.4 Cognitive Mobilisation

I measure levels of cognitive awareness by using items that ask generally about political awareness such as a voter's attention to and interest in politics. Items that ask about people's political knowledge, their media usage and their skills (education) measure levels of cognitive sophistication.

Variables are coded so that low scores are equivalent to low levels of education, low amounts of information, and low levels of political engagement or interest in politics. The higher the score the more cognitive engagement occurs.

The coding is as follows: Follow politics: (1) Hardly at all (2) Sometimes (3) most of the time. Interest in politics: (1) not interested, (2) somewhat interested, (3) very interested. Frequency of political discussion: (1) never, (2) occasionally, (3) frequently. Political knowledge is as follows: (1) Don't understand, (2) neither, (3) understand. Media usage: (1) never (2) occasionally (3) frequently. Education: (1) no education (2) some education (3) a formal education including matriculation and/ or tertiary education.

Dalton states that 'cognitively mobilized' voters are those who possess both the skills *and* psychological motivation to grapple with the complexities of politics on their own.¹⁶² To make this concept relevant to the South African case, and to ensure a working sub-sample of cognitively mobilized voters, I operationalise 'cognitive mobilisation' by using two indicators: those who have completed high school matriculation (education) *and* those who were very interested in politics. The 'cognitive mobilisation' variable is coded as follows (1) cognitively mobilised, (2) not cognitively mobilised.

¹⁶⁰ See Matthews and Prothro (1966) and Trilling (1976). The questionnaires asked: *I'd like to ask you what you think are the good and bad points about the two national parties: Is there anything in particular that you like about the Democratic Party? (If yes,) What is that? Anything else? Is there anything in particular that you don't like about the Democratic Party? (If yes,) What is that? Anything else? Is there anything in particular that you like about the Republican Party? (If yes,) What is that? Anything else? Is there anything in particular that you don't like about the Republican Party? (If yes,) What is that? Anything else?* The net party image index is calculated by taking the net score for the Democratic party (number of likes about Democrats – number of dislikes about Democrats) and subtracting the net score for the Republican party (number of likes about Republicans – number of dislikes about Republicans). The index is divided into five categories: (0) Strongly pro-Democratic (3 and up); (1) Mildly pro-Democratic (2 to 1); (2) Neutral; (3) Mildly pro-Republican (-1 to -2); (4) Strongly pro-Republican (-3 and down).

¹⁶¹ Martin P Wattenberg, "Party Identification and Party Images: A Comparison of Britain, Canada, Australia, and the United States," *Comparative Politics* 15, 1 (1982): 23-40, 29. The party image variable was constructed by subtracting the number of negative comments from the number of positive ones and classifying it into either positive, neutral, or negative towards each of the major parties. A six-fold classification was created for each country to represent how respondents see the parties.

¹⁶² Dalton, "Partisan mobilisation", 5; Dalton, "Cognitive Mobilisation and Partisan Dealignment", 267.

Table 4.6: Cognitive mobilisation question items

Concept	Questions used in South African surveys	Word deviation
Follow politics	1995, 1999: Do you follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, some of the time, only now and then, or hardly at all? 1997: Would you say you follow what goes on in government and politics always, some of the time, rarely, never? 2000: Would you say you follow what goes on in government and politics always, some of the time, only now and then, hardly at all?	
Interest in politics	How interested would you say you are you in public affairs? Very interested, somewhat interested, not interested, not at all interested, don't know?	CNEP 2004: More generally, how interested are you in politics? Very, somewhat, not interested?
Frequency of political discussion	When you get together with friends or family, would you say you discuss political matters frequently, occasionally or never, don't know?	2002: Have you discussed politics with friends or neighbors in the past year? Yes, often; Yes, several times, Yes, once or twice; No. CNEP 2004: How frequently did you talk about the candidates, parties or issues with your family and friends (during the election campaign)?
Political knowledge	Politics and government sometimes seem so complicated that you can't really understand what is going on. Strongly agree; agree; neither; disagree; strongly disagree; don't know.	1995: Some people say that what goes on in government is so complicated that people like themselves can't really understand what is going on. Other people say that they feel that they have a pretty good understanding of what goes on in government. What would you say about your understanding goes on in national government? Very/ somewhat complicated; in-between; somewhat/very understandable; don't know.
Media usage	How often do you get news	The items in Opinion 99 and CNEP 2004

	<i>from the following sources? Radio, Television, Newspapers. Every day; a few times a week; a few times a month; less than once a month, never, don't know.</i>	differ to the extent that they are not comparable and are excluded.
Education	<i>What is the highest level of education that you have completed?</i>	1994; 1995: <i>what is your highest educational qualification?</i> 1997: <i>What is your highest level of education that you have passed?</i> 2000: <i>what was the highest grade, standard, or form you completed?</i>

These variables reflect choices made in other studies. Popkin measures the cognitive abilities and skills of voters by emphasizing educational levels while political information is measured using exposure to campaigns, the news media and information sourced from daily life.¹⁶³ Fiorina uses items that tap political interest, information and resources (education) to measure the cognitive skills of voters.¹⁶⁴ Some scholars deviate slightly from conventional methods in the way they conceptualise and operationalise cognitive mobilization. Khan and Lau's Hong Kong study of voter behaviour measures cognitive ability using an item that taps political information.¹⁶⁵

We now turn to the empirical chapters to test the major theoretical approaches to voting behaviour.

¹⁶³ Popkin.

¹⁶⁴ Fiorina, 49-53.

¹⁶⁵ Khan and Lau, p. 571.

Chapter 5

The Partisan Responses of Social Groups

In this chapter I first look at the overall trends and patterns in South African partisanship over time. I test for three general types of electoral phases. The first phase, stable alignment, is marked by normal electoral periods where there is stability in party coalitions and aggregate partisan equilibrium.¹ Short-term volatility may occur but thereafter loyalties return to the status quo. These periods of overall stability mean that no significant changes are found over time to the coalitional basis of long-term support for parties. The second phase is a partisan realignment, which may be defined as a change in the partisan loyalty of a significant group of voters, with the result that the composition of party coalitions changes.² Finally, dealignment refers to a period of electoral change during which the partisan portion of the electorate shrinks as the traditional party coalitions weaken or dissolve.³ In other words, realignments or dealignments are described as a shift or downturns in partisanship respectively, as public perceptions about parties alter.⁴ All three electoral phases focus on the long term bases of party support and are differentiated by the condition of party loyalties.

I also explore the level and direction of partisan support among the entire electorate and the strength of partisan support for the African National Congress. I then examine changes to the demographic support base of the ANC by focusing on the partisan responses of important social groups. I test for changes in the level, direction and strength of partisan support shown towards ANC by age, race, urban-rural and class groups. In doing so, I scrutinize conventional wisdom which argues that the ANC attracts overwhelming, active and uncritically loyal support from the black African population.⁵ As Seekings says, 'Most commentaries on the 1994 elections tended to attribute voting patterns to race alone. In some accounts, racial factors rendered African voters so blindly loyal to the ANC that they disregarded their supposed interests.'⁶ By their own admission, shortly after the 2004 elections, the ANC's National Research Unit commented on the 'high levels of enthusiasm and very high levels of turnout' which 'can be generalized to African townships throughout most of the country.'⁷

¹ Dalton, Flanagan and Beck, *Electoral change*, 11; Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 139

² Dalton, Flanagan and Beck, *Electoral change*, 13.

³ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁴ Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 139.

⁵ See Hermann Giliomee, James Myburgh and Lawrence Schlemmer, "Dominant Party Rule, Opposition Parties and Minorities in South Africa," in *Opposition in South Africa's New Democracy*, Conference Papers, hosted by Department of Political Studies, Rhodes University and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. June 2000, 37-50. http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_5086-544-2-30.pdf

⁶ Jeremy Seekings, "Review: South Africa's 1999 Elections," *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 27, 1 (2001): 163-166, 164.

⁷ Michael Sachs, "The 2004 Election," Research paper, ANC National Research Unit, 2004. <http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/pubs/umrabulo/umrabulo21/election2004.html>.

These longitudinal analyses of partisanship among the entire electorate and within social groups therefore address the first three research questions.

My findings will reveal that the level of partisanship in South Africa between 1994 and 2006 has fluctuated considerably, and far more than is often acknowledged. First, partisanship decreased for all political parties. Both the ANC and opposition parties have 'leaked' partisans to the independent category, which increased dramatically over time. This has created larger numbers of potential 'floating voters' who are not overtly loyal to one particular political party, nor guided by long-standing partisan ties when deciding which party to support at elections. Yet, new independents appear to disproportionately come from the opposition parties, which experienced a much higher rate of decline than the ANC. This development can be best described as 'asymmetrical partisan dealignment', as voters moved away from feeling close to a particular party but more so from the opposition. There was little to no shift of allegiance across party lines by racial and other social groups. Rather than voters moving their support from one political party to another, partisanship has simply declined.

Secondly, in spite of all the socioeconomic changes that were discussed in the introduction, there is remarkably little change in the ANC's electoral coalition. Instead, rural, unemployed or poor, working class Africans continue to support the party in the face of rising inequality. Having said this, support among social groups for the ANC shows tentative and subtle signs of change. Black African voters are consistently more likely to be party identifiers than other race groups but the high numbers of independents among black Africans suggests that as this group expands they may be approaching a size where it will have to be taken more seriously as a factor in future electoral realignments. Rural voters are more likely to support the party than their urban counterparts. There is increased support from the middle classes while workers and the unemployed show early signs of partisan decline. And, voters may start to become less politically aligned as the electorate becomes younger over time. Subtle signs of electoral volatility coupled with the dealignment trend suggest two things: the ANC's support base may become less broad based, as the party becomes increasingly reliant on specific segments of the public for its electoral support, and that structural cleavages, created during apartheid, do not over-determine voter behaviour.

5.1 Aggregate distributions of partisanship in South Africa

Using survey question that measure the concept of party identification, this section taps macropartisan movements, or the behaviour of partisanship in the aggregate over time. An aggregate descriptive analysis is essential to the study for several reasons. Observing overall macropartisan movement allows one to assess patterns of partisan stability, realignment or dealignment. Second, aggregate analysis allows us to monitor and understand the fluctuations and changes to partisanship caused by shifts in individual behaviour and 'time shocks' (events during and between election campaigns such as sudden economic downturn,

scandals or other events that affect the popularity of governing and opposition parties) which come to be reflected in and affect partisanship over time.⁸ It should be emphasized that aggregate changes in partisanship cannot tell us about individual level or group shifts. These will be addressed subsequently in this and following chapters. Nevertheless, an examination of macropartisanship prepares the way for the following analyses, which investigate micro motivations of voters and any changes therein, thereby allowing for the micro level and macro level analysis to fit together in a consistent fashion. The tables and graphs found in this chapter are compiled using separate cross-tabulations run for each survey year.⁹

5.1.1 Levels of partisanship: partisans vs. non-partisans

Table 5.1 displays the level of partisanship over time, distinguishing between adults who declare themselves partisans and those who are non-partisans (or independents). As expected, there are signs of dealignment with partisanship generally decreasing over time until 2002 when it rises again. After initially high levels of partisanship after the historic 1994 'liberation' election, the proportion of partisans in the electorate declined significantly and then fluctuated between 70 and 45 per cent over the following twelve years. After 1994 no more than 64 per cent of the population has ever stated that they feel close to a political party until 2006 when it rose again to 70 percent. By end of 2004 the percentages of partisans and independents were almost equal in number, with partisans constituting only 53 per cent of the electorate. By 2004, just ten years into democracy, almost half the electorate were not overly loyal to any particular political party, and thus are unguided at election time by long-standing partisan ties when deciding which party to support, suggesting that short-term forces influence party support.

Variations within aggregate distributions of partisanship need to be accounted for. First, slight deviations in the party identification question item in the 1994, 2002 Afrobarometer and 2004 CNEP surveys may account for the variation. In 1994, while unique wording may account for the high levels of partisanship it is more likely that it is attributable to the high level of emotion associated with the 'Uhuru' election. The level and direction of party identification question items in the 2002 Afrobarometer survey was collapsed into one item which may have affected the results for this year by over-emphasizing partisanship, while the CNEP item taps support rather than closeness, thus accounting for the dip in partisanship. I remove CNEP 2004 from Graph 5.1 because this item is most incomparable with the other surveys, and tends to distort

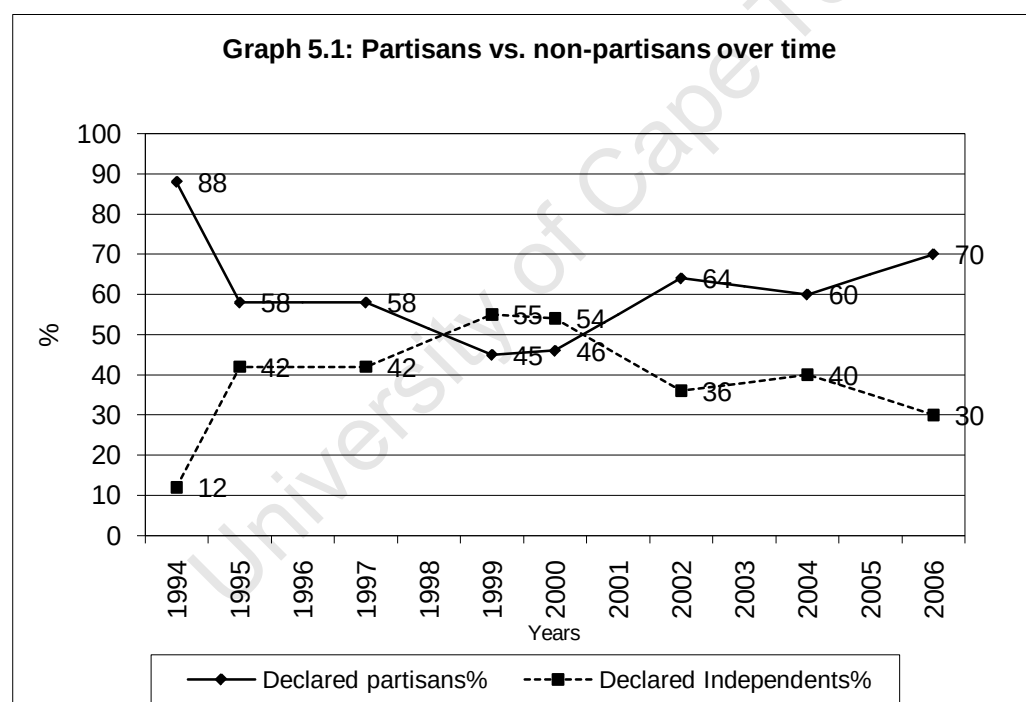
⁸ Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 87.

⁹ The Chi-square based Cramer's V was selected as the appropriate summary statistic / coefficient to describe the relationship between the variables. The level of measurement of the dependent variables (level, direction and strength of PID, as well as the independent variables (race, urban-rural, class) are all nominal (except age which is ordinal but can be treated as nominal). Furthermore, Cramer's V should be used when one of the variables has three or more categories, which applies to most of the variables used here. However, a significant disadvantage of Cramer's V is that its coefficient cannot be reliably compared between tables of different sizes. See De Vaus, 258-61. The appropriate inferential statistic / test of significance (P-value) are also reported. Other studies, such as Miller and Klobucar's study of Russia and Ukraine also use cross-tabulation statistics to show the distribution of partisans using demographic and social variables.

overall patterns, by showing a decline in patterns before the sudden increase in 2006. The rise in party identification in 2006 can be attributed to campaign mobilization for the 2006 local government elections, which took place in 1 March 2006. Afrobarometer 2006 was conducted in February 2006. Generally, one can expect some political withdrawal between elections which is not necessarily permanent. As elections draw near lost voter interest will be re-stimulated.

Table 5.1: Distribution of Partisans and Non-partisans over time %¹⁰

Years	Partisans	Non-Partisans	Confidence interval	Total
1994	88	12	1.3%	100
1995	58	42	2%	100
1997	58	42	1.7%	100
1999 ¹¹	45	55	2%	100
2000	46	54	2%	100
2002	64	36	2%	100
2004	60	40	2%	100
2004 ¹²	53	47	2.8%	100
2006	70	30	2%	100
Average ¹³	60	40	-	100



¹⁰ The 'level of partisanship' variable includes only those respondents who declare themselves as partisans (yes) or independents (no) and exclude irrelevant responses such as 'confidential' and 'refused to answer'. However, respondents who answered 'Don't know' have been included in the 'non-partisan' category since it seems likely that if one is unsure about whether they feel close to a party, they are unlikely to be partisans.

¹¹ Opinion 99 Nyulo 1 survey is used because it was conducted in September 1998 and is furthest from the time of the 1999 national election. It is therefore less influenced by election effects, thus reflecting more normal partisan trends.

¹² The second 2004 category represents the CNEP survey done later in 2004, while the first 2004 category represents data from the Afrobarometer survey done earlier in the same year. The CNEP survey is excluded from the second section in this chapter which examines ANC support among social groups for consistency across the Afrobarometer surveys.

¹³ All averages over time in this section are mean averages.

Finally, there is a 95 percent chance that the wider South African population mean will fall within 2 percentage points of the reported figures in Table 5.1.¹⁴ It is unclear how much of the difference between years is the result of using different data sets and how much is due to methodological issues but the magnitude of the year-on-year variation found here is unlikely to reflect measurement error rather than actual trends. The range of variation is far larger than sampling error.¹⁵

Partisanship in South Africa compares with European data more closely than in other emerging democracies. In most western European countries, between 60 and 70 per cent of voters identify at least somewhat with a party, though this figure has declined in recent decades. In Southern Europe in 1989 partisanship ranged from 30 per cent in Spain, to 63 per cent in Italy.¹⁶ In Latin America, partisanship was 67 per cent in Uruguay, 38 per cent in Argentina; 36 per cent in Chile; 33 per cent in Venezuela; and 33 per cent in Brazil.¹⁷ Only 22 per cent of the Russian electorate identify with a party, while 40 per cent do so in the Czech Republic, 30 per cent in Slovakia, 20 per cent Hungary and only 15 per cent in Poland.¹⁸ As Mainwaring states, 'in virtually all of the advanced industrial democracies, most voters have a party preference, whereas in many third wave democracies, the great majority do not.'¹⁹ The exception is India where 70 percent of the population has declared themselves as party identifiers and over 50 percent declared themselves to be strong identifiers.²⁰ Since 1995, non-partisans, or independents, have fluctuated between 30 percent and 55 percent in South Africa, amounting to more than found in the UK (10 percent) or Germany (30 percent), but similar to that of France and the United States (approximately 40 percent respectively).²¹

The relatively high instances of partisanship in South Africa indicate a well-institutionalized party system. Both Eastern European post-Communist citizens and South Africans have short-lived experiences with democracy, yet post-Communist countries have struggled to develop similarly stable and reliable partisanship. Again, Brazil's political parties have

¹⁴ Probability theory tells us that for 95 percent of samples the population mean will be within ± 2 standard errors of the sample mean. We can therefore estimate within a confidence interval what the population mean is likely to be. De Vaus, 232.

¹⁵ I discuss measurement error in Chapter Four and conclude that the validity and reliability of the party identification measure is such that measurement error is minimised due to the use of similar wording across surveys; and the use of the international standard 'party closeness scale' which is suited to a multi-party setting and by directing attention away from vote choice. The sampling frame, method of sampling and sample size are all sufficiently similar to make comparisons over time valid and reduce sampling error.

¹⁶ Hermann Schmitt, "On party attachment in Western Europe and the Utility of Eurobarometer data," *West European Politics* 12, 2 (1989):122-139.

¹⁷ Mainwaring, 30-1.

¹⁸ White, Rose and McAllister, 135.

¹⁹ Mainwaring, 31.

²⁰ Eldersveld, 271-95. Despite India's its brief history with a competitive party system since 1947, by 1960s' and 1970s' when Eldersveld did his study, Indians had developed strong party identification. He argues that causative factors are congress party dominance, rapid politicisation, and development of a competitive party system, which converged to create party identification.

²¹ Dalton, *Citizen Politics*, 213-216.

struggled to develop stable societal roots.²² Historical factors account for overall partisan stability among South Africans since most voters entered the democratic era with relatively firm party loyalties inherited from previous political struggles. Most of the political parties in the new party system, including those banned during apartheid, have a history as political movements with significant mass support bases. The historical antecedents of South Africa's political parties meant that partisanship was simply reinforced in the post-apartheid democratic elections. Yet, twelve years later there are fewer voters predisposed towards any party.

5.1.2 Direction of partisanship: ANC vs. Independents vs. Opposition

Self-declared partisans can be further divided into those who support the ANC and those who support opposition parties. Table 5.2 and Graph 5.2 show the ratios of ANC supporters, opposition supporters (includes all opposition parties) and independents across the electorate over time. Although the vast majority of declared partisans are ANC governing party supporters there are several developments to be noted.

First, partisanship decreased for all political parties until 2002 when it shows a rise thereafter. Both the ANC and opposition parties have 'leaked' partisans to the independent category, which increased dramatically over time. Yet, new independents appear to disproportionately come from the opposition parties, which experienced a much higher rate of decline than the ANC. This development can be best described as 'asymmetrical partisan dealignment', as voters moved away from feeling close to a particular party but more so from the opposition. Unable to maintain their proportional share of partisans, opposition parties have been the biggest losers. That opposition parties have proliferated and fragmented since 1994, together with the fact that they share a decreasing aggregate share of partisans, suggests that they have to work harder to convince voters to support them at each subsequent election. The only time in which the increase in ANC partisanship is shared by the opposition is between 2000 and 2002. So, where voters do return to their partisanship, it is almost always to the ANC partisans and not to the opposition parties.

Second, between 1995 and 2006 non-partisans made up a substantial proportion of the eligible electorate (defined here as surveyed citizens who are eligible to vote) fluctuating between 31 per cent and 56 per cent. This 'floating vote' accounts for roughly one-third to one half of the electorate. Moreover, data suggest that it is not an 'ossified floating vote', as Schlemmer argues, 'made up largely of minorities'.²³ Instead, much of the non-partisan category is made up of black African voters. This raises questions about predictions that the

²² Mainwaring, 30.

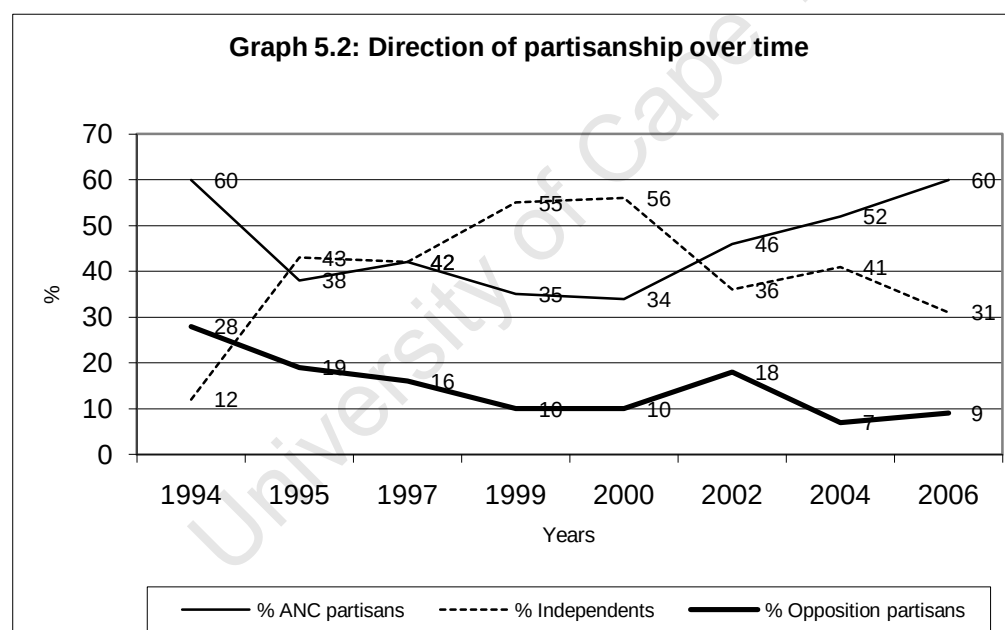
²³ Schlemmer, 'State of parties and health of democracy'.

ANC's support base is driven by ascriptive identity politics and that the potential swing effects of the floating vote in South Africa are undermined by the 'solidarity vote' for the ANC.²⁴

Table 5.2: Direction of partisanship over time %²⁵

Years	ANC partisans%	Independents%	Opposition partisans%	Total
1994	60	12	28	100
1995	38	43	19	100
1997	42	42	16	100
1999	35	55	10	100
2000	34	56	10	100
2002	46	36	18	100
2004	52	41	7	100
2004	42	48	10	100
2006	60	31	9	100
Average	45	41	14	100

The high number of floating voters whose support is in doubt at the beginning of an election suggests that there is an increased potential for electoral competition or movement in support across political parties. Thus the volume of 'mobile voting' or 'electoral availability' among the electorate, as defined by Bartolini and Mair, is significant.²⁶



²⁴ Ibid.; Johnson, *The 1994 Election*, 319; Horowitz, *Democratic South Africa*, 45; Schlemmer, "Democracy or Democratic Hegemony?", 282; Giliomee, "South Africa's Emerging Dominant"; Giliomee and Simkins, *Awkward Embrace*, 341.

²⁵ This data comes from a recoded variable, which consists of respondents who declared they are 'not close to a party' (independents); and ANC and opposition partisans. A very small amount of partisans who 'refused' to declare their party when asked are excluded and have thus been excluded in all later analyses. The slight discrepancies between figures in this table and the one above (which include all declared partisans) are attributable to this, but the numbers are negligible and make very little difference to overall trends and results. Including partisans who refused to declare their party serves no purpose in this analysis because I attempt to explore movements between ANC, Independents and Opposition.

²⁶ Bartolini and Mair, 286.

Lastly, on average less than half the electorate are ANC partisans. In 1994, 60 per cent of the electorate were ANC partisans, but this figure has since fluctuated between 34 per cent and 60 percent of the total electorate.

I apply a measure termed 'macropartisanship' to the South African data as shown in table 5.3. It is used by scholars to measure aggregate partisan balance and changes to distribution of partisanship over time. Its operationalisation has two noteworthy features: it omits independents, and is calculated using the ratio of two percentages, and consequently tends to amplify small changes in survey results.²⁷

The computation of macropartisanship for South African data confirms that the pace of aggregate partisan change was quite rapid during the first decade of democracy. The consistent incremental change over time reflects the ANC's increasingly larger share of the partisan 'market'; due partly to the shedding of partisans from opposition parties among the South African electorate. In other words, as the measure rises, it reflects the rising proportion of ANC partisanship.

Table 5.3: Macropartisanship: a measure for partisan balance over time

Years	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006
	68	67	72	78	77	72	88	87

5.1.3 Strength of ANC partisanship

Here I examine the strength of ANC partisan support to assess whether today's ANC supporters are as loyal as they were in 1994. I limit my tests to ANC partisans only and exclude opposition parties. There is a pressing concern among South African analysts that the dominant ANC coalition, which currently holds over 70 percent of parliamentary seats, is a permanent majority because of racial demographics. Group-based politics, particularly as an expression of race, has been presented as an explanation for the overwhelming support given to the ANC.²⁸ If indeed race drives voter behaviour, South Africa is likely to produce a cycle of permanent majorities following each election. These hypotheses can be validated or falsified with greater ease by searching for signs of volatility or fluidity within the ANC's coalition.

Table 5.4 outlines the strength of ANC partisan support as a proportion of the entire public (or entire survey sample). Displaying changes in strength of support alongside independents and opposition partisans helps to clarify changes by highlighting movement to or from the ANC as

²⁷ The formula used in the US is as follows: Percentage of Democrats divided by (Percentages of Democrats + Republicans) and is used as a summary statistic to show the distribution of partisanship over time in the US, Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 87-8. I have reformulated for the South African data as follows: (SA = % of ANC / (% of ANC + Opposition).

²⁸ Giliomee and Simkins, *Awkward Embrace*, 341; Horowitz, *Democratic South Africa*; Schlemmer, "Democracy or Democratic Hegemony?", 282.

strength of support increases or diminishes. Graph 5.3 provides the mean average for strength of partisanship for the ANC over time.²⁹

The mean averages tell us that strength of ANC partisanship decline gradually over time until the year 2000, when it increased thereafter. A closer look at table 5.4 reveals that this increase in strength of partisanship for the ANC may be due to subtle fluctuations and movements across the various categories. It appears that as people move away from the ANC they climb down the 'ladder of partisan intensity'. So, the strong partisans move into the two weaker categories, while the weakest partisans appear to move into the independents category. If the 'somewhat close' and 'not very close' categories are combined into one category (labelled 'weak partisans') it is easier to compare their percentages to 'strong' partisans. The percentage of 'weak partisans' is stable over time compared to percentage of 'strong' partisans, which fluctuates. This seems reasonable when one considers that dealignment is most likely to occur first among the weakest partisans. The weak partisan category is then replenished by a movement from the strong partisan category, hence its stable nature over time. As the weakest partisans leave the ANC fold, the strongest affiliated partisans remain which gives the impression through the mean average of increasing strength of overall partisanship.

The exception is in early 2004 and 2006 where the Afrobarometer survey registers a high rating of strong partisans: 38 and 33 per cent of the electorate respectively felt 'very close to the ANC'. This is attributable to partisan mobilisation for the 2004 national and provincial elections and the 2006 local government elections when the ANC had most likely mobilised voters beyond its core support base (the high number of respondents who report feeling 'very close' is not attributable to a difference in the question item). People do not appear to move into the opposition category, which in fact, drops to its lowest levels in those years.

Table 5.4: Strength of partisanship for ANC over time compared across entire electorate %³⁰

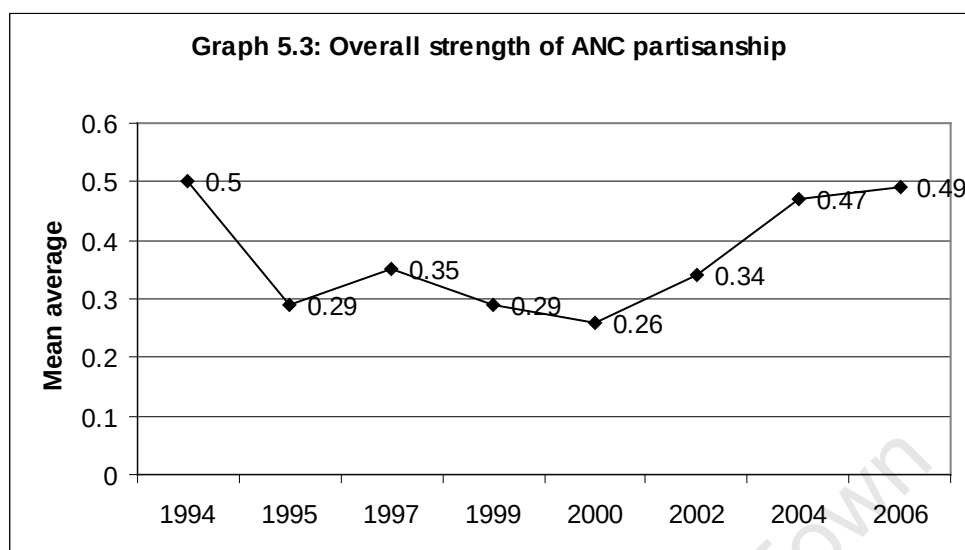
Years		1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	Very strong	36	16	24	19	15	21	38	33	25
	Somewhat strong	19	17	15	13	15	15	12	21	16
	Not very strong*	5	5	3	3	4	10	2	6	4
Independents		12	43	42	55	56	36	41	31	40
Opposition		28	19	16	10	10	18	7	9	14
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

²⁹ To calculate the mean average for strength of ANC partisanship I coded opposition and independents (0), not very strong ANC (1), somewhat strong ANC (2); and very strong ANC (3) and calculated a mean average for each survey.

³⁰ ANC percentages were calculated using the overall percentage of ANC partisans within the entire electorate (see table 2) plus the percentages for strength of ANC partisanship taken from frequencies. Example: Year 2000: $0.34 \times 43.7\%$ (ANC strong partisans) = 15%.

Mean average	0.50	0.29	0.35	0.29	0.26	0.34	0.47	0.49	0.37

*'Not strong at all' category collapsed and included into this category.



The most notable development from the analysis of aggregate partisanship is the dealignment trend in the early years which emerges across the entire electorate. At this point however, it is less clear what the causes of dealignment are. In Chapter Three I suggest two possible causes. First, dealignment may be the result of dissatisfaction with incumbent performance on the one hand, and voter images of party exclusiveness on the other hand. Both forces work in tandem to drive voters away from any party affiliation. Second, dealignment may be attributable to the growth of 'apartisans', a group of politically involved, educated voters who come to rely less on partisanship. I address both possible causes in Chapters Six and Nine respectively.

The development in this section is the pattern of 'asymmetrical partisan dealignment' whereby the opposition block loses a greater proportion of its partisan support compared to the ANC party. As I expected, dealignment has not occurred at the same rate for both sides. There is an increasingly larger gap between ANC and opposition supports over time, especially as the ANC wins back some of its partisan support in the later years. This supports my expectations that the proliferation and fragmentation of opposition parties since 1994 has weakened their attraction for many opposition voters. In addition, the ANC continues to hold onto much of its partisan support due to its role in the struggle for liberation and its ability to make use of its record in government at elections.

Finally, the strength of partisanship for the ANC appears to increase after 2000, but this may be due to the weaker partisans having left the ANC fold leaving behind a smaller core of strong supporters. This development gives the appearance of a party solidifying its core base whilst losing some of its weaker supporters.

5.2 The Partisan Responses of Social Groups

Despite a general consensus that the African population has continued to identify strongly with the ANC while minority voters still support opposition parties, we have limited empirical knowledge about the demographics of ANC supporters. Scholars, such as Tom Lodge, point to substantive demographic changes to the ANC's support base since it came to power.³¹ While he acknowledges that the ANC still holds mass appeal, its support base among African voters might not be as broad-based as it appears from election results. In particular, he notes a shift away from being a worker's movement with widespread working class urban support among black South Africans. Instead, this historic support base, in the townships of Gauteng and elsewhere, increasingly abstain from voting altogether. The ANC's core support, according to Lodge, increasingly comes from both the most marginalized and poorest sectors of society (rural pensioners and grant recipients) and the expanding middle classes.³² Looking at ANC voting patterns among key social groups in South Africa, the ANC's National Research Unit stated after the 2004 elections that change was evident, including declines in turnout in African working class urban centers like Gauteng (despite population increases), as well as increasing support in Indian and Coloured communities and the Zulu (IFP) political heartland. Finally, that 'the absolute number of people who voted in most African townships and informal settlements was lower in 2004 than in 1999' and 'given the population growth such declines should be cause for concern (for the ANC)'.³³

So, while the ANC clearly maintains its mass appeal, its support base might not be as broad-based as election results suggest especially among African voters. In fact, the social characteristics of its partisan base may have changed substantially, though blurred by ever increasing electoral margins. I therefore examine cross-sectional patterns of structural variables over time to see whether ANC partisanship is static or dynamic among specific key social groups. I analyze the partisan responses of these demographic groups primarily to detect changes or realignments within the social composition of the ANC's party support base over time.

I expect to find some significant changes to the social composition of the ANC coalition since 1994. The key lines of social cleavage that I test are race, age, urban-rural location, and socio-economic class. Race is important because politics has traditionally pivoted around race in South Africa, as a result of apartheid. While I do not expect to see much change in term of the direction of support given by various racial groups, I do expect to see levels of partisanship drop among all racial groups. The ANC should therefore attract less support from

³¹ Lodge, Tom. "The triumph of the ANC's champagne socialists". The Sunday Independent, 9 January 2005, 9

³² Ibid.

³³ Michael Sachs, "The 2004 Election," Research paper, ANC National Research Unit, 2004. <http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/pubs/umrabulo/umrabulo21/election2004.html>.

the black African population over time. I expect age to matter because the changing socio-economic situation should increasingly influence newer and younger voters differently to their older counterparts. This should lead to a decline in the levels and strength of partisan support among younger voters. The emergence of a new, younger age group should therefore reshape the size and strength of the ANC's coalition. With uneven social and economic delivery in South Africa, the urban-rural divide is potentially an important social cleavage for partisan support. A voter's location within an urban or rural location may affect her/his perceptions of government performance and social delivery. This, in turn, should affect levels of partisan support for the incumbents. The urban-rural divide is also expected to affect the direction of partisan support with rural voters more inclined towards the ANC. Finally, occupational class is potentially consequential for the level, direction and strength of partisanship as divergences in economic realities find political expression. Voters who are material beneficiaries of the post-apartheid era should offer higher levels of support for the incumbent party, while those voters affected by poverty, inequality and unemployment should begin to show signs of dissatisfaction.

I therefore examine the partisan profiles of key social groups by testing for changes to the extent and direction of partisanship in each social group, and the strength of ANC partisanship in each social group.

Distributions showing the *level* of partisanship across key social groups can tell us whether certain social groups are moving away from political parties' altogether. An examination of the *direction* of partisanship can tell us whether certain social groups have moved away from the ANC, but also whether they shifted their allegiances and moved from governing to opposition parties. In addition, changes to the demographic characteristics and social bases of party supporters and independents show the social groups most likely to have moved into the non-electorate and abstain from voting.³⁴ This is not to suggest that Independents are non-voters, but they are the most likely to group to abstain, while party identifiers are more likely to turn out at the polls.³⁵ Modifications to the strength of ANC partisan support inform us about which social groups offer the ANC the most loyal support. Due to space constraints much of the data for this section is placed in the Appendix (plus confidence intervals). Here I display in tabular and graph form only the information which is deemed most necessary, namely the levels of overall and ANC partisanship for the social groups.

³⁴ This study notes that there has been a reduction in party identification and an increase in Independent category as well as an increase in non-voting within the South African registered electorate. However, the study is more interested in predicting the partisan profiles of key demographic groups and strength of partisanship (closeness to a party). A separate analysis of non-voters presents a challenge for another study.

³⁵ Campbell et al.

5.2.1 Race groups³⁶

Level of partisanship

As to be expected, levels of partisan support were very high among all racial groups in 1994 due to the historical 'liberation' election that had just taken place that year. Since then levels followed a downward slope rising again after 2000 possibly due to campaign mobilization for national and provincial elections. Black African voters have been consistently more likely to identify with a party than other minority race groups (see table 5.5). Yet, on average only 67 percent of black voters have felt close to any particular party, whereas as many as 49 percent have declared themselves to be independent in some years. Levels of partisanship among white South Africans have decreased dramatically since 1994, fluctuating between 17 per cent and 47 percent. Correspondingly, the increase in independents is significant. Among Coloureds, on average, there are as many independents as there are partisans. Indians reflect similar trends to that of other minority racial groups although dealignment has been remarkably rapid. Since 1995, the proportion of independents among Indians is the highest out of all racial groups and fluctuates between 45 per cent and 94 per cent.

Table 5.5: Levels of overall partisanship by race group over time %

Years	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
Indian	81	16	36	18	6	43	22	55	35
Coloured	88	51	55	30	39	47	44	54	51
White	85	43	38	17	30	41	24	47	41
Black African	89	65	64	53	51	73	67	75	67

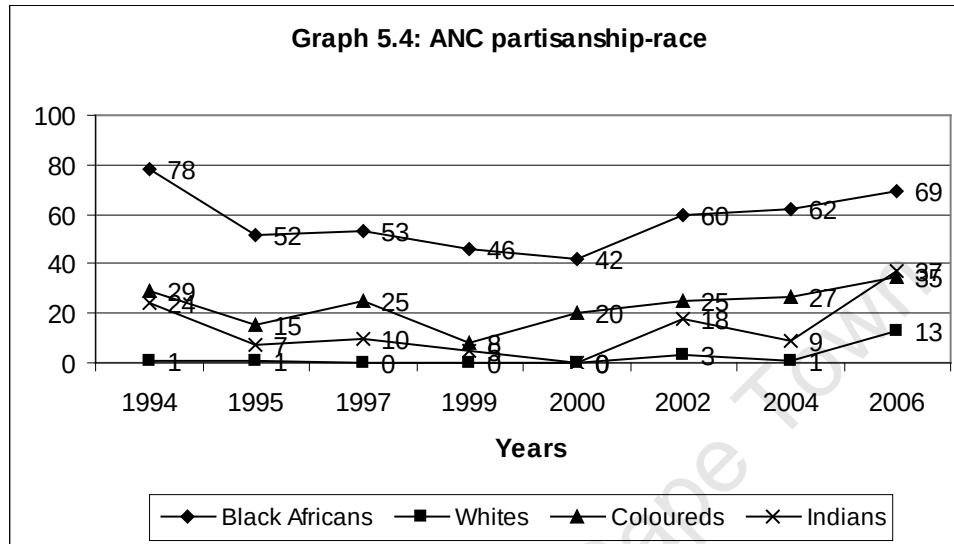
Levels of ANC partisanship

Table 5.6 shows ANC partisanship across the four racial groups. Among black Africans ANC partisanship is always higher than other racial groups and is relatively consistent over time. However, on average, only 58 percent of black Africans are ANC supporters. Approximately 35 percent are independents and 7 percent are opposition supporters. Among whites, support for the governing party remains negligible, while 36 percent are opposition supporters and 62 percent are independents. Support for both the ANC (14 percent) and opposition parties (18 percent) among Indians are also consistently low. Among Coloured South Africans we see a mixed trend emerging. Support for opposition parties has declined steadily over time from 59 percent in 1994 to 18 percent in 2006, due possibly to the demise of the New National Party, (the formerly ruling party which merged itself into the ANC in 2005, offset somewhat by the growth in support for the Democratic Alliance). But support for the ANC has increased since increased consistently since 1999 among Coloureds, suggesting that the ANC coalition is increasingly made up of a mix of both black African and Coloured support. Overall, on average, half of Coloured respondents are independents (50 percent) while 27 percent are opposition and 23 percent are ANC partisans.

³⁶ Whilst race is not recognised as a scientific category, for historical reasons socially constructed racial identities continue to be socially relevant in South Africa.

Table 5.6: Levels of ANC partisanship by race group over time %

Years	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
Black African	78	52	53	46	42	60	62	69	58
Whites	1	1	0	0	0	3	1	13	2
Coloureds	29	15	25	8	20	25	27	35	23
Indians	24	7	10	5	0	18	9	37	14

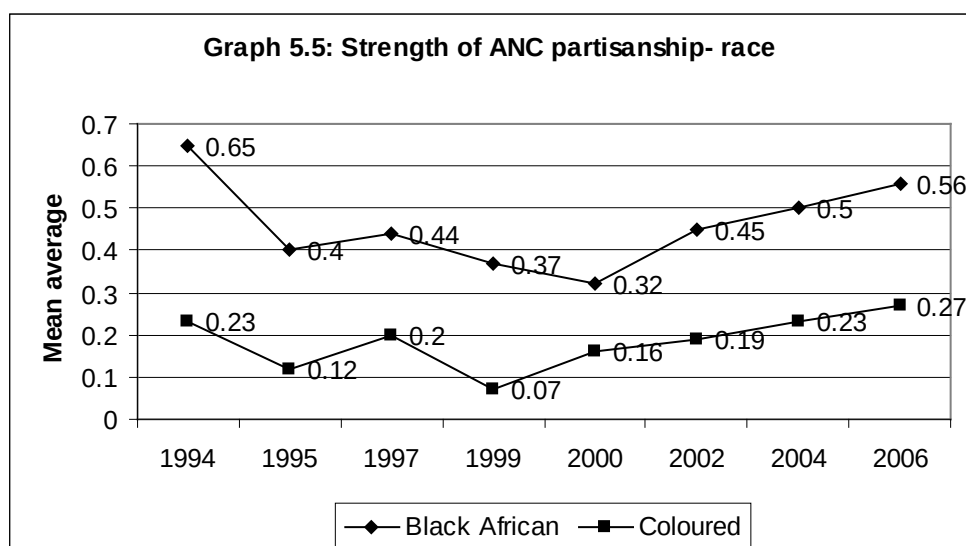


Strength of ANC partisanship

Subtle changes to the strength of support given to the ANC by black African and Coloured respondents are noticeable. The mean averages show a decrease in the strength of support until the years 1999 and 2000 when there is a significant increase thereafter. Coloureds show a remarkable increase in the strength of support shown to the ANC. In later years, it seems that the proportions of party identifiers who are 'very close' to the party increased in both groups while those who feel 'somewhat' or 'not very close' steadily decreased. Whites and Indians are not tested due to the negligible levels of support for the governing party which means that the number of cases is also too low to do any meaningful tests.

Several points can be made from this preliminary analysis of race. First, levels of partisanship are higher among black South Africans than any other racial group. Yet, on average 44 percent of black South Africans are independents. It would appear that, contrary to conventional wisdom, black voters are not an enthusiastic, unquestionably loyal electorate.³⁷

³⁷ See introduction of chapter for discussion and also current explanations of South African voting behaviour in chapter 2.



Second, the ANC's support base appears to be more racially mixed than ever before. Although its main support comes from black South Africans support for the ANC among Coloured respondents has consistently increased since 1999.

Third, there is a significant increase in independence among black Africans suggesting that core ANC support is smaller than initially supposed and that many black voters support this party at election time, not because they are loyal partisans but because they do not regard opposition parties as feasible alternatives.

Finally, while higher ratios of independents exist among minority racial groups, a smaller proportion of independents among black Africans can still amount to more independents numerically given the demographic composition of South Africa. Continuing increases in non-partisans among the black electorate therefore holds the key to future electoral realignments. Democracy's future prospects, to a large extent, hinge on genuine intra-racial competition. As Friedman notes, 'The black vote is likely to be the test, given the society's demographics.'³⁸

5.2.2 Urban vs. rural residents

Levels of partisanship

The data indicates consistently fewer partisans and more independence among urban residents. In some years independents make up a majority of the urban electorate. In contrast, rural voters are consistently more likely to be partisans.

Table 5.7: Levels of partisanship by urban-rural groups over time %

Years	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
Urban	87	55	55	43	44	60	56	69	59
Rural	89	61	64	45	48	71	66	73	65

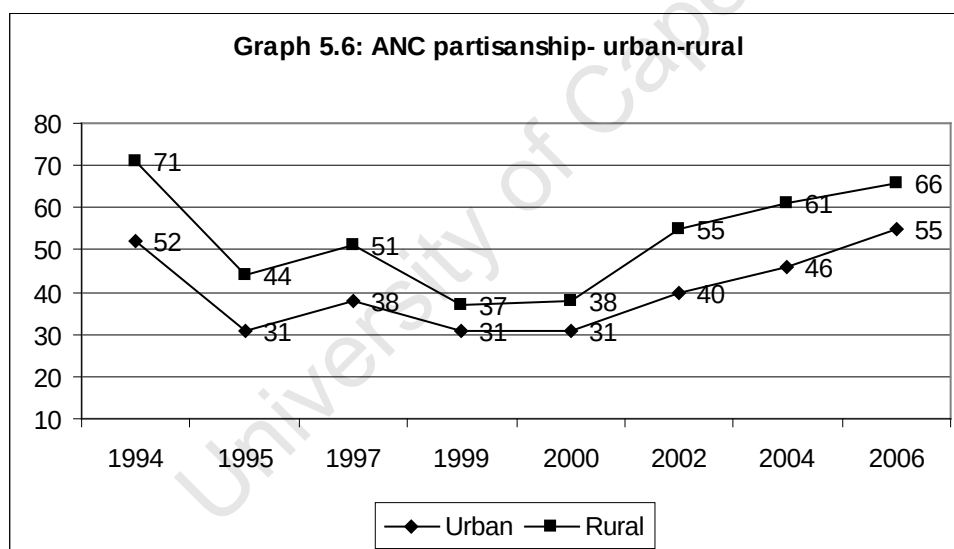
³⁸ Friedman, 'A Voice for some,' 9.

Levels of ANC partisanship

Table 5.8 shows ANC support among urban and rural groups declining sharply in 1995, climbing thereafter. By 2006, it seems that the ANC support base remains as it was in 1994. However, there is a consistently higher ratio of ANC partisans among rural residents. Among rural residents, on average, 53 percent are ANC partisans, 10 percent are opposition partisans and 37 are independents. Among urban residents, on average, 41 percent are ANC partisans, 17 percent are opposition partisans and 42 are independents. Factoring in the mainly rural Zulu IFP constituency, 53 percent of all support amongst rural people appears to be a good show of support for the ANC in the rural constituency. Among both urban and rural residents opposition partisans are on the decline, but urban areas have greater proportions showing that opposition party identifiers are mainly urban dwellers.

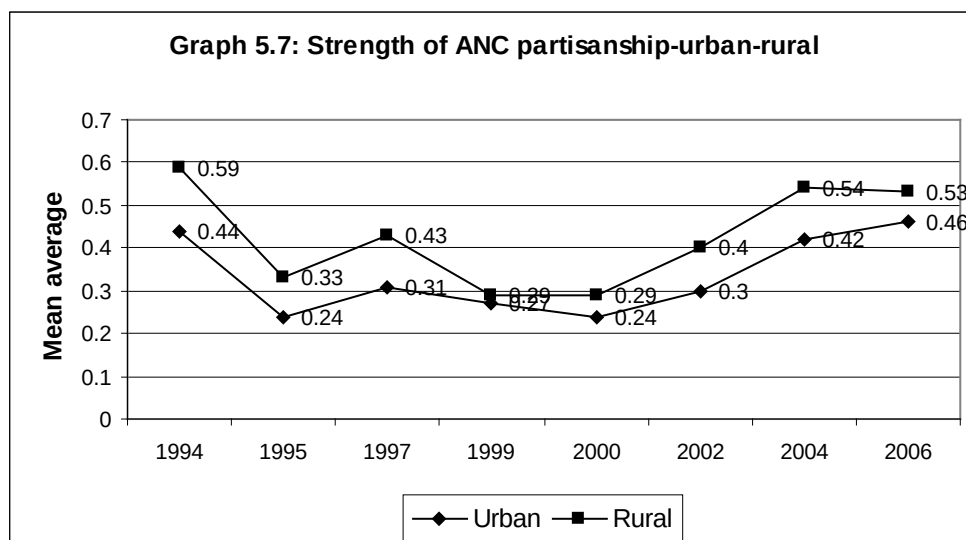
Table 5.8: Levels of ANC partisanship by urban-rural groups over time %

Years	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
Urban	52	31	38	31	31	40	46	55	41
Rural	71	44	51	37	38	55	61	66	53



Strength of ANC partisanship

When I test for strength of partisanship, ANC partisan loyalties are consistently stronger among rural residents which support the findings showing higher ratio of ANC partisans among rural residents. Overall, rural areas offer more loyal ANC identifiers compared to their urban counterparts.



The data appears to confirm expectations that urban residents are least likely to offer support to the ANC compared to rural residents. The ANC attracts its greatest levels of support from the latter group, who, despite being one of the most marginalized sections of society, are also consistently more loyal supporters.

5.2.3 Age groups

Levels of partisanship

Here, I look at age groups instead of age cohorts. For example, the first row in table 5.9 shows voters who were aged 18-29 at the time of each survey. In other words, I do not track a static cohort across time but rather track an ever-changing group of 18 to 29 year olds and so on. However, for the 1994 survey (and possibly up to 1999) each of the four age groups can arguably be said to loosely reflect or capture four different 'political generations' and provide a parsimonious way to measure whether different age groups affect partisanship.³⁹ In 1994, the 18-29 year old group reached the age of 16 years between 1981 and 1992 and are the '1980's' generation. The 30-44 year old group in 1994 had reached the age of 16 between 1966 and 1980; they therefore comprised the group that was in high school at the time of the Soweto 1976 uprising. The 45-59 year old group in 1994 had reached the age of 16 years between 1951 and 1965 and constituted the pre-Soweto generation that witnessed the rise and incarceration of Nelson Mandela. Anyone aged 60 or over in 1994 had turned 16 in or before 1950. Finally, a post-apartheid generation who has little direct early-adult experience of apartheid enters the electorate around the year 2000.

³⁹ The 'refused or don't know' category in the frequency distributions become quite large as age cohorts get older – this could mean that there are many more partisans among these older age categories (but they refused to declare their age or simply do not know how old they are). This may distort the true reality. For example: in 2002, among cohort 1 (18 to 29) 'refused or don't know' category in the frequency distribution was 12%; in cohort 2 (30 to 44) it was 15.2%; in cohort 3 (45 to 59) it was 17.4% and then in the last cohort (over 60) it was 24%. However, there are still sufficient frequencies in each cohort in each survey for statistical analyses.

The data show little variation between age groups, with no remarkable patterns or trends. All age groups witness a sharp decline after the 1994 elections to 2000, and increase thereafter. There are no clear distinctions between age groups in terms of levels of partisanship.

Table 5.9: Levels of partisanship by age group over time %

Years	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
18-29 yrs	87	60	61	45	46	60	60	68	61
30-44yrs	88	58	59	48	46	67	59	72	62
45-59yrs	88	58	56	43	47	67	59	73	61
60+	91	56	51	38	41	62	59	68	58

Levels of ANC partisanship

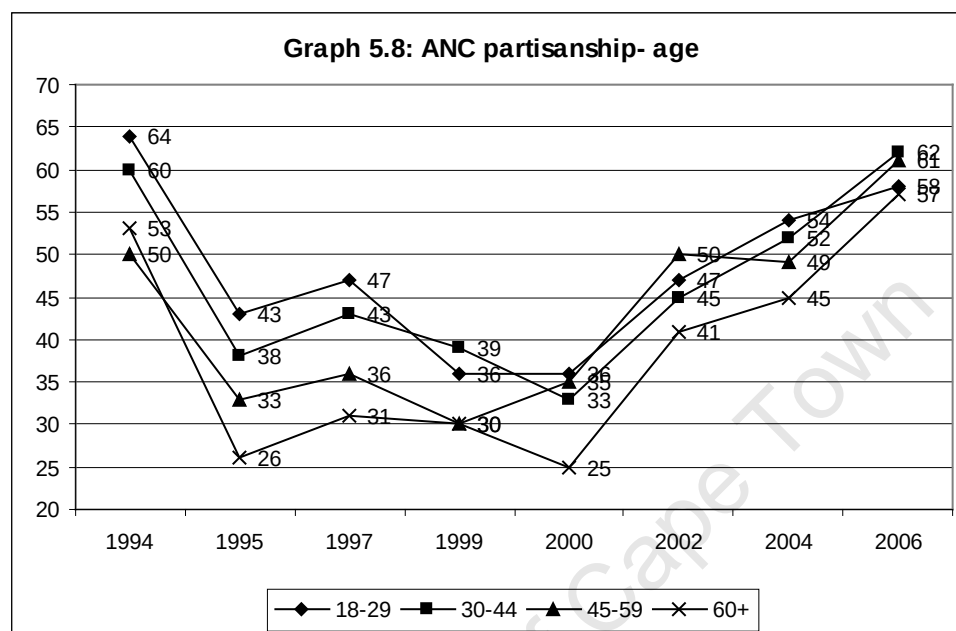
Trends among ANC partisans within various age groups also show little variation, with all groups following a similar trend over time. Possibly, the only notable feature is that the gap between the various age groups closes over time. Whereas in 1994, the proportion of ANC partisans was higher in the two younger age groups compared with the two older groups, by 2006 there are very similar proportions across all groups. This might be a result of younger voters entering the younger groups after 2000 who have no partisan affiliation, thereby decreasing numbers in this group. At the same time, some of the voters who were in the two younger categories in early years would have moved into the older categories by the end of the decade, taking their partisanship with them. These developments will have the effect of closing the gap over time.

The greatest variation is the clear trend over time among younger voters who show lessening support for opposition parties compared to their older counterparts. On average, among the 18 to 29 year olds, opposition partisans are 11 percent, among 30 to 44 year olds it is 14 percent, among 45 to 59 year olds it is 17 percent and among 60 plus it is 19 percent – a clear increase. This is an indicator of the increasing stagnation of opposition parties if they are unable to mobilize voters among an ever increasingly younger electorate in future years.

Generally, it appears that the overall growth in independents and corresponding decline in ANC partisans has little to do with voters' age groups. In fact, the youngest cohorts have the highest proportion of ANC partisans. Rapid population growth among the youngest cohort also suggests that this group will have a higher *number* of independents compared to older groups. The impact of the post-apartheid generation is only likely to be detected after 2000, which is somewhat supported by the decline in partisanship among the 18-29 year olds in later years.

Table 5.10: Levels of ANC partisanship by age group over time %

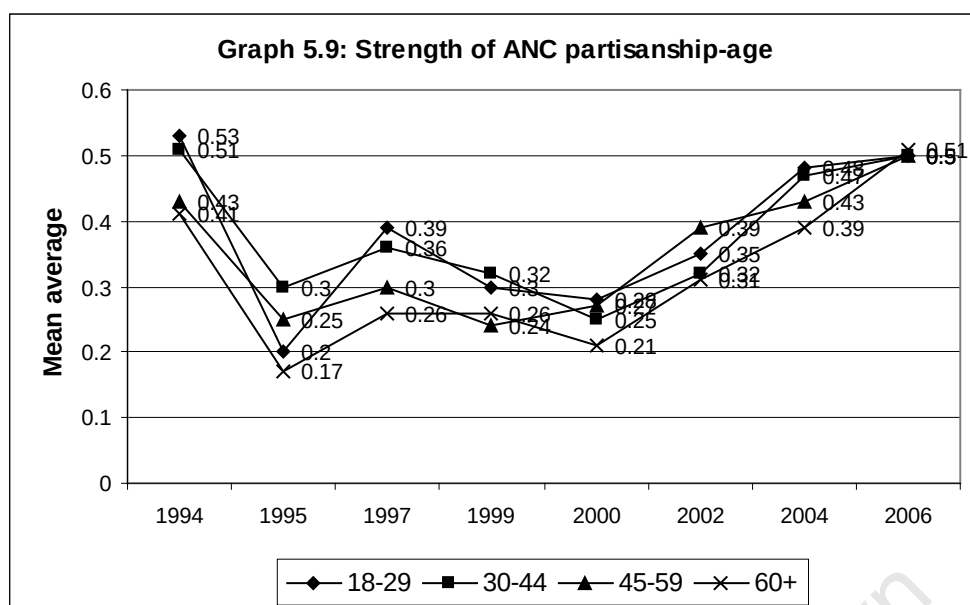
Years	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
18-29	64	43	47	36	36	47	54	58	48
30-44	60	38	43	39	33	45	52	62	47
45-59	50	33	36	30	35	50	49	61	43
60+	53	26	31	30	25	41	45	57	39



Strength of ANC partisanship

Again, the notable feature in the strength of ANC partisanship is the closing gap between the various age groups over time. For the same reasons outlined above, the post-apartheid generation shows a weakening in the strength of party ties over time as all groups converge in 2006, having roughly the same proportions of loyal partisans who feel 'very close' to a party. Whereas in early years younger voters are more intense in their support of the ANC, by 2006 neither younger nor older voters are stronger supporters.

Although I expected to find a noticeable decline in partisanship among younger voters over time the data show little variation between age groups. Within the ANC's coalition, the younger voters in later years show a weakened levels and strength of partisanship. These are possibly subtle signs of the new post-apartheid age generation entering the electorate with less partisan attachments for either the ANC or opposition. However, contrary to my expectations, the emergence of new, younger voters in the electorate has not (yet) reshaped the size of the ANC's party support. However, it has begun to reshape the strength of support given to the ANC. These trends can only be confirmed in time as further data avails itself.



5.2.4 Occupational class

Levels of partisanship

'Old' and 'new' middle class respondents evince a steady decline in partisanship until 1999 and a steady rise thereafter. Similarly, respondents from the working class and those who are unemployed also show an overall decline in partisanship until 2000. There are consistently more partisans among workers and the unemployed until 2006 when all groups converge, and for the first time, the owner/employer category show the highest levels of partisanship. This may present the beginnings of a newly emerging pattern among classes, where workers and unemployed begin to withdraw support from parties in general, while the beneficiaries of the post-apartheid era among the wealthier middle classes increase their partisanship.

Table 5.11: Levels of partisanship by class groups over time %

Years	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
Owner/ employer	85	66	43	27	38	55	51	76	55
Professional/supervisory	90	43	53	33	51	62	48	69	56
Worker	88	58	58	50	48	68	61	71	63
Unemployed	89	60	65	49	45	65	60	72	63

Levels of ANC partisanship

Between 1994 and 1999, ANC partisanship drops dramatically among the owner/ employer category but steadily rises thereafter. In addition, the professionals and supervisors show a significant rise in ANC partisanship. By 2006, both middle class groups converge with the worker and unemployed groups. The latter groups have remained steady across time with the greater proportion of partisans compared to their middle class counterparts. The data appears to reflect the emergence of the new black African middle class, whose support for the ANC begins to dominate this social category by the year 2000. Where control over the means of

production lay firmly with the largely white middle class in the early post-apartheid years, by 2000 the black African share of the middle class has increased, thereby changing (and increasing) the proportion of ANC partisans in this category. These people slowly come to supplant the older white middle class, whose partisanship has steadily declined since 1995.

The direction of partisanship in the professional/supervisory category is reversed by end of 2004. Whereas opposition partisans made up 70 per cent of this category in 1994, while the ANC only 21 per cent, by 2004 29 per cent of partisans are ANC supporters while only 19 per cent are opposition supporters. Again, this is reflective of the rise of a new professional black middle class whose aspirations have been met and, as a social class, they respond with higher levels of party support for the ANC. A dramatic decline in opposition partisans is reflected in a steady rise of independents in this category. By the end of 2004, 52 per cent are independents. The professional/supervisory category is the first group whose partisan trend presents a clear exception to the general pattern of decline and rise in partisanship.

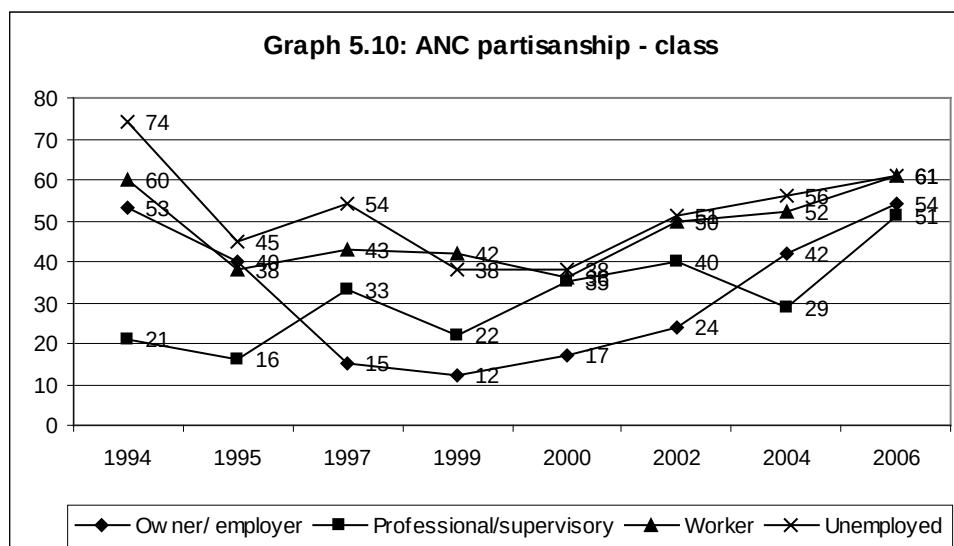
The two middle class categories thus show clear increases in support for the ANC, as the two middle class categories catch up with levels of ANC partisanship among workers and the unemployed. Variations may also be reflective of emerging tensions between black capitalists and the civil petty bourgeoisie versus the working class and unemployed as former groups become less inclined to remain their traditional political allies by distancing themselves from worker issues and increasing their political support for the governing party.⁴⁰

Table 5.12: Levels of ANC partisanship by class groups over time %

Years	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
Owner/ employer	53	40	15	12	17	24	42	54	32
Professional/supervisory	21	16	33	22	35	40	29	51	31
Worker	60	38	43	42	36	50	52	61	48
Unemployed	74	45	54	38	38	51	56	61	52

Among workers, ANC partisanship remains steadfast over time, but never makes up more than half the electorate until 2006. Opposition partisans among workers are low and decline from 28 per cent in 1994 to 8 per cent in 2006. Independents rise steadily over the years, only declining slightly between 2000 and 2002, but rising again thereafter. In the unemployed category, the pattern is largely the same. If we look at ANC partisans across social groups ANC partisans are highest among the unemployed and then workers, whose trends largely mirror each other.

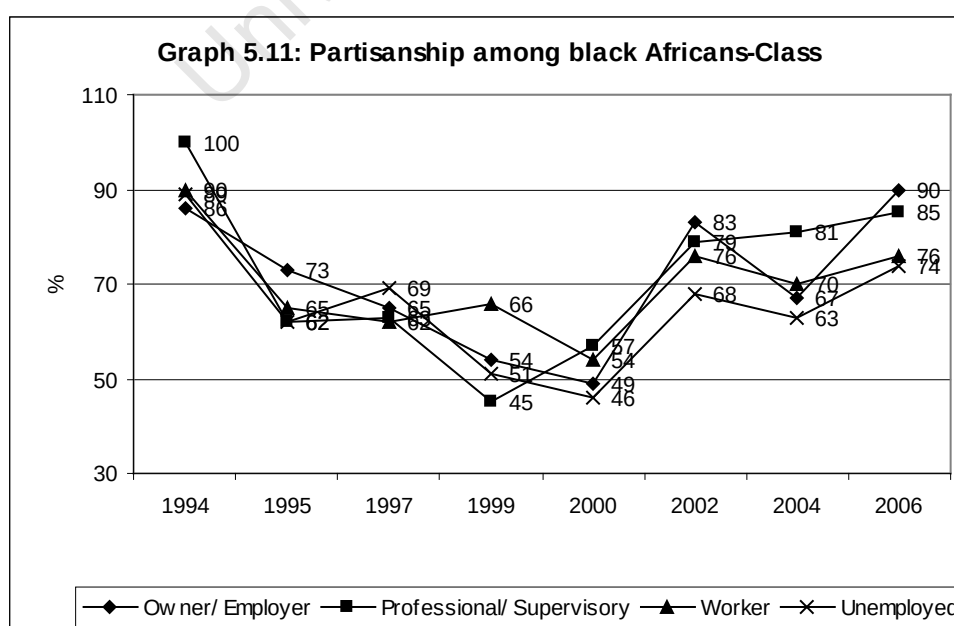
⁴⁰ Southall, "Political change", 539-540.



That poorer people are distancing themselves from partisan affiliation is most evident when one looks closely at variations between class groups among black Africans seen in table 5.13. Levels of partisanship among the middle class categories within the black African group rise sharply after 2000. Although workers and the unemployed categories also rise they do not rise to the same levels as the middle class. In fact, the unemployed black Africans show the lowest levels of partisanship after 1999, followed by workers.

Table 5.13: Levels of partisanship among black Africans by class groups over time %

Years	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
Owner/ employer	86	73	65	54	49	83	67	90	71
Professional/supervisory	100	62	63	45	57	79	81	85	72
Worker	90	65	62	66	54	76	70	76	70
Unemployed	89	62	69	51	46	68	63	74	65



This picture differs from the analysis that includes all race groups where levels of partisan support among the unemployed and workers categories were the highest. By restricting the analysis to black Africans the situation is reversed - while all averages rise for black Africans, the percentage increase is more dramatic among middle class categories as displayed in brackets in table 5.14. These variations suggest that, among black Africans, the middle class or wealthier citizens are more easily persuaded by the ANC compared to other relatively poorer class groups.

Table 5.14: Comparing 'over time' averages for class groups among Africans

	All races	Black Africans only
Owner/employer	54	68 (14% difference)
Professional/ supervisory	56	72 (16% difference)
Worker	62	69 (7% difference)
Unemployed	62	64 (2% difference)

Strength of ANC partisanship

The strongest show of support for the ANC still comes from workers and unemployed respondents. However, in line with the class data, the middle class groups begin to increase their strength of support in later years. This is demonstrated by the rise in their mean averages compared with workers and the unemployed.

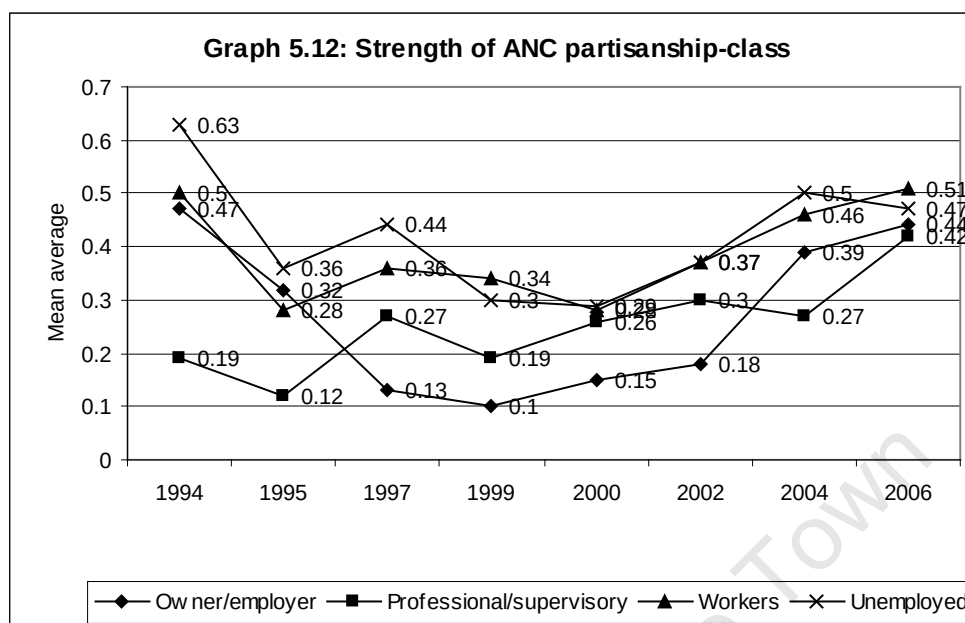
Table 5.15: Strong ANC partisans across class group's %

Years	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
Owner/employer	37	20	10	6	10	12	34	33	21
Professional/supervisory	14	8	17	12	14	20	24	29	17
Workers	36	15	25	22	17	23	37	36	26
Unemployed	48	22	29	19	17	22	40	27	28

A closer look at those who declared themselves to be 'very close' reveals that while workers and the unemployed have the highest percentages of 'strong' partisans in early years this alters in 2002 when there is a sharp increase in 'strong' ANC partisans among the owner/employer category, again, a reflection of strengthening partisan ties among wealthier groups in later years. In addition, the percentage of strong ANC partisans among the unemployed continues to decline - by 2006 they have the lowest percentage of strong ANC partisans. This is pertinent, especially given the higher proportion of unemployed people in South Africa in 2006 than in 1994.

As I expected from the class analysis, the beneficiaries of the post-apartheid era within the wealthier middle classes increase their levels and strength of ANC partisanship in latter years. Changes in the middle class are less likely to be represent changing partisan minds as much as the changing nature of class. In other words, middle class voters have not necessarily changed their partisan opinions – instead, fluctuations are more likely due to the introduction of a new set of partisan orientations as the overall racial composition of this social group

readjusts. The black African share of the middle class has increased, thereby increasing the proportion of ANC partisans in this category.



I did expect to find a much more pronounced decline in the level and strength of ANC partisanship among workers and unemployed people. I was less certain that the worker category would express itself as a homogenous partisan bloc but I did expect to find clear patterns indicating some political alienation, or rejection of ANC party affiliation, among the poorest citizens, as the positive effects of liberation wane. The acquiescence of the poor may be attributed, as Seekings and Natrass argue, to the combination of the ANC's pro-poor policies, the ANC's cross-class racial coalition, and the fact that it is difficult to link the effects of state policies with inequality and unemployment.⁴¹ It may be that by lumping together this broad category of wage earners, any internal differences and distinctions between the semi-professional classes and marginal working classes become blurred.

However, workers and unemployed people do appear to be slowly withdrawing their support from parties, particularly the ANC. So while workers and unemployed remain as traditional constituencies for the ANC, providing core support, an emerging trend indicates that these groups may start to gradually distance themselves from the party over time. Instead, core support for the ANC has begun to emerge from the material beneficiaries of a post-apartheid order, shown in the increases in levels and strength of party support among the black middle classes. It is unclear whether this trend will continue unabated.

Although this data does not permit, it may also be interesting to look more closely at variations to partisanship *within* the (new) black middle class. As Southall states, various

⁴¹ Seekings and Natrass, 370-1.

fractions of the black middle class have shared the benefits of economic growth and transformation differentially.⁴² In particular, the relative economic advantage of 'state managers', corporate fractions of the black middle class, along with the more advantaged sections of the civil petty bourgeoisie suggests the possibility that partisanship is stronger among these groups compared to the black trading petit-bourgeoisie or 'traders', although a dependence of the latter upon procurement might mean that they are even more strongly partisan.

5.3 Summary and conclusions

The argument of this thesis is that a silent revolution may be under way among South Africa's voters. So far, its dominant characteristics may be found in the increasing numbers of 'floating voters' who are not overtly loyal to one particular political party, nor guided by long-standing partisan ties when deciding which party to support at elections, especially during the early years. Thereafter ANC partisanship fluctuates while the clear dealignment trend continues among opposition supporters. The overall trend is best described as 'asymmetrical partisan dealignment' whereby the opposition block loses a greater proportion of its partisan support compared to the ANC party. A dozen years after the first 1994 elections there are fewer voters predisposed towards any party. The fact that the extent of mobile voting or electoral availability is significant offers the potential to reshape future electoral outcomes. Aggregate distributions of partisanship seldom shift abruptly but it appears that the extent of partisan change in South Africa has fluctuated considerably more than often acknowledged. Partisan change has been obscured by a focus on election results and ill-considered analyses of turnout data.

Race

First, there is a reduction in levels of partisanship drop among all racial groups. The ANC therefore attracts less support from the black African population over time. Levels of partisanship are higher among black South Africans than any other racial group at. Yet, on average 44 percent, are of black South Africans are independents. It would appear that, contrary to conventional wisdom, black voters are not an enthusiastic, unquestionably loyal electorate. The significant increase in independents among this racial group, suggesting that core ANC support is smaller than initially supposed and that many black voters support this party at election time, not because they are loyal partisans but because they do not regard opposition parties as feasible alternatives. Moreover, given the demographic composition of South Africa, continuing increases in non-partisans among the black electorate holds the key to future electoral realignments. Second, although the ANC's main support comes from black South Africans (while opposition parties attract mainly support from minority groups) support

⁴² Southall, "Political change", 539.

for the ANC has consistently increased among Coloured respondents over time. The ANC support base appears to be more mixed than ever before.

Age

I expected age to matter because the changing socio-economic situation should increasingly influence newer and younger voters differently from their older counterparts. This should have led to a decline in the levels and strength of partisan support among younger voters. Yet, the data show little variation between age groups. I also expected the emergence of a new, younger age group to reshape the size and strength of the ANC's coalition. Younger voters do show slightly weakened strength of support for the ANC latter years but, as yet, there are no visible changes to the size of the ANC's party support.

Urban-rural

Despite heightened levels of poverty and uneven social and economic delivery in the rural areas urban residents are less likely to offer support to the ANC compared to rural residents. The ANC attracts its greatest levels of support from the latter group, who, despite being one of the most marginalized sections of society, are also consistently more loyal supporters.

Occupational class

Finally, occupational class does appear to be becoming consequential for partisanship. The beneficiaries of the post-apartheid era among the wealthier middle classes increase their partisanship in latter years, probably due to the changing nature of class in South Africa as the black middle classes swell. I did not find a pronounced decline in ANC partisanship among workers and unemployed respondents. They remain traditional constituencies for the ANC. Yet, declines in levels and strength of ANC partisanship shown by these groups in later years suggest that they may be slowly withdrawing their partisan support.

Although the ANC still holds mass appeal its core support base may shrink as the party becomes increasingly reliant on specific segments of the public for its electoral support. First, its proportion of the total VAP has decreased significantly over the last twelve years. Second, its percentage of identifiers has declined with less than half the electorate declaring themselves to be ANC partisans. Third, the degree of loyalty felt towards the party has also diminished. Finally, certain social groups show subtle signs of change. While its strongest partisans are found among black Africans, only 67 per cent of black voters are close to a particular party. Certainly the high numbers of independents among black Africans suggests that they may become significant player's in future electoral realignments. Middle class voters are slowly becoming more partisan, while workers and the unemployed show early signs of partisan decline. Rural voters are more likely to support the ANC than their urban counterparts.

Nonetheless, changes in electoral trends or patterns should not be mistaken for changes in the behaviour of individual voters. Surveys cannot tell us whether people have changed their minds or whether the composition of the population has changed because of factors such as generational replacement or migration. To the extent that aggregate changes do reflect individual opinion change, the magnitude of opinion change thus far remains unclear.⁴³ As the South African population undergoes further demographic and socio-economic changes, it is likely that the sizes and distribution of different social groups will alter and affect voting results. For example, changes over time to the age, race or class status composition of the population can produce different results in certain areas. Moreover, in situations where partisan groups are relatively equal in size, differential turnout can cause swings and shifts entirely unrelated to changes in individual voter behaviour. Major power shifts in Cape Town are not necessarily voter realignments but due rather to demographic change as migration into the city boosts the proportion of ANC voters in the municipal electorate.⁴⁴ In Kwa-Zulu Natal, the Inkatha Freedom Party's support base has also been eroded as demographic processes proceed, such as integration into the urban economy.⁴⁵ Even slight variations within and across social groups may, as time progresses, hold the key to future electoral realignments. For the moment demographics will also dictate the degree of electoral competition. Areas that have several relatively evenly sized demographic, particularly racial groups, such as Cape Town, are likely to experience higher levels of electoral contestation and volatility.

Perhaps the most important finding is that there is little or no shift of allegiance across party lines by racial and other social groups. Rather than voters moving their support to another political party, partisanship has simply declined. The relatively even pattern of dealignment across all social groups has meant that the key cleavage structures that defined party support in 1994 are much the same in 2004. The social and demographic profiles of the ANC and opposition partisan bases have not altered dramatically despite the socioeconomic changes that have taken place in South Africa. There is remarkably little change in the ANC's electoral coalition. Instead, rural, unemployed or poor, working class Africans continue to support the party in the face of rising inequality. Weakening party bonds will simply continue to provide the governing party with larger majorities from increasingly smaller electorates. In the medium-term, electoral outcomes will continue to mirror the racial cleavages of the past. In addition, as partisanship declines and the majority of voters do not politically realign themselves, they become non-partisan in attitude, and potentially more open to persuasion. However, non-partisans may also be harder to mobilise at elections, and have a greater potential to abstain from voting. The decreasing turnout figures suggest that this may be the case.

⁴³ Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 91.

⁴⁴ Seekings, "Partisan Realignment in Cape Town".

⁴⁵ Friedman, "A Voice for Some".

These findings and conclusions also present a range of new questions to be pursued. The data intimates that individual voters may not be dominated by long-term socialised party attachments but also inform their partisanship using short term factors. Yet, the extent to which voters are guided by sociological factors or by performance evaluations is still unknown. In addition, the lack of inter-party movement by racial and other social groups suggests that the opposition do not benefit from the problems of the incumbent party. Yet, the reasons for the failure of opposition parties to attract wider support are not clear. This descriptive research therefore provides stimulus for further investigation into the micro motivations of individual voters in subsequent chapters.

University of Cape Town

Chapter 6

The Influence of Sociological Factors

While voters may choose those parties and candidates that they see as serving their interests, the way they make those decisions may be heavily shaped by the context in which they find themselves. This may include the larger sociological context and their location within the social structure. Yet, as discussed in Chapter Two, no single assumption underlies or explains the importance of sociological factors to voting. A number of micro theories exist and each suggests an alternative mechanism to explain the impact of sociological variables on partisan behaviour.¹ Firstly, sociological voting is explained as a referent for group behaviour where individuals turn to the group to anchor their opinions and attitudes. Second, sociological voting can also be an expression of a group identity.² Third, sociological political behaviour can also be viewed as a product of a social learning process through 'behavioural contagion'.³ Citizens form their opinions and attitudes over time through a repetitive process where they are rewarded or punished for their political viewpoints by the people they encounter. Lastly, sociological voting can also be explained as a result of rational and cognitive calculations, whereby citizens use sociological or group cues to inform themselves about their individual interests.⁴

Historically, South African society has been, and still is, heavily defined and divided by race.⁵ Furthermore, race and class closely overlapped. However, ongoing social and economic transformation since 1994 has meant that many voters have experienced significant changes to their position in the class structure. Some sociological theories thus might expect such rapid social transformation to affect voting behaviour, thereby reshaping the cleavage structures created by apartheid. To test this account, I investigate whether sociological or structural factors continue to influence electoral behaviour, and if they do, which structural variables matter most? In particular, I am interested in whether the associations between certain social variables and partisanship change over time, as a result of post-apartheid social transformation. I test the effects of five sociological factors: race, age, class, ethnicity and the urban-rural divide.⁶

¹ Huckfeldt and Sprague, 281-299.

² Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups*; Horowitz, *Democratic South Africa*.

³ Beck, Dalton, Greene and Huckfeldt, 68.

⁴ Posner, 91.

⁵ Race is not recognised in academic literature as a scientific category. However, for historical reasons socially constructed racial identities continue to be socially relevant in South Africa due to the legacy of apartheid. I am also aware that race cannot be described as a structural variable in the same way as class. A number of interpretations for 'race' are possible. However, the author treats race as a sociological variable.

⁶ Refer to chapter four for variable specification and coding. Refer to Appendix 2 for South African population census 2001 figures for these demographics.

To test the extent to which sociological factors shape partisan choice I first examine bivariate associations between the five sets of sociological variables and the direction of partisanship. This includes two separate bivariate analyses, of first, the direction of partisanship among the entire electorate, and second, among black South Africans only.

The correlation coefficients from each survey year are then examined for increments or decrements in significance, strength and direction over time.

In the second step I use logistic regression to explore the explanatory power of the sociological model in explaining the direction of partisanship among first, the entire electorate and then among the black electorate. Among both groups two variations (see below) of the generic dependent variable 'direction of partisanship' are used to test the likelihood of a (black) voter being an ANC versus an opposition identifier or an independent using sociological variables. I also compare models over time.

To summarise, I examine the effects of sociological factors on the direction of partisanship among all voters as well as within the black South African electorate using two variations of the dichotomous dependent variable as follows:

- ANC versus opposition identifiers
- ANC versus independents.

As expected, I find that the way voters chose among parties has been heavily shaped by the sociological context in which they found themselves. The structure of South African society influenced the extent to which South Africans identified with political parties, and which parties they identified with. While race and ethnicity had the strongest effects on partisanship the influence of other structural cleavages can also be observed. Yet, given the highly differentiated and rapidly changing social structure of South African society the effects of class were surprisingly limited. At the same time I find that the impact of the entire sociological model on partisanship declined during the first decade of democracy. This can probably be accounted for by the increasing influence of other, as yet unknown, variables (or models). Finally, I conclude that before one can settle upon a particular sociological explanation for the continuing effects of race we should consider additional theoretical explanations. In particular, I argue for further exploration using cognition theory to understand the role of race as an information cue.

6.1 Bivariate Relationships: Sociological factors

To what extent do sociological factors predict the direction of partisanship among either the entire electorate or black South African voters? Table 6.1 shows the bivariate associations

between five sets of sociological variables and the direction of partisanship (ANC vs. opposition/independents) among the entire electorate, while Table 6.2 shows the same analysis among black South Africans only.

6.1.1 Direction of partisanship among entire electorate (ANC/ non ANC)

Table 6.1: Sociological factors with direction of partisanship among entire electorate

Sociological Factors	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2004 CNEP	2006
Race	.376** *	.207** *	.165** *	.159** *	.113** *	.187** *	.179** *	.125** *	.146** *
No. of cases	2319	2364	3403	2199	2140	2121	2191	1169	2087
Urban/Rural	.034** *	.020** *	.014** *	.003** *	.005**	.021** *	.020** *	.002	.012** *
No. of cases	2317	2365	3461	2199	2125	2121	2191	1169	2091
Class	.031** *	.007**	.021** *	.020** *	.005*	.014** *	.008**	.014**	.005*
No. of cases	2317	2294	3448	2195	2087	2066	2191	1166	2091
Ethnicity/language	.399** *	.231** *	.182** *	.198** *	.130** *	.212** *	.185** *	.119** *	.181** *
No. of cases	2318	2366	3459	2199	2141	2122	2191	1170	2092
Age	.012** *	.011** *	.012** *	.006** *	.004*	.003	.004*	.001	.002
No. of cases	2318	2190	3458	2199	2131	2056	2188	1170	2085
Total cases	2401	2430	3500	2200	2199	2400	2400	1199	2400

*** Indicates the correlation is statistically significant at .000.

** Indicates the correlation is statistically significant at .001.

* Indicates the correlation is statistically significant at .05.

DV= non-ANC (0) vs. ANC (1). Summary statistic: Goodman and Kruskal's tau.

The choice of the correlation coefficient is determined by the fact that all variables are nominal, with class, ethnicity and age having more than two categories. In these instances the appropriate summary statistic is the PRE (proportional reduction of error) Goodman and Kruskal's tau based coefficient.⁸ This summary statistic is appropriate for a pair of nominal variables for any size table (2-by-2 or larger) and is probably the most useful of the PRE-based coefficients for nominal variables. PRE-based coefficients also have the additional benefit of a precise interpretation that can be interpreted as a percentage improvement in accurate prediction compared to simply predicting that all respondents would identify with the model category (ANC) with Chi-square based coefficients.⁹

⁷ When the 2-category race variable is used (Black African=1; other=0) the results are very similar to the 4-category variable.

⁸ De Vaus, 258.

⁹ Ibid., 258-261, 269.

The first thing we can observe is that the associations between the direction of partisanship and the race and ethnicity variables are always statistically significant at the $p=0.001$ level. Second, they also show the strongest associations with the direction of partisanship compared with any of the associations found for the other sociological variables. While ethnicity remains relatively static over time the impact of race appears to be generally declining. The coefficients for race confirm that being white, Indian or Coloured is associated with support for opposition parties or being independent. Black South Africans are therefore much more likely to be ANC identifiers. The rest of the sociological variables are also almost always statistically significant. Although significant in most years, the associations of class, urban-rural location and age with the direction of partisanship are much weaker and show very small associations.

6.1.2 Direction of partisanship among Black Africans (ANC/ non ANC)

Table 6.2: Sociological factors with direction of partisanship among black voters

Sociological Factors	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2004 CNEP	2006
Urban/Rural	.000	.001	.000	.009** *	.001	.000	.000	.009*	.001
No. of cases	1678	1624	2549	1170	1604	1483	1712	874	1654
Class	.003	.002	.001	.031** *	.004	.007*	.001	.003	.005*
No. of cases	1677	1588	2542	1168	1592	1450	1712	872	1653
Ethnicity/language	.083** *	.044** *	.053** *	.060** *	.029** *	.067** *	.034** *	.054** *	.055** *
No. of cases	1677	1624	2548	1170	1617	1483	1711	874	1654
Age	.001	.005*	.003*	.005** *	.002	.010*	.002	.004	.002
No. of cases	1677	1500	2551	1170	1613	1428	1709	874	1648
Total cases	2401	2430	3500	2200	2199	2400	2400	1199	2400

DV= non-ANC (0) vs. ANC (1). Summary statistic: Goodman and Kruskal's tau.

However, by looking amongst black South Africans, race is removed from the analysis and fewer coefficients are statistically significant across time. Of the four sociological variables, ethnicity is the most significant but its strength declines once it is applied to black South Africans only. This suggests that by taking out the part of ethnicity that reflects 'race' ethnicity explains less about partisanship than initially suggested by Table 6.1.

Overall, it appears that, apart from race and ethnicity, the influence of these sociological factors on the direction of partisanship is extremely limited. Although most variables are statistically significant, the strength of the association is not substantial. Race appears to show the strongest associations after ethnicity, while class, age and urban-rural location are

less useful as predictors. By comparing these social correlates of partisanship across each survey year it is also clear that there are few increments or decrements that could indicate significant and consistent changes in the effects and importance of each individual variable. We now turn to an examination of the overall predictive capacity of the sociological model on direction of partisanship using logistic regression techniques.

6.2 Multivariate Relationships: Entire Electorate: Sociological factors

I now turn to investigate the overall ability of the sociological model to explain the direction of partisanship. Using logistic regression, the results predict the probability or odds of, first, being an ANC identifier as opposed to an opposition identifier and, secondly, ANC versus independents by testing the effect of the sociological variables. This sub-section once again divides the analyses into two groups by explaining direction of partisanship among the entire electorate as well as the black electorate.

6.2.1 Direction of partisanship: Opposition vs. ANC

Table 6.3 informs us about the likelihood of a voter being an ANC or an opposition identifier.¹⁰

Table 6.3: Direction of partisanship among entire electorate: Opposition (0) versus ANC (1)

	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2004 CNEP	2006
Ethnicity (ref: English speakers)									
Afrikaans	1.347	1.487	1.187	1.034	2.868*	1.085	1.674	1.163	1.407
Xhosa	18.622* *	33.793** *	3.845** *	13.165** *	3.414*	1.965	4.148*	3.587	5.288** *
Zulu	1.784	10.033*	1.239	2.304**	.123***	.712	3.107	1.706	1.563*
Tswana	16.627* *	38.502** *	2.457*	17.457** *	.535	2.837*	21.927**	29.064*	8.093** *
Sesotho	15.601* *	56.590** *	3.175** *	16.178** *	.738	3.897**	9.600**	3.351	8.735** *
Others	8.230* *	41.366** *	3.546** *	14.463** *	-	3.144**	12.189** *	67.211* *	4.727** *
Effect ¹¹	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
Race (ref: non-black)									
Black	9.807*	1.487	1.867	8.330***	144.704** *	6.129** *	4.123*	6.766**	4.673** *
Urban/Rural (ref: rural)									
Urban	1.081	.841	1.560**	.965	1.582*	.983	.961	3.816** *	.823

¹⁰ Pampel, 39; Menard, 53-6. For a more intuitive interpretation the exponentiated value of Beta (odds ratio) is provided in all the logistic regression tables. Refer to chapter four.

¹¹ An overall effect (summary statistic) is provided by SPSS for large categorical dummy variables along with the effect of each dummy variable (namely ethnicity and class), the latter which should only be tested if the overall effect of the variable is significant. SPSS Training Manual 3-12.

Class (ref: middle class)									
Workers	1.457	1.181	1.635*	3.078***	1.188	1.263	.758	1.787	1.523
Unemployed	2.023*	.941	1.874**	.679**	1.356	1.175	1.138	1.980	1.237
Other	1.392	1.009	1.235	1.366*	.976	1.131	1.013	1.827	1.351
Effect	*	-	*	***	-	-	-	-	-
Age (continuous var)									
	.978***	.976***	.993	.1045** *	.998	1.007	.986*	.991	.996
Constant	.201***	.367*	.246***	.084***	.098***	.296**	.1061	.169*	.800
Nagelkerke R²	.613***	.497***	.432***	.488***	.392***	.303***	.312***	.404***	.305***
Classification %	87%	83%	83%	87%	85%	80%	90%	85%	88%
Hosmer & Lemeshow Test	.240	.724	.103	.000	.607	.653	.031	.536	.446
Valid cases	2091	1361	1968	853	885	1323	1226	576	1417
Total cases	2517	2674	3500	2200	2200	2400	2400	1200	2400

* p< 0.05; ** p< 0.01; *** p< 0.001 (Model Chi-Square)
DV=ANC/Opposition identifiers

Evaluating the overall fit of the model:

The model chi-square is statistically significant (p=.001) across all years allowing us to conclude that the set of variables improves the predictive capacity of the model (prediction of the log odds) compared to a null model. The pseudo R square measure, Nagelkerke, indicates that the model and independent variables explain a reasonable portion of variance. However, the predictive capacity of the model appears to decline over time. In 1995 the model explains 50 percent of the variance in partisanship but by 2006 it only explains 30 percent. Overall, the Hosmer and Lemeshow statistic indicates a goodness-of-fit for the majority of the years. The overall predictive accuracy, using classification percentages, is high, fluctuating between 80 percent and 90 percent over the years. In other words, we can conclude that in 2006 the partisanship of 88 percent of all respondents could be predicted using this model.

Interpreting the regression coefficients:

How much does each variable contribute to our ability to predict the direction of partisanship? Looking at the significant values we see that ethnicity and race are continually significant across most of the years. Being black dramatically increases the likelihood of being an ANC identifier as opposed to an opposition supporter, although the effects diminish slightly in later years.

Ethnicity is always statistically significant and shows expected results, with the pattern remaining largely similar across years. English speakers (reference category) are almost

always least likely to be ANC partisans, followed by Afrikaans and Zulu speakers. The most likely ethnic language groups to be ANC partisans are always Xhosa speakers, followed Sesotho and other African language speakers.

In the early years, class also helps to predict whether people are ANC or opposition partisans. In 1994, 1997 and 1999 workers are the most likely group to support the ANC, which is to be expected shortly after the end of apartheid when the middle classes are still predominantly white. Being middle class (owner/employer or a professional) increases the chances of being an opposition identifier. In 1994 and 1997 the unemployed also show support for the ANC but in 1999 they are less likely than the middle class to be ANC partisans. Thus, in 1999 compared to being a member of the middle classes, being unemployed decreases the odds of being an ANC identifier by 32 percent, increasing the odds of being an opposition supporter. After 2000 class is in flux and fails to show statistical significance.

Urban dwellers are always more likely to be ANC partisans than rural dwellers, who are more likely to be opposition supporters. The Urban-rural divide is significant in 1997, 2000 and 2004. Where age is significant it shows that younger voters are generally more likely to be ANC supporters. For each unit increase in age (one year) the odds of being an ANC partisan decline by about 0.02 percent per year.

6.2.2 Direction of partisanship: Independents vs. ANC

Table 6.4 shows the likelihood of being an ANC identifier versus a self-declared independent (omitting opposition supporters) among all voters.

Table 6.4: Direction of partisanship among entire electorate: Independents (0) versus ANC (1)

	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2004	2006
Ethnicity (ref: English speakers)									
Afrikaans	2.962***	2.751**	1.622*	2.409***	4.017**	1.534	2.943***	1.716	1.830*
Xhosa	26.751*	3.634	3.152**	2.401***	1.160	4.763***	6.933***	3.320*	8.251***
Zulu	7.399	.153	1.094	.632*	.479***	2.016*	2.131	.898	2.431**
Tswana	25.145*	1.988	1.817	1.899**	.823	4.523***	3.046*	2.569*	8.333***
Sesotho	16.630	4.289	2.385*	1.428	.725	4.691***	3.099*	.868	6.047***
Others	8.833	3.964	2.425*	1.815*	.999	7.078***	3.424**	1.413	6.732***
Overall effect	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
Race (ref: non-black)									
Black	1.296	10.671*	5.123***	42.938***	31.008***	3.235***	6.887***	5.287***	2.021*
Urban/Rural (ref: rural)									
Urban	1.076	1.187	.932	1.854***	1.220	.991	.975	1.586**	1.366**
Class (ref: middle class)									
Workers	1.186	.855	1.439*	2.292***	1.118	1.263	.589	1.084	.641

Unemployed	1.544	.725	1.510*	.969	.884	.885	.581	1.054	.718
Other	1.059	.766	1.146	1.031	.753	.714	.497*	.749	.544*
Overall effect	-	-	**	***	*	**	-	-	-
Age-									
(cont. var)	1.000	.987**	.991***	1.002	.999	1.01188	1.006*	1.008	1.006
Constant	.342**	.088***	.161***	.011***	.033***	.121***	.115***	.085***	.257***
Nagelkerke R^2	.198***	.285***	.221***	.329***	.180***	.296***	.250***	.171***	.202***
Classification%	84.6	67.9	66.6	70.3	65.1	72.5	69	64	72.2
Hosmer & Lemeshow	.123	.940	.143	.001	.771	.459	.165	.594	.272
Valid cases	1492	1827	2873	1929	1857	1691	2019	1050	1906
Total cases	2517	2674	3500	2200	2200	2400	2400	1200	2400

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ (Model Chi-Square)

DV=ANC/Independents

Evaluating the overall fit of the model:

The model chi-square is statistically significant ($p=.001$) across all years allowing us to conclude that the set of variables improves the predictive capacity of the model. Compared to the previous model (table 6.3) the Nagelkerke R^2 statistic produced by this model (table 6.4) is quite different, explaining less variance. The overall predictive accuracy remains high fluctuating between 64 percent and 85 percent over the years.

Interpreting the regression coefficients:

Looking only at significant values, it is clear that race and ethnicity are still consistently significant predictors of whether one is an ANC partisan or an independent over the years. The partisan pattern observed in table 6.3 remains similar – but there are slight changes.

It appears that the relationship between ethnicity and whether one is an independent is less pronounced, compared to the ANC-opposition distinction. This is to be expected since opposition identifiers primarily support minority parties, some of which have an ethnic base (IFP and FF plus). However, the likelihood of Afrikaans speakers being ANC supporters rises in this model, because they are less likely to be independents than their English speaking counterparts, and because of those coloured Afrikaans-speakers voters who identify with the ANC.

Being black still dramatically increases the likelihood of being an ANC identifier as opposed to an independent or non-identifier. In fact, this model shows little change in the coefficients from those shown in table 6.3. ANC identifiers are mainly black and independents mainly white, Indian or Coloured over time.

Let us turn to class. Class becomes increasingly significant over time when one looks at the odds of being an ANC identifier or independent. Between 1997 and 2002 the results show that workers are always more likely to support the ANC compared to the middle classes. However, between 1999 and 2002, workers become less likely to support the ANC compared to the middle classes, and thus, more likely to be independents.

Urban dwellers are more likely to be ANC identifiers and rural dwellers independents, although the odds decrease over time. In 1999 the likelihood is 85 times greater, in 2004 59 times greater and in 2006 37 times greater. In terms of age, an increase of one year decreases the chances of being an ANC partisan very slightly. By 2004 however, this pattern is reversed.

Among the entire electorate, ANC partisans are to be found mainly Xhosa speakers, followed Sesotho and other African language speakers, workers, urban dwellers and younger voters. Opposition supporters and independents are found mainly among English, Afrikaans and Zulu speakers, the middle classes, rural residents, older voters, and the unemployed.

6.3 Multivariate Relationships: Black African Electorate: Sociological factors

The same set of regression analyses are performed on black South African voters only.

6.3.1 Direction of partisanship: Opposition vs. ANC

Table 6.5: Direction of partisanship among black voters: Opposition (0) versus ANC (1)

	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2004	2006
Ethnicity (ref: English speakers) ¹²									
Afrikaans	-	57.539	.044	(ref)	-	2.092	.495	.390	1.644
Xhosa	(ref)	397.057	1.233	13.631***	(ref)	1.949	2.086	1.561	2.318
Zulu	.085***	125.701	.317	2.360***	.298***	.659	1.558	.708	.637
Tswana	.975	489.255	1.280	18.133***	.1315	2.676	11.446	12.667	4.189
Sesotho	.716	688.401	1.465	16.752***	1.789	3.639	4.348	1.508	3.653
Others	.375**	538.926	3.144	15.032***	2.414*	2.999	5.6.445**	27.578*	1.961
Overall effect	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	**	***
Urban/Rural (ref: rural)									
Urban	1.778***	.923	1.695***	.945	1.981**	1.301	1.263	3.332**	.958
Class (ref: middle class)									
Workers	1.154	.830	1.454	4.548***	.538	.666	.950	.394	.617
Unemployed	1.334	.682	1.588	.828	.691	.692	1.349	.362	.349

¹² For years 1994 and 2000 Xhosa speakers are the reference category, and in 1999 Afrikaans speakers, because there are no English speakers among the black African sample.

Other	1.310	1.062	1.435	1.859***	.605	.991	1.657	1.242	.498
Overall effect	-	-	-	***	-	-	-	-	-
Age									
(cont. var)	.982**	.976***	1.004	1.087***	1.010	1.011	.991	.987	1.001
Constant	32.684***	.005	2.836	.429**	6.472**	2.359	5.100	14.634	19.349*
Nagelkerke R^2	.201***	.156***	.147***	.244***	.138***	.114***	.071***	.212***	.078***
Classification %	88%	82%	85%	88%	87%	83%	93%	91%	93%
Hosmer & Lemeshow	.027	.597	.395	.397	.305	.147	.005	.368	.201
Valid cases	1171	959	1542	624	727	1033	1035	442	1183
Total cases	1379	1701	2477	1170	1560	1605	1719	837	1804

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ (Model Chi-Square)
DV=ANC/Opposition identifiers

Evaluating the overall fit of the model:

The Nagelkerke R^2 statistic is significant across all years and the explained variance in the direction of partisanship ranges from just 7 percent to 24 percent. The model now reflects the true effects of inter-ethnic differences among blacks by removing the effects of race completely. Including ethnicity into the logistic regression for the black voter's increases both the significance and strength of the model across time compared to a model with the urban-rural divide, age and class only. However, the explained variance is still much lower than the previous models reflecting the entire electorate. The effects of race on partisanship are clearly strong and are noticeably absent when removed. By limiting the tests to the black electorate, a powerful predictor variable, race, has been removed from the independent variables, which serves to weaken the strength of the model. However, the overall predictive accuracy has actually increased compared to the ANC-Opposition model for the entire electorate.

Interpreting the regression coefficients:

This approach offers an opportunity to test the power of other sociological variables independently of race. Among black Africans, ethnicity is always statistically significant and confirms the results found above. The most likely ethnic group to be ANC partisans are Xhosa speakers and the least likely black ANC partisans are Zulu and Afrikaans speakers.

The Urban-rural divide becomes statistically significant from 1994, 1997, 2000, and 2004 and tells the same story across these years – that black urban dwellers are always more likely to be ANC partisans than black rural dwellers. In early years (1994 and 1995) the younger a black voter is the more likely they are to be an ANC partisan but in 1999 the direction changes and then shows that older black Africans are more likely to be ANC partisans. The

rest of years are statistically insignificant. Among black voters class loses much of its significance. In 1999 workers are most likely to be ANC partisans.

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6.3.2 Direction of partisanship: Independents vs. ANC

Table 6.6: Direction of partisanship among black voters: Independents (0) versus ANC (1)

	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2004	2006
Ethnicity (ref: English speakers) ¹³									
Afrikaans	.260***	3309.07	23.922	(ref)	.410** *	2.155	17.392*	.455	.878
Xhosa	.973	104.71	1.026	1.191	.706*	3.463*	10.027** *	1.775	2.471
Zulu	.585	58.67	.356	.310***	.626*	1.446	3.131	.488	.724
Tswana	.307***	58.33	.590	.944	.862	3.325*	4.527*	1.425	2.487
Sesotho	-	121.25	.750	.705	-	3.405*	4.350*	.485	1.851
Others	-	120.65	.814	.905	-	5.179* *	5.187*	.752	2.003
Overall effect	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***	***
Urban/Rural (ref: rural)									
Urban	1.325	1.302*	.955	1.928** *	1.276*	1.171	1.028	1.493*	1.385* *
Class (ref: middle class)									
Workers	1.178	.703	1.267	2.370** *	1.056	1.122	.476	.731	.424*
Unemployed	1.427	.599*	1.320	.960	.830	.752	.431	.689	.462*
Other	1.140	.707	1.123	1.038	.773	.691	.416	.663	.376*
Overall effect	-	-	-	***	-	*	-	-	
Age									
(cont. var)	1.004	.987**	.992*	.999	1.003	1.008	1.007*	1.009	1.008*
Constant	9.857** *	.037	2.555	.872	1.084	.593	.654	1.193	2.368
Nagelkerke R²	.060***	.052***	.057** *	.128***	.045** *	.087** *	.063***	.099** *	.080** *
Classification %	87.2	60.6	62.2	62.2	58.8	70.7	65.2	62.2	72.9
Hosmer & Lemeshow Test	.245	.765	.111	.000	.251	.021	.182	.097	.016
Valid cases	1194	1290	2202	1088	1385	1229	1496	772	1512
Total cases	1379	1701	2477	1170	1560	1605	1719	837	1804

* p< 0.05; ** p< 0.01; *** p< 0.001 (Model Chi-Square)
DV=ANC/Independents

Evaluating the overall fit of the model:

¹³ For years 1994 and 2000 Xhosa speakers are the reference category because there are no English speakers among the black African sample. In 1999 Afrikaans speakers are the reference category.

While the model remains statistically significant across all of the nine years, the Nagelkerke statistic drops indicating that the model's explained variance is weaker. It ranges between 12 percent and 5 percent. The capacity of this model to predict whether one is an ANC partisan or an independent is much lower compared to the other models, suggesting that factors other than sociological variables help to explain why some black voters are independents. Classification accuracy remains high, but lowers to around 60 percent in some years.

Interpreting the regression coefficients:

For ethnicity, the pattern is largely similar to the model above. The urban-rural distinction is significant in more years, showing that black urban dwellers are more likely to be ANC partisans than their black rural counterparts who are therefore more likely to be independents. Still concentrating only on those years that are statistically significant, being a black worker increases the odds of being an ANC identifier compared to the black middle classes. Whereas younger voters were more likely to be ANC partisans in earlier years (1995 and 1997) by 2004 and 2006 the odds decrease, suggesting that younger black African voters are more likely to be independent.

To summarise, among black Africans, ANC partisans are found mainly among Xhosa speakers and urban dwellers. In early years, younger voters are more likely to be ANC identifiers but in later years older voters are more so. Class loses much of its significance when examining black African partisanship – however, it is clear that black workers continue to provide a source of support for the ANC compared to the black middle class. Black African opposition identifiers and independents are found among English, Zulu and Afrikaans speakers, rural residents, the unemployed and middle classes, and in later years, younger voters.

6.4 Summary and conclusions

As I expected, the results confirm that the way voters choose among parties is heavily shaped by the sociological context in which they find themselves. The structure of South African society appears to have a clear but limited bearing on the way South Africans identify with political parties. Over the years, ethnicity and race continue to have the strongest effect on partisanship. Yet, I also expected new cleavages to emerge as a result of post-apartheid societal transformation. To some extent, this can be observed in other statistically significant predictors of partisanship, such as age, class and the urban-rural divide, but their effects are limited.

The investigation into the role of sociological variables on partisanship also provides further insight into the changing composition of the ANC's partisan coalition. Within class groups, the data shows that black, unemployed people are least likely, and workers most likely to identify

with the ANC, compared to the middle classes. As the rapid pace of social and demographic change continues, and changes to the class structure occur, swelling the black middle classes, the effects of support for the ANC from these class groups should grow accordingly (as demonstrated in Chapter Five). Changes to the sizes of different social groups are therefore bound to have an impact on the nature of support given to the ANC in future years. However, declining ANC identification among the unemployed in latter years indicates tangible changes in levels of partisanship within specific social groups.

Urban-rural associations are more limited but evidence again suggests that they may begin to increasingly shape ANC partisanship, with greater identification for the party amongst urban residents. Age remains a significant predictor across years. In early years, younger voters are more likely to be ANC identifiers but in later years older voters are more so. According to Census 2001 data in 2001 39 percent of the South African population was under voting age between ages 0 and 17 years and 62 percent of the population was between the ages of 0 and 29 years. As this large and as yet unexplored section of the populace reach voting age the impact of generational effects are more likely to be noticeable, possibly in further increases in independents among younger voters.

Given the highly differentiated and rapidly changing class structure in South African society I expected class to produce more pronounced effects on partisanship particularly in latter years. Yet, the impact of class is somewhat sporadic, and as a predictive tool, its utility is limited at best. Recent work on the development of the class basis to partisanship in Russia may offer clues to the weak influence of class in the South African case. Whitefield and Evans argue that the growing importance of class on Russian partisanship is due to a growing tendency among individuals to relate their different economic experiences to broader ideological perspectives and, in turn, to political party preferences.¹⁴ However, although South Africans are increasingly economically differentiated, they do not have such ideologically diverse range of political party choices as Russian voters. Ideologically disparate views about the economy are contained within the ANC's tripartite alliance, which effectively nullifies opportunities to link one's subjective class position to a relevant and opposing political entity. As Sartori might argue, the current composition of the South African party system and the strategies of political elites have not yet politicised class.¹⁵ However, there are signs of an emerging class consciousness as class conditions continue to change both among citizens as political differences emerge between the political elite (ANC, SACP and Cosatu) which may become more relevant in future data as new political alternatives develop.

¹⁴ Whitefield and Evans, 173.

¹⁵ Giovanni Sartori, "From the Sociology of Politics to Political Sociology," in *Politics and the Social Sciences* ed. Seymour Martin Lipset, 65-100 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969). He argues that class only emerges as a major cleavage in party systems to the extent that parties emphasize class issues.

A caveat must be noted here. The sporadic influence of some independent variables suggests some statistically significant correlates might amount to no more than trendless fluctuations in the data. Short term variations could arise due to methodological reasons such as measurement error. Yet, the fact that most of the correlations are in the same direction suggests that the impact of newly emerging social cleavages and other structural factors are genuine.

I also hypothesized that while one's position in the social structure should influence partisanship, the overall predictive capacity of the sociological model should dissipate over time as social influences on partisanship give way to short term factors, such as evaluations of government performance. The Nagelkerke R^2 (summarized in table 6.7) confirms my expectations. Among both the entire and black electorate, the effects of the sociological model on whether one is an ANC identifier or an opposition identifier clearly dissipates over time, suggesting that sociological variables become less important over time and that other variables begin to influence partisanship. In other words, the sociological factors examined here tell us less over time about how people decide their partisanship. Much like Western democracies which have experienced a declining relevance of fixed social characteristics and cleavages for their contemporary electorates, the sociological model also declines during the first decade of democracy in South Africa.¹⁶ Sociological variables appear to be less important over time as other variables begin to influence partisanship.

Yet, this is not true for the ANC-independent distinction – the predictive capacity of this model is lower but remains steady over time. Clearly, sociological factors play a minimal but consistent influence on whether people move into the independents category. This may be linked to voter perceptions about racialised party images as voters move into the independents category, perceiving no alternative political home from the ANC. This is analyzed further in Chapter Eight.

Table 6.7: Percentage % variance explained – Sociological model (Nagelkerke R^2)

Population		1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2004	2006
Entire electorate	ANC vs. Opposition	.613** *	.497** *	.432** *	.488** *	.392** *	.303** *	.312** *	.404** *	.305** *
	ANC vs. Independent	.198** *	.285** *	.221** *	.329** *	.180** *	.296** *	.250** *	.171** *	.202** *
Black voters	ANC vs. Opposition	.201** *	.156** *	.147** *	.244** *	.138** *	.114** *	.071** *	.212** *	.078** *
	ANC vs. Independent	.060** *	.052** *	.057** *	.128** *	.045** *	.087** *	.063** *	.099** *	.080** *

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ (Model Chi-Square)

¹⁶ For Western electorates see Dalton and Wattenberg, "The Not So Simple Act of Voting", 202. Franklin, Mackie and Valen, 420.

Despite an overall decline in the sociological model one still needs to account for the commanding strength of this model. There are several possible explanations. First, powerful predictors such as race and ethnicity remain influential political cleavages, unaffected by rapid socio-economic change.

Second, it may be that different sociological variables have come to replace the original sociological predictor variables. For example, as race and ethnicity decline in importance, class or age (or a combination of the two) increases, the overall effect being that the sociological model continues to hold similar sway. Yet, as discussed, despite increases in actual class differentiation, class is not yet affecting electoral politics in a major way. The ANC has proved itself adept at building a cross-class support base thus disallowing class to eclipse race as the basis for political identities. The ANC's 'double class compromise', where business, the working classes and the poor have benefited in different ways, has paid electoral dividends.¹⁷

Finally, it may be that the nature of the influence of race on partisanship has changed. In Chapter Three I hypothesize that race may alter its influence on partisanship over time, as it takes on an indirect effect for some voters by providing an important information cue about factors such as government's economic performance and party images. The effects of race on partisanship are clearly strong and are noticeably absent when removed. Moreover, sociological factors continue to influence partisanship by influencing whether people move into the independents category or not. Together, the data suggest that a sociologically founded explanation partly offers a fundamental basis for any understanding of partisanship twelve years into democracy. Yet, it is unclear whether the race-based influence on partisanship can be explained as a result of rational and cognitive calculations or as a result of group identities and loyalties. At this point it therefore becomes important to theorize about the possible effects of race on partisanship in South Africa by returning to the literature to explore briefly several sociological theories which use alternative mechanisms to explain voting.¹⁸

Understanding the Enduring Impact of Race: The Beginning of an Explanation:

For some analysts, partisanship is merely an expression of group identity and loyalty. Race reflects strong group loyalties, or acts as an expression of identity, which then guides individual voting behaviour.¹⁹ Other analysts increasingly focus on the sources and

¹⁷ Seekings, "The electoral implications", 36.

¹⁸ Huckfeldt and Sprague, 281-299. they set out the various micro explanations for sociological voting.

¹⁹ Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups*; Horowitz, *Democratic South Africa*; Friedman, 'A Voice for some'; Friedman, 'Who we are'; Friedman, 'Why we vote'; Giliomee, "South Africa's Emerging Dominant"; Giliomee and Simkins, *Awkward Embrace*; Horowitz, *Democratic South Africa*; Lijphart, *Democracy in plural societies*; Sadie; Johnson, 'The 1994 Election'; Schlemmer, "South Africa's First Open Election"; Schlemmer, "Democracy or Democratic Hegemony?".

consequences of political information and the role of cognitive theory on partisanship.²⁰ Before we can settle upon an explanation for the role of race it is important to test a number of theories that incorporate sociological explanations. Further investigation into the social and informational contexts within which individuals reside is required.

Chapter Eight tests the impact of perceptions of racialised party images and the racially homogenous nature of South Africa's social context on partisanship. If race can be explained as a useful shortcut, or source of information for voters, then party images and the social context should have some influence on partisan support. Moreover, once party images and the social context are entered into a model alongside race, the effects of race should disappear. I test the effects of cognitive theory in Chapter Nine. If race acts as a useful information shortcut for less informed voters we should see its effects when I test for mediating effects of party images and the social context. In South Africa, race may instead act as an indicator of one's own interest. If race is bound up in a voter's interests and evaluations of government performance the impact of race should disappear after performance evaluations entered into the equation in the integrated model in Chapter Ten. Indeed, if race is driven by identity politics or acts merely as an expression of group identities and loyalties then the role of race should not disappear even after all the above models are entered into an integrated model in Chapter Ten. In other words, I argue, as Achen does, that demographics are simply useful clues to understanding human behaviour, they are not explanations.²¹ We need to know not that race matters to voters but what it is about race that makes voters choose differently.²²

Why consider additional explanations? First, partisan identities can be attributed to people's immediate environments - where they live and with whom they interact, but often these social influences go unmeasured in surveys.²³ Partisan self-conception is guided by a sense of who belongs to various social and economic groups and one's relationship to them. Voters are provided with partisan cues from their immediate social context environments, particularly from personal networks, which have a direct influence on partisan behaviour.²⁴ Voters' enduring personal characteristics interact with the messages they receive from the established social context in which they operate. The 'social calculus' theory differs sharply from the 'reference group' explanation, in that it is based on rational and cognitive factors. To reduce the costs inherent in obtaining information, an individual uses socially available information as a cue. For many voters, race may therefore provide an information cue that

²⁰ Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*; Beck, Dalton, Greene and Huckfeldt; Posner; Randall Calvert, "Identity, Expression, and Rational-Choice Theory," in *Political Science: The State of the Discipline*, ed. Ira Katznelson and Helen V. Milner (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2002); Whitefield and Evans.

²¹ Achen, *Social psychology*, 206-7.

²² *Ibid.*, 209.

²³ Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 71, 109.
Beck, Dalton, Greene and Huckfeldt, 68.

informs their partisan preferences.²⁵ Furthermore, variations in the cognitive abilities of voters also influence how socially obtained information is treated.²⁶ Identities thus act as a source of information or short cut to voters about likely patronage patterns.²⁷ Voters inform themselves about the dynamics of electoral competition in order to maximize electoral payoffs. Racial or ethnic groups are mobilized or joined, not because of the depth of attachment, but because of the usefulness of the political coalitions that they define. Ethnic identities are therefore fluid and situational, strategic, and instrumental. As Calvert reminds us, behaviour and actions such as partisanship that appear as symbolic or expressive when viewed as purely political phenomena, are in fact instrumental in a wider social setting as actors (voters) shape their partisanship in accordance with the expectation of the group or to glean the benefits of group membership. He attributes partisan identity to the benefits of in-group cooperation in politics.²⁸ Partisanship may have political rather than social-psychological roots but is maintained by social means.

Inherent in many of these 'sociologically-bound' theories are elements of rational choice and cognitive theories which contribute to a greater understanding of the role of immediate social context, information, skills and resources of voters as they relate to sociological cues. As Calvert argues, mutually exclusive rational choice and identity-expression theories can be integrated into complementary and clarifying explanations.²⁹ And as Whitefield and Evans state, sociological explanations are not obsolete but when found they are often partly explained by other theoretical explanations.³⁰

Therefore, by digging deeper, additional theoretical explanations can tell us much about the ways voters use race to inform themselves about their interests in a rational and instrumental way. In other words, do voters use social cues to maximize benefits or is the role of race simply an expression of identity, mere robotic reflections of their ascriptive selves? These answers also tell us more about the enduring nature of race – if race is interest-based and not an expression of identity or team-solidarity it's potential to define politics in the long term may be reduced.

Understanding sociological voting in South Africa may therefore depend on greater exploration of additional factors that drive partisanship, such as cognitive learning from social settings. Indeed, many South Africans may be subject to a type of 'double reinforcement' of certain sociological cues. For many voters, personal characteristics and the social context are both characterized by the same racial and, to a lesser extent, class cues. Further tests are required before one can conclude or settle upon any particular sociological explanation.

²⁵ Popkin; Whitefield and Evans, 173.

²⁶ Popkin; Beck, Dalton, Greene and Huckfeldt 2002.

²⁷ Posner, 91.

²⁸ Calvert, 590.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Whitefield and Evans, 173.

Finally, the large portion of remaining, unexplained variance suggests that partisanship cannot be explained as an effect of sociological factors alone and that short-term factors, such as performance evaluations, may impact significantly on partisanship. A clearer explanation of voting behaviour therefore relies on testing other theoretical models to which we now turn.

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Chapter 7

The Influence of Performance Evaluations

The main hypothesis in the literature on rational choice theory and voting behaviour is that voters care about and respond to the economic and political performance of the incumbent party and compare it to what they think opposition parties might do in office. As citizens go to the polls they take into account the past performance of government and their future expectations and then punish or reward political parties accordingly.¹ Morris Fiorina's analysis of American survey data found that people appear to move to and from their respective political parties in response to their evolving evaluations of political and economic conditions and the performance of the parties and their candidates.² Partisanship is neither impervious to change nor devoid of political content. Partisanship is a running tally of current party performance.³ In Popkin's words, 'there is mutual adjustment between political evaluations, partisanship, and voting.'⁴

There are a number of different dimensions to voters' performance evaluations. The major first distinction is between political versus economic evaluations. The second major distinction can be found among different types of economic evaluations.

Amongst economic evaluations, the first distinction is between egocentric and sociotropic evaluations. Political scientists speculate whether voters distinguish between their personal economic conditions versus larger economic trends. Early economic studies of voting made simplifying assumptions about how voters connect their personal economic conditions or personal finances with their votes in the form of 'pocket-book voting'. Popkin later argues however, that voters do not project directly from their own pocketbooks or even their personal problems. Instead they discriminate between government and personal problems and bring to bear only those personal problems they believe are part of the political agenda, and those problems with which government should be helping.⁵ Indeed, studies appear to confirm that assessments of national economic conditions have a bigger impact on voting than changes in personal economic well-being.⁶ However, Sigelman et al find that sociotropic and self-interested voting operate side by side.⁷ There is, they conclude, an underlying tendency for people to reward or punish the incumbent president when things have been going well or

¹ Fiorina, 25.

² Ibid., 84-130; Popkin, 54-5.

³ Popkin, 54-5; Fiorina, 199-200.

⁴ Popkin, 55.

⁵ Ibid., 31.

⁶ Ibid., 32. Sigelman, Sigelman and Bullock, 129.

⁷ Sigelman, Sigelman and Bullock, 140.

badly for them financially. However, this underlying tendency is overridden by the complexity of the electoral setting.⁸

The second distinction relates to whether voters act retrospectively by evaluating past economic performance or prospectively in terms of expectations for the economy's future.⁹ If evaluations are retrospective the voter looks back at how the economy has fared, and then decides whether to reward or punish the incumbent government. If evaluations are prospective, voters vote on the basis of their expectations of how the economy will do. Fiorina suggests, however, that retrospective and prospective elements can coexist as the voter looks ahead and chooses between alternative futures, while taking cognizance of past trends, or uses the past to forecast the ahead.¹⁰

A third dimension of economic voting distinguishes between simple versus mediated evaluations. As Fiorina explains, simple retrospective evaluations (SRE's) are based on personal direct experience and only consider one aspect of the economy such as unemployment or income. Mediated retrospective evaluations (MRE's) require the voter to consider two or more economic factors in his evaluation.¹¹ The simple-mediated distinction is based on the object of concern - a simple object being unemployment and a complicated object being as government's handling of employment.¹² Voters connect their own personal economic situations to government only when they can connect changes in their personal financial situation to broader economic trends and government policies.¹³ As Popkin explains, 'Voters who see political reasons for changes in their pocketbooks will reward and punish political leaders; voters with only personal explanations for their situations will not.'¹⁴ Lewis-Beck also argues that simple egocentric economic evaluations are insufficient for understanding the impact of one's personal circumstances on voting.¹⁵ Only when one's personal financial situation is considered in relation to the role of government policy does it show an effect, albeit indirectly. If voters perceive government as partly responsible for changes in their economic circumstances they will act to reward or punish government accordingly.

Fourth, in addition to evaluations of 'economic goods' voters also evaluate the delivery of 'political goods' which include assessments of government performance in various policy areas, presidential performance, trust in and approval of the job performance of political actors and evaluations of political institutions. Within political performance evaluations a key distinction (especially for new democracies) concerns government versus regime. Regime

⁸ Ibid., 143.

⁹ Fiorina, 15; Popkin, 33.

¹⁰ Fiorina, 200.

¹¹ Ibid., chapter six, 107, 128-9.

¹² Ibid., 80, chapter six.

¹³ Popkin, 32; Sigelman, Sigelman and Bullock, 140.

¹⁴ Popkin, 32.

¹⁵ Lewis-Beck, "Comparative Economic Voting", 175.

evaluations tap people's satisfaction with democracy, and are distinct from evaluations of government performance.¹⁶ Since voters should distinguish their governments from overall regimes these evaluations should remain a distinct and more permanent judgment.

This chapter investigates the effects of both economic and political performance evaluations on voting behaviour in South Africa by testing their impact on the direction of partisanship. In addition, I examine the effects of regime evaluations on partisanship. And because political scientists still differ about the relative importance and role of different types of evaluations, I also investigate which have the greater impact on partisan support. In particular, I examine the relative influence of retrospective versus prospective, socio tropic versus egocentric, and simple versus mediated evaluations. I then examine the relative influence of political versus economic evaluations. The bivariate relationships between the various types of evaluations and direction of partisanship are presented in tabular form using correlation coefficients to show increments and decrements in the strength of each item over time.

As in Chapter Six, I then use logistic regression to test the explanatory power of the performance model on the direction of partisanship across, first, the entire electorate and, second, within the black South African electorate. Two variations of the dependent variable used are as follows:

- ANC versus Opposition identifiers
- ANC identifiers versus Independents.

Data are coded in a manner that ensures that higher codes reflect higher levels of approval of government performance, since theory leads us to expect that approval and ANC identification should go together. In the interests of parsimony I reduce multiple indicators to tap evaluations of government's policy performance by constructing two multi-item indices guided by factor analysis data reduction techniques. The first index taps respondents' evaluations of government's handling of economic policy while the second index taps handling of service delivery policies. Factor scores of evaluations for both policy areas are used in the multivariate analysis while average index scales are used in the bivariate analysis. Finally, job performance evaluations are constructed as a 4-point scale (an average score is calculated for each respondent) for the multivariate analysis. Again, the higher the scale scores the more positive the evaluation of government performance of the various issues.

I find that both economic and political evaluations correlate with the direction of partisan identification in South Africa. Approval of economic and political performance is almost always associated with support for the incumbent ANC at the national level. The delivery of political goods appears to correlate with partisanship to a greater extent than economic goods across time. I conclude that the partisan choices of South Africa voters are also motivated by short-

¹⁶ Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi, 81.

term issues and performance evaluations. The influence of short term factors on partisanship is potentially capable of producing partisan change or fluidity within the electorate. This, in turn, should improve the quality of democracy in the long term as incumbents are forced to consider popular opinion. I also conclude however, that the reluctance of voters to distinguish between regime and government performance is potentially hazardous for democratization.

7.1 Trends in economic and political evaluations

The performance of the South African economy since 1994 has been characterized by macroeconomic stabilization and considerable progress on liberalization and privatization.¹⁷ However, the government's contractionary fiscal and monetary policies have constrained domestic economic activity. Real GDP growth rates were 4.2 percent in 1996/7, but thereafter declined gradually to 1.9 percent in 2001/02.¹⁸ Although the (Growth, Employment and Redistribution) GEAR policy was designed to contain spending and inflation, during the 1996/97 to 2001/02 period inflation (CPIX) averaged 7.4 percent, remaining above target range of 3 to 6 percent.¹⁹ Skills shortages have contributed to limited investment, low growth and high unemployment. The main weakness of the GEAR strategy has been its inability to address the critical issues of long-term growth and unemployment. Unemployment continues to drive widening inequality in South Africa, pushing many households deeper into poverty. By 2003 the official unemployment rate was 28.2 percent while the expanded definition placed it at 41.8 percent.²⁰ In 2000, the Gini coefficient for the distribution of income was estimated 0.7.²¹

Before we turn to the relationship between government performance evaluations and partisanship this section reviews how South African voters have viewed government performance over time as well as evaluations of the economy and polity. The evidence will show that changes in economic and political evaluations often correspond with and reflect fluctuations in partisanship.

Economic Evaluations: evaluating the economy

Graph 7.1 shows positive judgements of overall conditions in the country (direction of country), personal and national economic evaluations and trends in ANC partisanship.²² Trends in ANC partisanship closely match fluctuations in evaluations of national economic

¹⁷ Anna McCord 2003: 33. Overview of the South Africa economy
<http://hrdreview.hsrc.ac.za/saeconomy/saeconomy.pdf>

¹⁸ Ibid., 39.

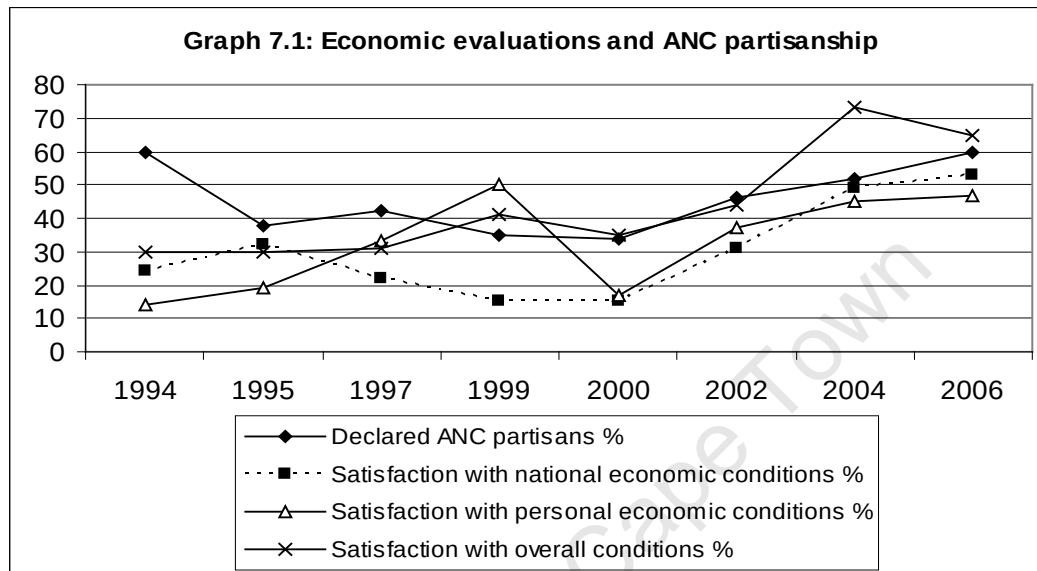
¹⁹ Ibid., 34, 39.

²⁰ Sourced from Seekings and Nattrass, 318.

²¹ Ibid., 303; Southall, "Political change", 531.

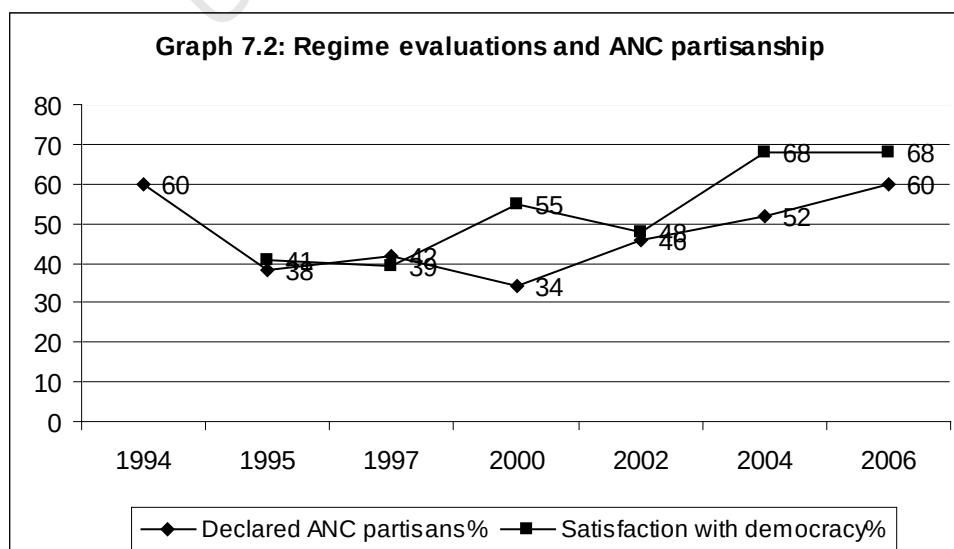
²² Graph 1 'Overall conditions' *What about the overall conditions of the country? Would you say that the country is: Going in the right direction, Going in the wrong direction, Don't know; In general, how would you describe: A. The present economic conditions of this country? (this is what I call 'national economic conditions') B. Your own present living conditions? (this is what I call 'personal economic conditions');* The percentages include respondents who answered positively to each evaluation.

conditions and satisfaction with overall conditions. ANC partisanship only begins to reflect personal economic conditions after 2000. The fluctuations show that as national economic evaluations decline and stabilise between 1995 and 2000, so does ANC partisanship. As economic evaluations after 2000, again so does trends in partisanship. As perceptions of economic conditions improve or worsen the intention to support or distance oneself respectively from incumbent's increases. This data shows a pattern over time that offers strong support for the economic model.



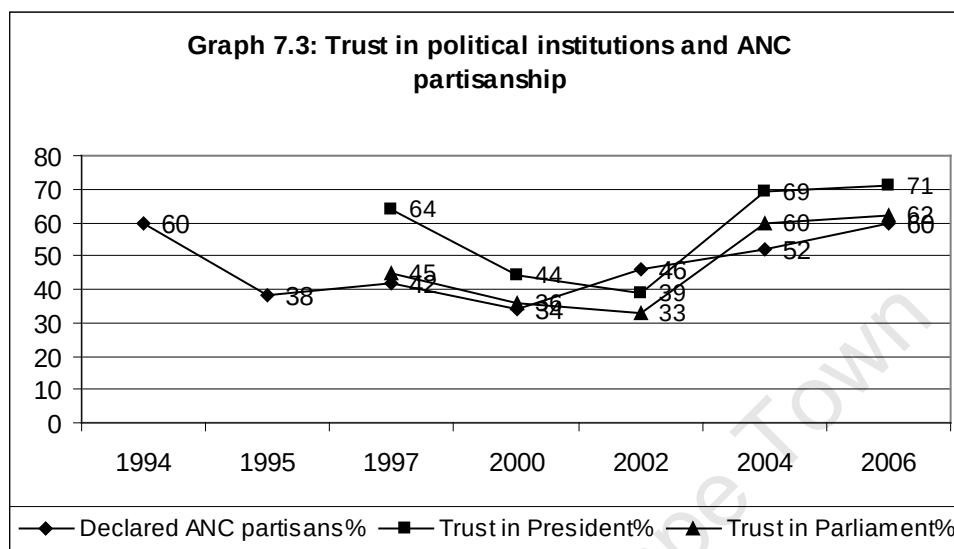
Assessing Regime Satisfaction: evaluating democracy

To tap popular judgements about satisfaction with the current democratic regime surveys ask people 'Overall how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in South Africa?' Graph 7.2 shows those who were either fairly or very satisfied with democracy. South Africans are clearly satisfied with the way democracy has worked since 1994 and satisfaction is increasing over time. Again, as regime evaluations improve or worsen the intention to support or distance oneself respectively from the ANC increases.



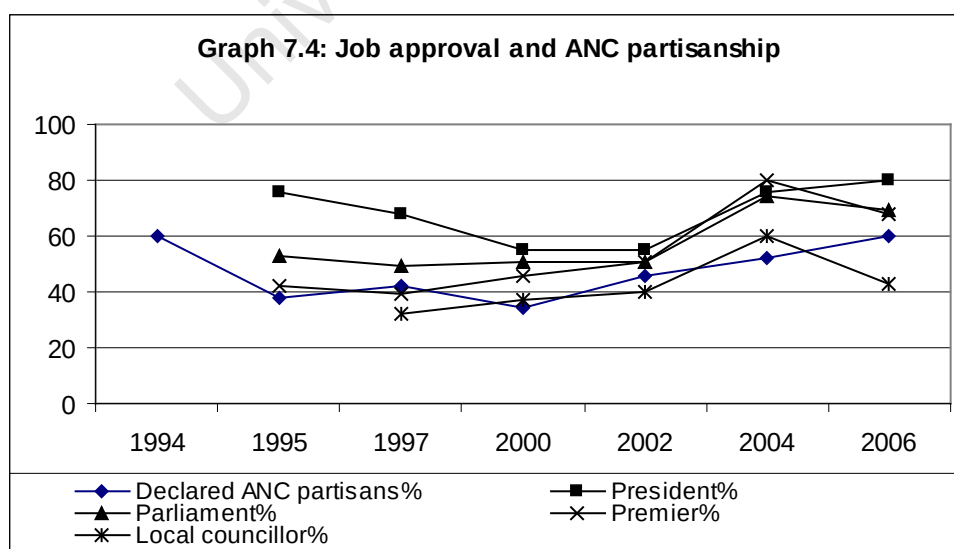
Political Evaluations: trust in political institutions and leaders

Do South Africans trust their institutions? Graph 7.3 shows that the proportion who trust the President or National Parliament most or all of the time is on average about half of the population. Trust in political institutions and leaders also appear to affect whether people support or distance themselves from the ANC.



Measuring Job Performance: job approval of elected leaders and policy

Graph 7.4 shows respondents who approve of the way elected leaders have performed their jobs. The President and National Parliament outrank provincial and local leaders consistently over the years. Again, overall trends in the evaluations of job performance and ANC partisanship appear to be closely associated.



7.2 Bivariate relationships: Economic evaluations

To what extent do performance evaluations predict the direction of partisanship among either the entire electorate or black South African voters? This section uses the dependent variable ANC vs. Non-ANC (opposition and independents) and explores bivariate relationships between numerous economic performance evaluations and support for the incumbents. Table 7.1 shows the bivariate associations for the entire electorate, while Table 7.2 shows the same analysis among black South Africans.

7.2.1 Direction of partisanship among entire electorate (ANC/ non ANC)

Table 7.1: Economic Items with direction of partisanship among entire electorate

Item by type	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006
Socio-tropic vs. egocentric– current conditions								
Current socio-tropic	.275***	-	.254***	.306***	.299***	.231***	.186***	.251***
No. of cases	2151		3365	2106	2110	2070	2152	2018
Current egocentric	.037	-	.131***	.025**	.175***	-.016	-.073*	.112***
No. of cases	2263		3418	2189	2125	2100	2184	2082
Retrospective vs. prospective –personal/egocentric								
Retrospective egocentric	-	.218***	.343***	.271***	-	.143***	.147***	.219***
No. of cases		2265	3424	2178		2085	2181	2076
Prospective egocentric	-	-	.398***	.397***	-	.273***	.316***	.246***
No. of cases			3258	1983		1902	2097	1956
Retrospective vs. prospective –collective/socio-tropic								
Retrospective sociotropic	-	.361***	.386***	.346***	.318***	.269***	.213***	.276***
No. of cases		2260	3335	2105	2114	2051	2146	2002
Prospective sociotropic	-	.502***	.405***	.519***	.344***	.320***	.302***	.324***
No. of cases			3221	1937	2029	1930	2083	1906
Mediated evaluations of governments economic policy								
Personal mediated retrospective	-	-	-	-	-	.171***	.237***	.280***
No. of cases						1905	2050	1928
General evaluation of domestic affairs / overall conditions in SA / direction of country								
Overall direction of the country	.290***	.399***	.336***	.670***	.422***	.385***	.548***	.455***
No. of cases	2140	2252	3419	1955	2128	2121	2192	2090
Total cases	2401	2430	3500	2200	2200	2400	2400	2400

* Indicates the correlation is significant at the 0.05 level. ($p \leq 0.05$)

** Indicates the correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. ($p \leq 0.01$)

*** Indicates the correlation is significant at the 0.001 level. ($p \leq 0.001$)

DV= Non-ANC (0) vs. ANC (1). Summary statistic: Gamma.²³ - = Not asked

²³ De Vaus, 261-2. If one variable is dichotomous the other variable should determine the choice of coefficient. Therefore, when a dichotomous, nominal level DV variable is cross tabulated with an ordinal level variable, all variables should be treated as ordinal and the appropriate statistic is therefore gamma.

7.2.2 Direction of partisanship among Black Africans (ANC/ non ANC)

Table 7.2: Economic Items with direction of partisanship among black voters

Item by type	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006
Socio-tropic vs. egocentric– current conditions								
Current socio-tropic	.072	-	.086**	.191***	.214***	.156***	.131***	.244***
No. of cases	1383		2479	1090	1597	1439	1684	1585
Current egocentric	- .039	-	.088**	.166***	.158***	.069	.027	.241***
No. of cases	1462		2517	1161	1608	1463	1705	1648
Retrospective vs. prospective –personal/egocentric								
Retrospective egocentric	-	.056	.170***	.217***	-	.085*	.137***	.240***
No. of cases		1569	2522	1152		1457	1702	1643
Prospective egocentric	-	-	.189***	.323***	-	.137***	.259***	.213***
No. of cases			2414	1015		1330	1635	1543
Retrospective vs. prospective –collective/socio-tropic								
Retrospective sociotropic	-	.168***	.165***	.174***	.211***	.125**	.152***	.252***
No. of cases		1546	2462	1086	1595	1426	1677	1580
Prospective sociotropic	-	.272***	.171***	.345***	.241***	.138***	.181***	.256***
No. of cases		1624	2382	965	1522	1338	1625	1497
Mediated evaluations of governments economic policy								
Personal mediated retrospective	-	-	-	-	-	.151***	.099*	.264***
No. of cases						1342	1607	1544
General evaluation of domestic affairs / overall conditions in SA / direction of country								
Overall direction of the country	- .046	.147***	.150***	.473***	.297***	.252***	.383***	.407***
No. of cases	1370	1530	2521	1011	1608	1483	1712	1654
Total cases	1734	2430	2581	1170	1665	1625	1875	1876

DV= Non-ANC (0) vs. ANC (1). Summary statistic: Gamma.

- = Not asked

Dimensions of economic voting

First, the relationships between partisanship and various types of economic evaluations are almost always statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$. Second, the consistently positive direction of the coefficients confirms that approval is almost always associated with increased

My DV's are both dichotomous while the IV's are ordinal. Other ordinal measures include Kendall's tau b and Kendall's Tau c. Tau b requires that the DV's and IV's have the same number of categories resulting in a square matrix, which is not the case here. Tau c can be used instead. Janet Johnson and Richard Joslyn, *Political Science Research Methods*, Third edition (USA: Congressional Quarterly Press Inc, 1995), 340 state that tau and gamma generally give similar values for any given crosstab, although gamma can give higher coefficients than other ordinal coefficients and may yield a misleading overestimation of the strength of a relationship. After comparing the gamma values with Tau c in selected years gamma shows only slightly higher values, and are consistent in the increases in each variable. This should not present a problem for overestimation since I compare among gamma values and not between different summary statistics.

support for the ANC. Opposition identifiers and independents therefore consistently disapprove of the current ANC government's economic performance. The pattern is largely the same among black African voters.

Egocentric vs. socio-tropic economic evaluations

The bivariate correlations suggest that people find changes in the national economy as opposed to personal economic conditions to be better indicators government performance. When comparing coefficients across the years the strongest correlations are consistently found in the sociotropic category. This suggests that South African voters base their partisan decisions not on their own personal pocketbook situation, but on their larger perceptions of the performance of the broader economy as a whole. This data fits with general findings which assert that personal evaluations have little direct influence on the vote (particularly in Western nations). Voters do not appear to hold the ANC government responsible for their personal economic plight. This might partly explain why the ANC continues to garner overwhelming popular support in the face of enduring poverty and deepening socio-economic hardships.

However, if we look at the same analysis among black African voters we see that the strength of the egocentric coefficients relative to sociotropic evaluations is much higher. This suggests that black voters are much more likely to hold the ANC to account for their personal economic plight. Indeed, in some years such as 1997 egocentric evaluations are stronger than sociotropic evaluations. In other years, such as 1999 and 2006 the gap between the two evaluations is very small.

It also seems plausible that poorer citizens, especially those who often go without basic necessities such as food often, are more likely to connect government's management of the economy to their personal economic plight and judge government accordingly. Using a poverty variable that taps how often a respondent has gone without food, the survey sample is divided into two sub-groups: hungry citizens (or those who always or very often go without food) and non-hungry citizens (those who have gone without food never, rarely or only several times). I filter the survey sample to exclude the non-hungry and then test for the bivariate associations between direction of partisanship and sociotropic and egocentric economic evaluations among hungry citizens. I then repeat for the non-hungry respondents by excluding the hungry. Table 7.3 shows comparisons between the hungry, non-hungry and the entire sample.

Table 7.3: Egocentric evaluations and partisanship among hungry and non-hungry citizens

Hunger	Item by type	2000	2002	2004	2006
Egocentric evaluations	Poor/hungry	.257***	.075	.198*	.324**
	Non-hungry	.150***	-.013	-.113***	.094**
	Entire sample	.175***	-.016	-.073*	.112***

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

DV=ANC/non-ANC (opposition identifiers and independents)

Summary statistic: Gamma.

The results suggest that people who reported having gone without food on a regular basis show a consistently stronger propensity towards egocentric evaluations over the four years compared to people who reported having sufficient food to eat. This bivariate analysis suggests that the poor appear to be more likely than their better off counterparts to evaluate government performance based on their (empty) pocketbooks.

To test whether hunger in particular may have a different impact than poverty in general Table 7.4 shows a more comprehensive poverty index that measures the availability of several basic commodities among the poor, non-poor and the entire sample. The sample is again divided into two sub-samples - those who report going without basic necessities such as food, water, medical care, cash income and cooking fuel frequently and those who don't. Again I filter the survey sample to exclude non-poor and then test for the bivariate associations between direction of partisanship and egocentric economic evaluations. I then repeat for non-poor by excluding the poor.

Table 7.4: Egocentric evaluations and partisanship among poor and non-poor citizens

Poverty Index	Item by type	2000	2002	2004	2006
Egocentric evaluations	Poor	.287***	.077	.033	.261***
	Non poor	.138**	.000	-.065	.054
	Entire sample	.175***	-.016	-.073*	.112***

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

DV=ANC/non-ANC (opposition identifiers and independents)

Summary statistic: Gamma.

When the entire poverty index is considered the patterns remain largely unchanged. People who report going without a range of basic commodities are more likely to rely on egocentric evaluations when informing their partisan choices. This suggests the poor are better able to connect their plight to government policy than the non-poor. In addition, black African voters are more likely to do so than other voters. Unfavorable personal economic situations are more likely to solicit a reaction than favorable economic experiences. In other words, voters are more likely to attribute negative economic experiences to government responsibility, or hold government responsible for their economic woes than their good fortunes. Indeed, research finds that unemployed and poor people tend to favor societal explanations of economic

disadvantage more and individualistic explanations less than more advantaged individuals do.²⁴ A final conclusion can only be drawn from multivariate analyses.

Retrospective vs. prospective economic evaluations

The bivariate relationships in tables 7.1 and 7.2 suggest that South African voters look back and act retrospectively when evaluating government's economic performance particularly in terms of collective/ socio-tropic evaluations as evident in moderate to strong relationships shown by the relevant coefficients. Yet, overall prospective evaluations show much stronger relationships with partisanship than retrospective evaluations. The same pattern holds for black African voters.

In addition, when comparing the two types of prospective evaluations (egocentric versus socio-tropic) it is clear that prospective socio-tropic evaluations have a stronger relationship with partisanship than prospective egocentric evaluations. Overall, the data suggest that South African voters are more likely to think prospectively than retrospectively when evaluating economic performance in terms of expectations for entire country's economic future and these evaluations affect the direction of partisan identity. However, retrospective evaluations are far from irrelevant to voting behaviour. Their continued presence indicates that voters do enforce some level of electoral accountability. In line with international literature, it appears that South African voters are attuned to both retrospective and prospective evaluations of government performance.²⁵

Among black voters the pattern again remains largely similar. Several remarkable points can be made. First, the overall strength of the coefficients in table 7.2 are not vastly different to those found in table 7.1, suggesting that even once the impact of race is removed, evaluations continue to matter to black voters. Second, in the later years, particularly in 2004 and 2006, the coefficients are virtually the same, which indicates that these set of economic criteria have become increasingly important to black African voters as the influence of other variables diminish.

Simple vs. mediated retrospective economic evaluations

I test 'mediated' retrospective evaluations (MRE's) using an indicator that solicits evaluations of government's economic policy in relation to people's personal economic circumstances.²⁶ Among the entire electorate, coefficients for mediated evaluations show an increase in strength from low to moderate between the years 2002 and 2006. Simple retrospective evaluations, which are based on personal direct experience, explain less of partisanship compared to mediated retrospective evaluations where voters are asked to consider both their personal economic circumstances and government's handling of the economy together

²⁴ Sigelman, Sigelman and Bullock, 142.

²⁵ Ibid., 141; Fiorina.

²⁶ The item is *The government's economic policies have helped most people, only a few have suffered*.

in their evaluations. Lewis-Beck found that mediated evaluations go much further in explaining American partisanship than simple current egocentric evaluations which find inconsistent support in South Africa and sometimes insignificant results.²⁷ Fiorina also finds that mediated retrospective evaluations show greater statistical strength and significance than simple retrospective evaluations and at least partially subsume them.²⁸ This is certainly the case with the South African data. In addition, mediated evaluations are also stronger in South Africa than current sociotropic coefficients and retrospective economic evaluations (which are consistently stronger than current economic evaluations). Among black African voters, the pattern remains similar. Mediated economic evaluations generally show stronger and statistically significant relationships with partisanship compared to egocentric, sociotropic and retrospective evaluations between 2002 and 2006.

Economic voting is more detectable when respondent evaluations are mediated by taking the role of government into account. In other words, pocketbook voting is most likely to be observed when personal economic circumstance is assessed in conjunction with government's impact on it.

The fact that mediated evaluations are not directly probed (because of the unavailability of survey items) can have implications for the findings because, as both Lewis-Beck and Fiorina argue, personal retrospective evaluations are the least likely to show economic or pocketbook voting.²⁹ Personal economic measures should therefore include a mediated aspect. And initial findings suggest that mediated items deserve more attention in South African surveys.

Table 7.5: Simple versus mediated economic evaluations

Entire electorate	2002	2004	2006
Mediated retrospective	.171*	.237*	.280*
Current egocentric (simple)	-.016	-.073*	.112*
Current sociotropic (simple)	.231*	.186*	.251*
Retrospective egocentric (simple)	.143*	.147*	.219*
Retrospective sociotropic (simple)	.269*	.213*	.276*
Black African electorate			
Mediated retrospective	.151***	.099*	.264***
Current egocentric (simple)	.069	.027	.241***
Current sociotropic (simple)	.156***	.131***	.244***
Retrospective egocentric (simple)	.085*	.137***	.240***
Retrospective sociotropic (simple)	.125**	.152***	.252***

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

DV=ANC/non-ANC

Summary statistic: Gamma.

²⁷ Lewis-Beck, "Comparative Economic Voting", 175.

²⁸ Fiorina, 120, 128-9. Fiorina's results found a weak or non-existent relationship between individuals' perceptions of their changing financial situation and the vote.

²⁹ Lewis-Beck, "Comparative Economic Voting", 182.

General evaluations of direction of country and overall conditions

Some of the strongest coefficients are found in the relationship between partisan support for the ANC and evaluations of overall conditions in South Africa. Over the time period the strength of the relationship is substantial and also seems to increase, especially among black voters. This suggests that while voters perform economic evaluations they also look to the broader national picture for information when deciding which party to identify with or support. Perceptions of the direction and overall condition of the country also act as information sources for future expectations about the economy and are therefore closely linked to the strong correlation coefficients found for prospective sociotropic economic evaluations.

7.3 Bivariate relationships: Political evaluations

This section uses the dependent variable ANC versus Non-ANC to explore bivariate relationships between numerous political performance evaluations and support for the incumbents among the entire electorate and black African voters.

7.3.1 Direction of partisanship among entire electorate (ANC/ non ANC)

Table 7.6: Political Items with direction of partisanship among entire electorate

Item by type	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006
Evaluation of regime							
Satisfaction with democracy	.461***	.436***	-	.403***	.265***	.506***	.451***
No. of cases	2364	3333		2031	1930	2039	1958
Evaluations of government institutions							
Trust in the President?	.473***	.552***	-	.419***	.467***	.547***	.533***
No. of cases	2430	3294		1999	2033	2124	2046
Trust in the National Assembly?	-	.471***	-	.420***	.430***	.446***	.483***
No. of cases		3273		2000	2011	1910	1841
Approval of job performance							
President	.653***	.497***	.781***	.524***	.421***	.530***	.522***
No. of cases	2365	3285	2199	1939	1992	2103	2008
MP's	.501***	.444***	-	.494***	.421***	.399***	.476***
No. of cases	2366	3236		1915	1889	1768	1735
Province/ Premier	.281***	.273***	.328***	.361***	.368***	.459***	.362***
No. of cases	2365	3249	2199	1795	1792	1845	1873
Local government councillor.	-	.159***	-	.212***	.208***	.229***	.228***
No. of cases		3209		1832	1785	1853	1862
Approval of policy performance ³⁰							

³⁰ I created two separate summated unweighted factor-based scales for bivariate analysis (consisting of average scale scores for each respondent) based on factor analysis data reduction techniques (two

Economic Policy ³¹	-	-	.589***	.286***	.244***	.300***	.286***
No. of cases			1945	1914	1875	1954	1839
Social Services Policy ³²	-	-	.648***	.354***	.303***	.361***	.333***
No. of cases	1370	1530	2058	2065	1921	2042	1940
Total cases	2430	3500	2200	2200	2400	2400	2400

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

DV= non-ANC (0) vs. ANC (1), Summary statistic: Gamma.

- = Not asked

7.3.2 Direction of partisanship among Black Africans (ANC/ non ANC)

Table 7.7: Political Items with direction of partisanship among black voters

Item by type	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006
Evaluation of regime							
Satisfaction with democracy	.310***	.308***	-	.270***	.179***	.360***	.399***
No. of cases	1593	2489		1567	1385	1591	1549
Evaluations of government institutions							
Trust in the President?	.382***	.395***	-	.294***	.291***	.363***	.475***
No. of cases	1625	2462		1547	1433	1681	1628
Trust in the National Assembly?	-	.323***	-	.311***	.254***	.253***	.426***
No. of cases		2443		1525	1418	1505	1454
Approval of job performance							
President	.472***	.303***	.670***	.438***	.233***	.393***	.480***
No. of cases	1624	2430	1170	1498	1411	1678	1610
MP's	.374***	.268***	-	.387***	.228***	.227***	.422***
No. of cases	1622	2398		1469	1341	1442	1393
Province/ Premier	.216***	.172***	.188***	.289***	.204***	.325***	.328***
No. of cases	1625	2409	1170	1421	1323	1532	1522
Local government councillor.	-	.113***	-	.189***	.122**	.149***	.226***
No. of cases		2381		1428	1297	1554	1535
Approval of policy performance ³³							

rotated factors extracted). The equivalent indicators for 1997 and 1999 are a 4-point and 11-point index/ scale respectively that taps government performance in policy areas.

³¹ Economic Policy Evaluation Index reliability is very high: years 1999 (Cronbach's Alpha = .63) (n = 1946); 2000 (Cronbach's Alpha = .72) (n = 1964); 2002 (Cronbach's Alpha = .68) (n = 2113); 2004 (Cronbach's Alpha = .78) (n = 2140); 2006 (Cronbach's Alpha = .76) (n = 2113).

³² Social Services Policy Evaluation Index reliability is very high: years 1999 (Cronbach's Alpha = .75) (n = 2059); 2000 (Cronbach's Alpha = .74) (n = 2119); 2002 (Cronbach's Alpha = .71) (n = 2168); 2004 (Cronbach's Alpha = .80) (n = 2248); 2006 (Cronbach's Alpha = .77) (n = 2230).

³³ I created two separate summated unweighted factor-based scales for bivariate analysis (consisting of average scale scores for each respondent) based on factor analysis data reduction techniques (two rotated factors extracted). The equivalent indicators for 1997 and 1999 are a 4-point and 11-point index/ scale respectively that taps government performance in policy areas.

Economic Policy ³⁴	-	-	.350***	.210***	.229***	.213***	.246***
No. of cases			951	1463	1308	1530	1562
Social Services Policy ³⁵	-	-	.376***	.202***	.190***	.229***	.271***
No. of cases	1023	1029	1073	1572	1365	1620	1459
Total cases	1673	2581	1170	1665	1625	1875	1876

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

DV= non-ANC (0) vs. ANC (1), Summary statistic: Gamma.

- = Not asked

Dimensions of political evaluations

The most remarkable feature of the data in tables 7.6 and 7.7 is the overall increase in the strength of regime and many other political performance evaluations across time. They generally show stronger relationships with partisanship compared to economic evaluations. It therefore appears that the political and policy performance of the incumbent ANC government has become an increasingly important determinant of partisan support in South Africa, and remains more persuasive than economic evaluations. It also appears that regime evaluations and the delivery of 'political goods' such as institutional performance make a greater impact on people's partisan decisions than policy performance. Finally, voters tend to use national institutions rather than local institutions as information guides to inform their political evaluations, suggesting that South African voters tend to look at the national picture over the local with respect to both institutional and policy performance.

Evaluations of democratic regime

Regime evaluations which tap people's satisfaction with democracy are designed to assess the concrete performance of an actual elected regime rather than government. Evaluations of political regime performance are distinct from normative 'support' for democracy or from evaluations of delivery of 'political goods', which assess performance of a current government and state institutions.³⁶ Because governments come and go more frequently than regimes, approval of government performance may fluctuate, while satisfaction with (and indeed support for) democracy should remain a distinct and more permanent judgment. Ideally, citizens should offer support for the principle of democracy whilst drawing a clear distinction between their choice for a democratic government and the performance of the current regime.³⁷ Voters should therefore distinguish their governments from overall regimes.

Yet, the close match in the overall pattern in the correlations for government performance evaluations suggest that voters make little distinction between evaluations of the democratic

³⁴ Economic Policy Evaluation Index reliability is very high: years 1999 (Cronbach's Alpha = .63) (n = 1946); 2000 (Cronbach's Alpha = .72) (n = 1964); 2002 (Cronbach's Alpha = .68) (n = 2113); 2004 (Cronbach's Alpha = .78) (n = 2140); 2006 (Cronbach's Alpha = .76) (n = 2113).

³⁵ Social Services Policy Evaluation Index reliability is very high: years 1999 (Cronbach's Alpha = .75) (n = 2059); 2000 (Cronbach's Alpha = .74) (n = 2119); 2002 (Cronbach's Alpha = .71) (n = 2168); 2004 (Cronbach's Alpha = .80) (n = 2248); 2006 (Cronbach's Alpha = .77) (n = 2230).

³⁶ Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi, 81.

³⁷ Norris, *Critical citizens*, 2.

regime and the ANC government's performance. Satisfaction with the way democracy works in South Africa has a moderate to substantial relationship with whether one supports the incumbent party or not, and more importantly, it rises over time as other political performance evaluations rise. Rather than disassociating the two, it seems likely that when voters report on satisfaction with democracy, they are thinking about the performance of the ANC government. This has several implications. Satisfaction with democracy is directly related to ANC support. And as evaluations of ANC performance rise and fall so may levels of satisfaction with democracy. Indeed, if the ANC fails to perform as an elected government, people may conclude that democracy has failed.

Evaluations of government institutions

Trust in the President and trust in the National Parliament both have strong relationships with whether one supports the incumbents or not, although trust in the President shows a stronger relationship. These evaluations are also increasingly important, especially among black African voters.

Approval of job performances

Again, approval of the president's job performance has a substantial to very strong relationship with support for the ANC. And it is stronger than approval with national members of Parliament. Approval of the provincial government or the Premier has a moderate relationship with support for incumbents while approval of local government is low to moderate. On the basis of the data it appears that the presidential figure and national institutions guide partisan behaviour to a greater extent than local institutions, which are meant to act as the main delivery arm of government.³⁸ If voters approve of and trust in the President they project these positive sentiments towards the incumbent party.

Government's policy performance

Using the two factor-based scales to tap evaluations of both economic and social service policy areas, approval of government job performance in both policy areas shows a moderate to substantial relationship to support for incumbents. Yet, approval of social service policy has consistently greater impacts than economic policy. The effect of positive evaluations of economic policy on ANC partisanship is smaller in comparison to social services. Indeed, of all the political evaluations presented here evaluations of economic policy performance in particular make the smallest impact on the direction of partisan support. However, among black voters between 2000 and 2002 the situation is reversed whereby economic policy has greater sway than social services.

³⁸ The Constitution (Chapter 7 S. 152) envisages local government to be the main delivery site for social services and socio-economic development.

7.4 Multivariate relationships: Entire Electorate: Performance model

This chapter has reviewed popular evaluations of both economic and political goods and their individual effect on the direction of partisanship. Bivariate analyses show correlations between South African voters' partisan choices and both economic and political evaluations. However, because these types of evaluations may overlap it becomes necessary to isolate their relative effects. This sub-section enters all the economic and political variables into one performance model in order to firstly, discern the key performance considerations that lie behind partisanship, and secondly, to test the overall predictive capacity of the model to explain the direction of partisanship among the entire and black African electorates.³⁹ In other words, we predict the probability or odds of being an ANC partisan (as opposed to being an opposition partisan or independent) by testing the effect of several independent evaluation variables.⁴⁰ The multivariate performance models among the entire electorate are displayed in Tables 7.8 and 7.9.

7.4.1 Direction of partisanship: Opposition vs. ANC

Table 7.8: Direction of partisanship among entire electorate: Opposition (0) versus ANC (1)

	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006
Economic evaluations						
Current sociotropic	.951	.702***	1.440*	1.068	.705**	1.143
Current egocentric	.576***	.720***	.810	.831*	1.013	.776*
Retrospective sociotropic	1.381**	1.511***	1.353*	1.250*	1.146	1.231
Retrospective egocentric	1.090	1.277***	-	.776*	.871	.727
Prospective sociotropic	1.343**	.881*	.788*	1.019	.985	1.023
Prospective egocentric	1.010	1.341***	-	1.018	.825	1.414*
Overall conditions	1.189*	1.589***	1.244	1.307*	1.871***	1.520**
Regime evaluations						
Satisfaction with democracy	1.267**	-	1.072	1.011	1.847***	1.221
Political evaluations						
Trust in the President	1.874***	-	2.189***	1.281	1.664**	1.253
Trust in National Parliament	1.113	-	1.086	1.082	1.435	1.068
Job performance ⁴¹	1.116***	6.227***	.929	1.057	1.095	1.203***
Economic delivery ⁴²	-	2.134***	1.478**	1.004	1.346	.761*

³⁹ These multivariate regression models include a number of independent variables. This may undermine significance as a result of excess conditionality. A more parsimonious model for economic and political evaluations which also includes race is provided in chapter ten.

⁴⁰ The economic variables are current sociotropic/collective and egocentric/pocket-book evaluations; retrospective sociotropic and egocentric evaluations; prospective sociotropic and egocentric evaluations and finally a variable that measures overall conditions of the country. Apart from 2000, where the retrospective and prospective egocentric variables are missing, these variables are all present in surveys dating 1997 onwards.

⁴¹ I use a 4-item scale for job performance of President, MP's, Provincial Premier, and Local Councillor.

⁴² Factor scores are used from factor analysis. Indicators include: economic policy, jobs, stable prices, income gap.

Social services delivery ⁴³	-	2.001***	1.402**	1.413***	1.403*	1.102
Constant	.026***	.002***	.414	.556	.064**	.041***
Nagelkerke R^2	.364***	.571***	.255***	.153***	.374***	.217***
Classification %'s	81	88	83	77	92	89
Hosmer & Lemeshow Test	.048	.000	.114	.095	.033	.309
Valid no. of cases	1606	517	579	785	768	891
Total no. of cases	3500	2200	2200	2400	2400	2400

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ (Model Chi-Square)

DV=ANC/ opposition identifiers

- = Not asked

Evaluating the overall fit of the model:

The model chi-square is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) across all years allowing us to conclude that the set of variables improves the predictive capacity of the model (prediction of the log odds). The pseudo R^2 measure, Nagelkerke, indicates that the model explains a modest amount of variance, averaging at 26 percent (although it is exceptionally higher in 1999, an election year). The Hosmer and Lemeshow test provides an additional goodness-of-fit measure.⁴⁴ The statistic indicates a goodness-of-fit for most years. A measure of how well the model performs is in its ability to accurately classify cases into the two categories of the dependent variable (compared to the null which simply assumes all voters support the ANC).⁴⁵ The overall predictive accuracy is reasonable and fluctuates between 77 percent and 92 percent over the years. Overall, the performance model appears to have good predictive capacity.

Interpreting the regression coefficients:

First, how much does each set of variables contribute to the performance model's ability to predict the direction of partisanship? The bivariate results set out earlier in section 7.2 provide support for certain claims of economic voting theory. As perceptions of economic conditions improve or worsen the intention to support or distance oneself respectively from incumbent's increases. However, once economic evaluations are combined with political evaluations the influence of economic goods relative to political goods clearly decreases. As a family of independent variables, political evaluations show the greatest ability to predict the direction of partisanship and this holds true over time.

⁴³ Factor scores are used from factor analysis. Indicators include: health, education, welfare, water and electricity.

⁴⁴ When comparing observed and expected events using the Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit statistic for logistic regression one hopes to find a non-significant probability, which indicates that the expected and observed events are close and that the model is a good fit. However, there is a potential problem with the Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test statistic. While a large sample size is necessary to ensure the expected number of events in most groups is greater than five, large sample sizes also means that it is easier to reject the null hypothesis. SPSS Training Manual, 3-10.

⁴⁵ Menard, 37. Classification tables indicate the predicted and observed value of the dependent variable for the cases in the analysis. However, the 'accuracy of prediction' is less important if the study is theory testing, which is the focus of this study. Nevertheless, I include the classification information in the tables.

Considering only the economic evaluations it is clear that current egocentric evaluations and retrospective sociotropic evaluations are the most consistently influential indicators of partisanship. They are statistically significant across the most number of years and suggest two things. First, positive evaluations of one's current personal economic situation (pocket book) affected ANC partisan support negatively (holding constant for everything else)! It appears that if people believe that their current personal economic conditions have not improved, they are more likely to be ANC identifiers (controlling for all of the other evaluative variables)! This is yet another sign that people's personal economic situations have consequences for partisan support. Second, a positive evaluation of the past years national economic conditions affected partisan support positively: if people perceived that the country's economic well being improved they were more likely to support the ANC. Prospective egocentric evaluations suggest that if people expect their personal economic situation to improve they offer the ANC support. The prospective-retrospective distinction does not appear to make an impact in the multivariate analysis.

One of the strongest impacts is of popular evaluations of 'overall conditions of the country', which is a continually significant predictor of direction of partisanship over the years. People who believe that the country's overall conditions or direction have improved are always most likely to support the ANC government. These sociotropic type evaluations are always significant and appear to make a greater impact than economic evaluations generally.

Political evaluations are key performance considerations among voters. Trust in the President emerges as an important indicator of incumbent support and is significant across many years. Generally, voters are more likely to be an ANC identifier than an opposition identifier if they trust the President (controlling for the other variables). Trust in National Parliament appears insignificant to partisanship. Positive ratings of job performance of key political figures such as the President, members of parliament, Premiers and local councillors are also consistent with support for the ANC. Finally, approval of government policy performance materialises as a statistically significant set of variables. In particular, it appears that approval of government's delivery of social services such as water and electricity, health, education and welfare show the most consistent relationship to direction of partisanship over time relative to economic policy. The predominance of approval for social services policy over economic policy as an indicator of partisan support again highlights the overall ineffectiveness of economic evaluations found in the data.

7.4.2 Direction of partisanship: Independents vs. ANC

Table 7.9: Direction of partisanship among entire electorate: Independents (0) versus ANC (1)

	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006
Economic evaluations						
Current sociotropic	.924	.1.052*	1.018	1.206*	1.216*	.966
Current egocentric	.745***	.690***	.905	.744***	.698***	.956
Retrospective sociotropic	1.113	.916**	1.052	1.126	1.096	1.036
Retrospective egocentric	1.074	1.271***	-	.981	1.014	1.013
Prospective sociotropic	1.020	1.262***	1.074	1.120	.891	1.182
Prospective egocentric	1.073	1.286***	-	.880	1.034	.862
Overall conditions	1.156*	1.366***	1.159	1.119*	1.197	1.164
Regime evaluations						
Satisfaction with democracy	1.370***	-	1.250**	1.122	1.539***	1.244*
Political evaluations						
Trust in the President	1.869***	-	1.231*	1.119	1.338**	1.284*
Trust in National Parliament	1.052	-	1.017	1.462*	1.019	1.388**
Job performance	.987	1.974***	1.084*	1.078*	1.044	1.141***
Economic policy	-	1.619***		1.079	1.145*	.871
Social services policy	-	1.778***	1.262**	1.420***	1.182*	1.254**
Constant	.056***	.012***	1.097	.152***	.098***	.043***
Nagelkerke R^2	.199***	.427***	.171	.236***	.204***	.227***
Classification %'s	67	74	65	72	70	76
Hosmer & Lemeshow Test	.226	.002	.016	.236	.293	.537
Valid no. of cases	2180	1083	1148	933	1122	1090
Total no. of cases	3500	2200	2200	2400	2400	2400

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ (Model Chi-Square)

DV=ANC/Independents

- = Not asked

Evaluating the overall fit of the model:

When the analysis concentrates on ANC versus independents, the model chi-square remains statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) across all years suggesting that the predictive capacity of the revised model remains satisfactory. The Nagelkerke R^2 drops and ranges between 20 and 23 percent (the 1999 figure is higher). The Hosmer and Lemeshow test continues to show reasonable goodness-of-fit. The overall predictive accuracy remains similar to the above model at 71 percent average. Overall, the model which includes ANC identifiers versus independents in the analysis again appears to have good predictive capacity that is beyond random variation in the sample.

Interpreting the regression coefficients:

When the entire electorate is examined looking only at ANC versus independents a few changes are apparent. Economic evaluations as predictors of partisanship become more statistically significant. Current egocentric and sociotropic evaluations are significant in a higher number of years. Positive evaluation of ones current personal economic situation (pocket book) affected ANC partisan support negatively while positive evaluations of national conditions affect ANC partisanship positively. Yet, unlike the previous ANC-opposition model, retrospective sociotropic and overall evaluations are less meaningful. It appears that current personal and national economic evaluations determine whether one is an ANC partisan or an independent. Furthermore, regime evaluations and social services evaluations are also more significant in this model again suggesting that these political evaluations matter as to whether the ANC attracts support or not. Independents appear to evaluate the regime and service delivery negatively.

Overall, these data continually suggest that voters base their evaluations and, in turn, their partisan support, on their perceptions of their own pocketbooks, performance of the broader conditions in the country and a host of political goods, namely presidential trust and approval of policy. Opposition supporters hold positive views of their personal economic circumstances, and negative views of national economic performance and political performance. Independents are especially characterised by negative views current personal and national economic evaluations, of the regime, and of service delivery.

7.5 Multivariate relationships: Black African electorate: Performance model

This section examines the effect of economic evaluations on the direction of partisanship among black South Africans only. It is important to ensure that findings from the entire South African electorate are not vastly different to that among the black electorate. This ensures that the analysis does not miss sociological or group-specific nuances hidden in the data that can be overlooked by not testing the black ANC electorate in isolation. The racial distancing and polarisation in South African politics may skew results if limited to the entire electorate - white opposition supporters may systematically evaluate the new (black) ANC-led government in a more negative and pessimistic manner than other race groups. By isolating black South Africans, and still observing similar patterns and trends, one can ensure and conclude that the effects of performance evaluations on partisanship are not actually an effect of racial bias.

7.5.1 Direction of partisanship: Opposition vs. ANC

Table 7.10: Direction of partisanship among black Africans: Opposition (0) versus ANC (1)

	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006
Economic evaluations						
Current sociotropic	.963	.700***	1.437*	.963	.625*	1.114
Current egocentric	.848	.920	.934	.960	1.152	1.006
Retrospective sociotropic	1.121	1.514***	1.336	1.118	.921	1.253
Retrospective egocentric	.882	1.196**	-	.699*	1.102	.887
Prospective sociotropic	1.352*	.887*	.724*	.853	1.021	1.121
Prospective egocentric	.895	1.207**	-	1.142	.896	1.238
Overall conditions	.912	1.418***	1.020	1.323*	1.621*	1.109
Regime evaluations						
Satisfaction with democracy	1.243*	-	.970	.999	1.537*	1.037
Political evaluations						
Trust in the President	1.524***	-	2.073***	1.298	1.518	.992
Trust in National Parliament	1.112	-	1.152	1.050	1.515	1.047
Job performance	1.144***	5.613***	.916	.974	1.071	1.303***
Economic policy	-	2.091***	1.630**	1.055	1.244	.778
Social services policy	-	1.790***	1.002	1.256*	1.259	.994
Constant	.221***	.005***	1.282	4.368*	.208	.070**
Nagelkerke R^2						
	.162***	.403***	.168***	.064*	.248***	.138***
Classification %'s	85	89	.86	82	94	93
Hosmer and Lemeshow Test	.902	.000	.728	.173	.017	.186
Valid no. of cases	1260	364	492	640	662	759
Total no. of cases	2477	1170	1560	1605	1719	1804

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ (Model Chi-Square)

DV=ANC/Opposition identifiers

- = Not asked

Evaluating the overall fit of the model:

The model chi-square is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) across all years allowing us to conclude the predictive capacity of the model is strong. Nagelkerke R^2 indicates that the model explains a smaller amount of variance than the previous model which includes the entire electorate. The Hosmer and Lemeshow test statistic indicates a goodness-of-fit. The overall predictive accuracy is remains reasonable, fluctuating between 59 percent and 71 percent and increasing over the years (an average of 66 percent). Overall, the model appears has less predictive capacity than the previous model which tests the entire electorate but still remains reasonable. The fact that the black-only model is consistently weaker than the previous model suggests that race plays a role in the way evaluations affect partisanship. Put more precisely, it suggests that blacks evaluate government very differently compared to other minority race groups. I return to this observation in the conclusion. This finding therefore

points to the need to re-interrogate the role of race in voting decision-making among South African voters.

Interpreting the regression coefficients:

We see that certain evaluations are significant economic predictors among black South Africans over the years. In general however, political evaluations remain the strongest predictors. Trust in the President, job performance and economic and social services policy evaluations are the most helpful predictors of partisanship. The direction of the variables remains the same. Positive evaluations increase the likelihood of being an ANC identifier while negative evaluations increase the likelihood of being an opposition identifier among black voters. Despite less statistical significance in the revised model, the relationship between performance evaluations and direction mirrors that of the wider population in the previous model.

7.5.2 Direction of partisanship: Independents vs. ANC

Table 7.11: Direction of partisanship among black Africans: Independents (0) versus ANC (1)

	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006
Economic evaluations						
Current sociotropic	.923	1.041	.991	1.209*	1.222*	.933
Current egocentric	.822**	.780***	.965	.830*	.742***	1.090
Retrospective sociotropic	1.018	.814***	1.013	1.041	1.071	1.035
Retrospective egocentric	1.083	1.222***	-	.982	1.050	1.009
Prospective sociotropic	.901	1.156***	1.096	.921	.842	1.147
Prospective egocentric	1.034	1.400***	-	.986	1.094	.861
Overall conditions	1.077	1.270***	1.115	1.172	1.083	1.146
Regime evaluations						
Satisfaction with democracy	1.372***	-	1.152	1.163	1.436***	1.199
Political evaluations						
Trust in the President	1.609***	-	1.156	1.033	1.191	1.259*
Trust in National Parliament	1.070	-	.990	1.239	.992	1.347**
Job performance	.971	1.574***	1.099*	1.054	1.033	1.128**
Economic policy	-	1.444***	1.087	1.162	1.106	.858
Social services policy	-	1.484***	1.101	1.288*	1.152	1.160
Constant	.255***	.046***	.110***	.527	.257**	.070***
Nagelkerke R^2						
	.098***	.226***	.105***	.109***	.098***	.163***
Classification %'s	66	68	61	74	69	79
Hosmer and Lemeshow Test	.772	.985	.230	.031	.323	.859
Valid no. of cases	1740	546	900	725	913	912
Total no. of cases	2477	1170	1560	1605	1719	1804

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ (Model Chi-Square)

DV=ANC/Independents
- = Not asked

Evaluating the overall fit of the model:

When I examine black African ANC identifiers versus independents, the model chi-square remains statistically significant across all years and Nagelkerke R^2 is lower than previous models in most years. The Hosmer and Lemeshow test statistic generally indicates a goodness-of-fit. The overall average predictive accuracy is good, increasing over the years.

Interpreting the regression coefficients:

The egocentric evaluations become significant again compared to the opposition versus ANC model for black Africans. Positive evaluation of one's current personal economic situation (or 'pocket book') affected ANC partisan support negatively, whereby people move into the independent category. The rest of the data offers strong evidence to suggest that evaluations of government institutions and leaders, as well as approval of job performance and policy, affect whether one decides to identify with incumbents or move into the independents category. Where evaluations are significant they indicate that positive evaluations increase the likelihood of being an ANC identifier while negative evaluations increase the likelihood of being an independent among black South Africans. Political variables are therefore particularly helpful in explaining partisanship versus independence.

Among both the entire and the black South African electorates evaluations of incumbent performance clearly do matter to partisan identification. The data continually suggests that voters base their evaluations and, in turn, their partisan support, on their perceptions of their own pocketbooks, performance of the broader conditions in the country and a host of political goods, namely presidential trust and approval of policy. Opposition supporters hold positive views of their personal economic circumstances, and negative views of national economic performance and political performance. Independents are especially characterised by negative views of current personal and national economic evaluations, of the regime, and of service delivery. Yet, the consistently weaker model for black Africans suggests that race plays a role in the way evaluations affect partisanship.

7.6 Summary and conclusions

Contrary to assumptions among some scholars that government performance does not affect partisan dispositions in South Africa, I find that economic and political performance evaluations do influence the direction of partisan support.⁴⁶ Strong support for the economic model can be found in the similarities in trends and patterns of partisanship and evaluations that tap satisfaction with the national economy. Second, the bivariate and multivariate analyses

⁴⁶ Schlemmer, 'State of parties and health of democracy'. He argues that the political 'solidarity vote' by Africans for the ANC undermines individual and policy-related interests. Voters will vote for the ANC regardless of whether they are unhappy with them or not.

show that approval of economic and political performance is almost always associated with support for the incumbent party. As perceptions of economic conditions improve or worsen the intention to support or distance oneself respectively from incumbent's increases. As expected, fluctuations in partisanship appear to be a result of changes in voter evaluations of government's economic and political performance.

The only noticeable deviation is found in the relationship between egocentric evaluations and partisan choice. I expected voters with unfavorable personal economic circumstances to punish the incumbent government. Yet, I find the opposite to be true. People who give positive pocketbook evaluations are the most likely to be opposition identifiers whilst people whose personal situations have not improved tend to support the ANC government. It does seem that, as Popkin might say, poorer South African voters do not project directly from their own pocketbooks or even their personal problems onto their partisanship. Instead, the use of mediated evaluations suggest that if some voters perceive government policy as having some responsibility for their economic circumstance they do act to punish or reward the incumbent party. In other words, they discriminate between government and personal problems and bring to bear only those personal problems they believe government should be addressing.⁴⁷ The sociotropic categories also suggest that South African voters base their partisan decisions, not simply on their own personal pocketbook situation, but on their larger perceptions of the performance of the broader economy as a whole. If the economy has performed well people are more likely to offer the incumbents support. As expected, the results show that South Africans are not exclusively 'pocket book' or sociotropic in their outlook. Instead, both types of evaluations act to reinforce each other. As Sigelman et al assert sociotropic and self-interested voting appear to operate side by side.⁴⁸

My expectation that the most economically disenfranchised or poorest voters will increasingly base their evaluations on their own personal situations rather than the performance of the broader economy is supported by the bivariate analysis. People who report going without a range of basic commodities are also more likely to rely on egocentric evaluations when informing their partisan choices. The poor are thus better able to connect their plight to government policy than the non-poor. Unfavorable personal economic situations are more likely to solicit a reaction than favorable economic experiences. In other words, voters are more likely to attribute negative economic experiences to government responsibility, or hold government responsible for their economic woes than their good fortunes. This confirms findings of other research which show unemployed and poor people tend to favor societal explanations of economic disadvantage more and individualistic explanations less than more advantaged individuals do.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Popkin, 31.

⁴⁸ Sigelman, Sigelman and Bullock, 140.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 142.

The results of the retrospective-prospective distinction support my hypotheses that South African voters act retrospectively by evaluating past economic performance and prospectively in terms of expectations of the economy's future. While the bivariate correlations show that prospective evaluations show much stronger relationships with partisanship than retrospective evaluations multivariate analyses show that both hold relatively equal sway over partisanship. In line with the international literature, South African voters think prospectively and retrospectively when evaluating government's economic performance and these evaluations affect the direction of partisan identity.⁵⁰

There are several reasons to expect both types of evaluations to matter in South Africa. Morris Fiorina argues that facts emanating from past performance are cheaper to acquire than knowledge of future plans and are more reliable for the voter than promises for the future, making it more rational for the voter to ground his voting decision on current events than purely on future ones.⁵¹ Yet, during these first years of democracy, voters had limited information about the ANC's track record in governance and are therefore more likely to think and act prospectively. Many voters might also have tempered the ANC's modest economic achievements with the party's success in dismantling the apartheid state. With the passing of time however, as the party develops a track record, retrospective evaluations should become more relevant as South Africans are better equipped to judge the ANC performance. Retrospective evaluations should thus become increasingly important in the future as voters begin to evaluate the ANC's time in office in terms of the delivery of economic and social goods. Mondli Makhanya, well-known journalist and political commentator, sums up the dual role for retrospective and prospective evaluations when he states, "Most South Africans are generally positive about the country they live in. They come from a place where they were sub-human and there was no hope. The past decade has given them a resemblance of hope that things can get better."⁵² Makanya's insight also reminds us why the ANC continue to garner support for their perceivably pro-poor policies from poorer segments of society, despite increased unemployment and poverty, the delivery crisis over electricity, and allegations of grand corruption over the arms deal. Finally, the continued presence of retrospective evaluations in particular also indicates that voters do enforce some level of electoral accountability.

I expected voters to place more emphasis on political over economic performance. When economic and political evaluations are combined in the multivariate analyses the influence of economic goods relative to political goods decreases. Evaluations of government institutions and leaders as well as approval of job performance and policy areas have greater effects than

⁵⁰ Ibid., 141; Fiorina.

⁵¹ Fiorina, 12.

⁵² Mondli Makhanya, "Opposition's only chance is to show some vision and stop whining", *The Sunday Times*, 18 April 2004.

economic evaluations on whether one decides to identify with incumbents or not. People also tend to look to national over provincial or local institutions for partisan guides.

Reasons for the predominance of political goods over economic goods may also lie in the strong leadership styles of party politics in South Africa, particularly in the ANC. It may also be bound up in the types of information cues that voters find helpful. Political performance is often easier to observe and evaluate for citizens – the behaviour of national political figures such as the President may provide richer sources of partisan information than oblique trends in the national economy. This proposition is supported by findings that show continued partisan support for the ANC among the economically poor. These voters do not necessarily connect their personal economic woes to government's management of the economy and thus do not appear to punish government accordingly. In a contrary but similar fashion people who give positive pocketbook evaluations are the most likely to be independents or opposition identifiers and therefore do not reward government accordingly.

Finally, the expectation that evaluations of social service delivery would make a greater impact than economic policy areas is supported in the comparisons between two major policy areas. Again, it may be that voters find it easier to judge government on the delivery of tangible social services, such as housing, water and electricity, than on government's management of the macro-economy.

I also hypothesized that the overall capacity of the performance model to explain partisanship should increase over time as social influences on partisanship wane. Chapter Six demonstrated that the sociological model dissipates over time. Yet, according to table 7.12 there does not appear to be any dramatic increase in the performance model's Nagelkerke R^2 in the ANC-opposition distinction. There is however, a slight increase in the Nagelkerke R^2 for the ANC-independent distinction suggesting that performance evaluations increasingly matter to whether one is an ANC partisan or a self-declared independent.

Certain findings have repercussions for democracy. The data shows that voters make little distinction between evaluations of the democratic regime performance and government performance. As approval with the current ANC government fluctuates so do levels of satisfaction with the democratic regime's performance. Bratton et al's study of several African countries found that 'regimes, states, and governments figure jointly in the popular conceptions of regime satisfaction, even after being controlled for one another.'⁵³ Indeed, they find that satisfaction with democracy is influenced principally by evaluations of government performance. With all results leaning in one direction across African countries, they conclude that a pragmatic conception of satisfaction with democracy offers a strong initial signal that

⁵³ Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah-Boadi, 83.

the popularity of democracy will be determined in good part by performance considerations.⁵⁴ Bratton et al also present further evidence of regime evaluations being linked to economic evaluations, when they find that economic dissatisfaction undermines support for democracy. As they state, 'Even in South Africa, those who feel relatively deprived are quickly turned off to democracy.'⁵⁵

Table 7.12: Percentage % variance explained – Performance model (Nagelkerke R²)

Population		1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006
Entire electorate	ANC vs. Opposition	.364***	.571***	.255***	.153***	.374***	.217***
	ANC vs. Independent	.199***	.427***	.171	.236***	.204***	.227***
Black voters	ANC vs. Opposition	.162***	.403***	.168***	.064*	.248***	.138***
	ANC vs. Independent	.098***	.226***	.105***	.109***	.098***	.163***

The reluctance of voters to distinguish between regime performance and government performance is potentially hazardous for democratization. If high levels of ANC partisanship and approval of party incumbents are fundamental to ongoing and wider satisfaction with the democratic regime, positive economic evaluations then also become crucial for regime satisfaction. Slow economic progress or downturns in the economy could presage danger for the democratic regime. As Bratton, Mattes and Gyimah reason, 'over the long run, satisfaction with democracy cannot withstand a persistent and seemingly endless decline in living standards.' These concerns speak to whether South Africans are able to replace under-performing governments without, at the same time, overturning the institutional rules of democracy.⁵⁶

The data also points to positive implications for democratisation. Short-term issues and performance evaluations do motivate voters. This implies that the South African electorate is less predictable and more fluid than often thought. Different outcomes from government performance are therefore potentially capable of producing partisan change. A loss of partisan support should help to improve the quality of democracy in the long term as electoral uncertainty forces incumbents and political parties to become more responsive and more representative of interests. The only detrimental effect for the regime may be increased instability in electoral outcomes as partisan ties weaken. Furthermore, the significant roles that retrospective and prospective evaluations play on partisanship indicate that voters do enforce some level of electoral accountability.

Finally, the overall predictive capacity of the performance model is not dissimilar to that of the sociological model tested in the previous chapter, as indicated by the Nagelkerke statistic in

⁵⁴ Ibid., 84.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 228.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 223.

Table 7.13. It is impossible to state which of the two models is more useful in predicting the direction of partisanship until they are tested against each other in an integrated model. Chapter Ten explicitly tests several models simultaneously to assess the relative effects of each set of theoretical variables. What is clear at this point in the analyses is the apparent stability of and similarity in the strength of the sociological and performance models across the years. While there is evidence of some decline of sociological factors there is no clear increase in performance evaluations on partisan behaviour. This raises questions about the role of sociological cues vis-à-vis evaluations of government's actual or anticipated job performance. Rational choice theorists argue that personal characteristics, such as race, should give way to performance evaluations as voters focus on qualities of legitimate relevance to a candidate's capacity to govern.⁵⁷ Yet the body of data presented so far suggests that sociological factors continue to matter and need to be assessed alongside performance evaluations.

Table 7.13: Percentage % variance explained (Nagelkerke R^2) - Sociological and Performance models compared (entire electorate: Opposition vs. ANC)

Year	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006
Sociological model	.432***	.488***	.392***	.303***	.312***	.305***
Performance model	.364***	.571***	.255***	.153***	.374***	.217***

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ (Model Chi-Square)

Perhaps the most convincing evidence for a renewed investigation into the role of race can be found in the consistently weaker model for black Africans. Race clearly affects the way in which people evaluate government performance – black South Africans evaluate government differently to other minority race groups. And since we know that evaluations do affect partisanship, it becomes reasonable to conclude that race has some kind of direct or indirect impact on partisanship. I therefore ask in what way race remains a relevant evaluation criterion for South African voters. This paves the way for subsequent chapters to assess the impact of party attributes and the role of cognitive behaviour on partisanship. Race will also be included into an integrated model with government evaluations and other variables in Chapter Ten to assess its relative contribution vis-à-vis other theoretical models.

⁵⁷ Fiorina, 152.

Chapter 8

The Influence of Party Images and Social Networks

Party images can be understood as the mental pictures, or psychological images that voters have of parties.¹ The elements of party images refer to the intrinsic values or attributes associated with a party. For example, a party can be thought to have worthy qualities and be regarded as a 'caring' or 'competent' party, or a 'moderate' or 'progressive' party. It may also be regarded as an 'inclusive' or 'unifying' party in a divisive context. Party attributes can also include the personal and demographic characteristics of a party or candidates such as race, ethnicity, language and accent, religion, gender, dress and local ties.²

Especially when information is limited and outcomes are uncertain, party attributes can act as important information short-cuts or heuristic political cues for voters.³ Moreover, when party characteristics are closely aligned with the interests of the voter, they provide an easy and accessible basis for estimates of candidate or party behaviour.⁴ In other words, by thinking about *who* and *what* political parties stand for voters can learn much about politics from social cues.⁵

In South Africa, qualities such as a party's perceived (racial) inclusiveness may constitute important information about how a party will perform in office and whether it represents a voter's interests or is congruent with his or her identity. These images take on either positive or negative connotations for voters as people use them to judge, among other things, whether parties are exclusive or inclusive. Since inclusivity shapes the credibility and trustworthiness of a party these images are important information cues for voters. The electorate can, in a fairly short time span, come to associate certain qualities with specific parties, which then has a substantial influence on its voting choices.⁶ These sociological cues can be expected to take on particular significance in divided or polarised societies, where party images are often a response to and reflect conflict and cleavages with the political system.

Due to the salience of race in South Africa I therefore expect information about the racial credentials of political parties to have an important influence on partisanship. Electoral competition and outcomes that mirror salient racial cleavages ensures that voters learn about parties, develop images and evaluate party policies in ways that resonate with apartheid racial categorizations. As discussed previously, South African political parties still borrow from

¹ Trilling, 2.

² Popkin, 11; Rose and McAllister, *The Loyalties of Voters*, chapter 7; Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*.

³ Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*, 28; Downs; Popkin.

⁴ Popkin, 63.

⁵ Ibid., 7 (my italics).

⁶ Butler and Stokes, *Political change in Britain*, 1st ed. 1969, 359.

historically politicized racial conflicts to maintain electoral support, employed mainly in political discourse and campaigning strategies.⁷ Party images should therefore act as helpful cues for voters about whom and what parties stand for. As such, this chapter builds on substantial work done by Karen Ferree. Her analysis explores different hypotheses about the role of ethnicity in voting behavior in South Africa. After testing if ethnic voting is a primarily expressive act for identification purposes or if instead ethnicity works to align the policy preferences of group members, she finally concludes that the primary role of ethnicity is informational, providing a sufficient statistic that helps voters make decisions about electoral options under conditions of uncertainty.⁸ The first half of this chapter extends the analysis Ferree begins to later time periods, and uses partisanship as the dependent variable instead of the vote choice. The novel theoretical and empirical contributions of this chapter are found in the exploration of the relationship between social networks and party images set out in later sections.

Although changes to the social and economic structure of South African society have been rapid, I expect the influence of racial party images on partisanship to endure over time. This is because I argue that voters' images of political parties will have changed very little over the past twelve years of democracy. Despite several noteworthy attempts, most political parties have been slow to successfully transform their party images.⁹ Voters' perceptions of what groups the parties stand for should therefore be similar to those expressed in 1994.

The aim of this chapter is to find out whether perceptions about the inclusiveness and the trustworthiness of political parties translate into partisan support. Given that party images can help voters determine a party's representivity and trustworthiness I operationalise party images by looking at two relevant survey items that tap firstly, how the public evaluates the inclusiveness and representativeness of parties, and secondly, the trustworthiness of parties. The Idasa 1994, Opinion 1999 and CNEP 2004 surveys have asked respondents to rate political parties on whether they see them as representative of the interests of all South Africans or exclusive and representative of only one specific group.¹⁰ Trust in parties constitutes another element of party imagery and I examine levels of trust in parties by race group. Finally, I investigate the bivariate and multivariate effects of party images on the direction of partisanship.

Hence, two sets of variables test the effects of party images:

1.1 The inclusiveness of the ANC (which is entered as a single item indicator)

⁷ Davis, "Proportional Representation".

⁸ Ferree, "The Microfoundations of ethnic voting", 1.

⁹ Some opposition parties have attempted to transform their images, most obviously the National Party which tried to reinvent itself as the New National Party and the Democratic Alliance which attempted to garner the black African vote in the 2004 election. The ANC also presents itself as a national, non-racial party in some areas.

¹⁰ Refer to chapter four for question items and coding.

1.2 The inclusiveness of opposition parties (which is turned into a scale/index that provides an average score for each respondent).

2.1 The trustworthiness of the ANC (which is entered single item indicator)

2.2 The trustworthiness of opposition parties (which is turned into a scale/index that provides an average score for each respondent).

These items are well-suited to the plural nature of South African society. Political inclusiveness is related to the notion of representation, particularly when representation within a political party can be said to be highly inclusive or exclusive of disparate social groups. The divided society paradigm argues that deep and enduring ascriptive cleavages often determine political affiliations.¹¹ The coexistence of many groups within the social and political spheres gives rise to conflict as the society is split into competitive political factions along racial or other lines. Political parties, as a result, are often seen to represent the social cleavages upon which a divided society is based.¹² In short, voter attachments to certain groups are represented and reinforced by political parties. Some voters may then perceive that certain parties are attached to a certain group to which they do not belong and thus exclude their interests. Hence, I see perceptions of inclusiveness as the most appropriate prism through which to analyze South African party images. Similarly, trust is also an important summary attribute that enables people to easily assess a party. Trust relates to representivity – if a voter believes a party to represent him he is more likely to trust that party. In turn, if a party is trustworthy a voter is more likely to support that party.

In addition to party attributes, another information cue for voters is from one's immediate social context where voters rely on the opinions of others as a reliable and cheap alternative information shortcut to evaluate the information they do have.¹³ Social networks consist of private citizens, family and friends, spouses and immediate community networks. The stronger the convergence of similar political influences from such source's the more likely the voter is to follow suit. In other words, social networks provide a context where inter-personal contacts and flows of communication create complementary political messages, which in turn, encourage uniformity in the behaviour of the immediate group. Individuals are likely to adopt the political views of those around them.¹⁴ Partisanship can therefore be influenced by an individual's immediate social network.

It follows that where social networks are homogenous, or where clearly defined and stratified salient social groups (along class or racial cleavage lines) exist in a community, pressures

¹¹ Seymour Lipset and Stein Rokkan, "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems and Voter Alignments," in *Conflict and Consensus: essays in political sociology*, ed. Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan, 113-185. New Jersey: Transaction, 1985, 114.

¹² Lipset and Rokkan, "Cleavage Structures", 117-118.

¹³ Popkin, 44; Beck, Dalton, Greene and Huckfeldt, 57; Gunther, Montero and Puhle, 183.

¹⁴ Dalton, Flanagan and Beck, *Electoral change*, 17.

emanating from this group will exert additional influence on individual political behaviour.¹⁵ South Africans remain deeply geographically stratified along racial and class lines which embed voters into homogenous social micro contexts.¹⁶ Voters are therefore still deeply embedded in racially defined information networks. Common characteristics of one's immediate social context should persuasively reinforce low information reasoning and thereby inform partisan preferences. South African voters are less likely than citizens in other countries to have mixed partisan messages and most likely to be exposed to partisan congruence from their personal discussants by being exposed to information that systematically favors one party or another. If the social context has a direct impact on the respondent's partisanship by providing new information and electoral cues then it seems likely that it should relate closely to those of intermediaries s/he is closest to, such as the spouse.

The influence of the social context and party attributes as information cues should be considered in conjunction with unequal levels of education across the population. Low education levels (due to the poor quality education under apartheid) may lead many voters to rely on multiple information shortcuts to help them negotiate complex political information. The relationship between cognitive skills and the use of information cues is dealt with in the next chapter. Suffice it to say that I expect reliance on numerous shortcuts to be great among many South African voters.

To measure the impact of information networks and the immediate social context on partisanship I use the CNEP 2004 survey which includes a battery of items that ask respondents about regular political discussants, including their spouse, and their political affiliations. Simple descriptive and bivariate analyses look at exposure to political information from regular personal discussants and levels of partisan congruence between respondents and these discussants.

If one's immediate social context is an important information cue there should be an effect on the respondent's partisanship. I create an index that summarises the level of partisan congruence among the respondent's regular discussants. Low scores on the index represent homogenous relationships (where there is a high level of congruence on partisanship between regular discussants). High scores represent pluralistic relationships (where there is a low level of congruence on partisanship between regular discussants). I then test for the effects of partisan congruence on the direction of partisanship.

I also explore whether there is a link between the social context and party images. I do this by examining whether congruent 'homogenous' partisan relationships affect way people view the inclusiveness of political parties. I hypothesise that respondents in highly congruent

¹⁵ Rose and McAllister, *The Loyalties of Voters*, 109; Richardson and Beck, "The Flow of Political Information", 192.

¹⁶ Mattes and Gouws, 126-7.

relationships (where respondents and regular discussants partisanship matches closely) will have a firm idea about the inclusiveness or exclusiveness of parties. However, respondents in incongruent situations or pluralistic relationships (where respondents' and regular discussants' partisanship do not match) are more likely to see political parties in an ambivalent or ambiguous light.

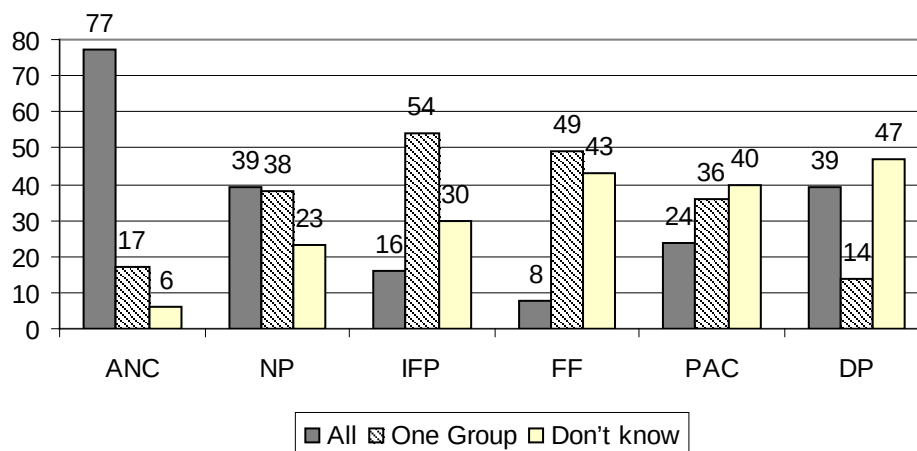
Previewing the results, I find that voter perceptions of party attributes influence partisan support. Citizens use their evaluations of the trustworthiness and inclusiveness of political parties to inform their partisan choices. Positive evaluations appear to attract voters to parties while both negative evaluations and uncertainty about inclusiveness repel voters away from parties. By thinking about who political parties stand for South African voters learn much about politics from racial cues. In addition, exposure to highly congruent, or homogenous, partisan signals also influences partisanship and the way people view parties. Information networks may therefore be a key factor in explaining how strong cleavage voting occurs even when people are not explicitly expressing racial identities. I conclude that the influences of racialised party attributes and homogenous partisan signals may hold negative consequences for electoral politics by minimizing the potential for partisan change while maximizing electoral predictability.

8.1 The inclusiveness of political parties

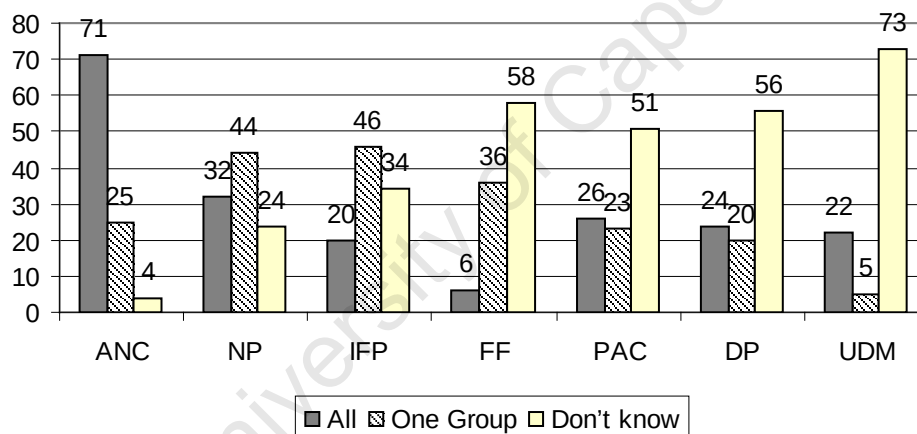
Survey items ask respondents to assess the extent to which the major political parties represent the interests of all South Africans or only one specific group. Graph 8.1 shows perceptions of inclusiveness and exclusiveness by political party for 1994. Graphs 8.2 and 8.3 show the same data for 1999 and 2004 respectively.¹⁷

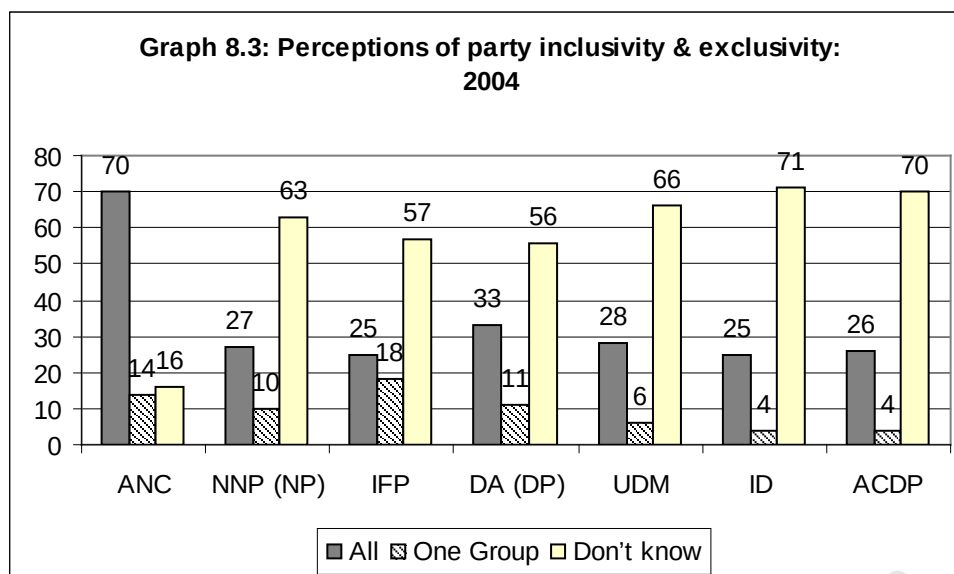
¹⁷ The confidence interval for 1994, 1999 and 2004 CNEP is 1%. At the 95% confidence level, expected range of response rates within the population will be between 1 percentage point above or below the reported frequencies.

**Graph 8.1: Perceptions of party inclusivity & exclusivity:
1994**



**Graph 8.2: Perceptions of party inclusivity & exclusivity:
1999**





In 1994, the data show that the ANC enjoyed the most inclusive image of all the parties with 77 percent of the entire sample believing that the party represents all citizens. Opposition parties had much lower levels of inclusiveness and higher levels of uncertainty and ambiguity about their images. Around half the sample regarded the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the Freedom Front (FF) as exclusive, or representative of only one group. The Democratic Party (DP- thereafter the DA) was seen by only 14 percent as exclusive, while around a third view the National Party (former apartheid governing party) and Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) as exclusive.

By 2004, there were intriguing changes in the way people view parties. The ANC experienced a small decline in the numbers who saw it as inclusive (from 77 percent to 70 percent), a slight decline in levels of perceived exclusiveness (17 percent to 14 percent) and an increase in those who don't know (6 percent to 16 percent). Most opposition parties however, witnessed a massive increase in levels of uncertainty about their images. Some parties experienced an increase in levels of inclusiveness between 1994 and 2004 such as the IFP (from 16 percent to 20 percent to 25 percent). Other opposition parties witnessed a decline in levels of inclusiveness. The DA shrunk from 39 percent in 1994, to 24 percent in 1999, perhaps due to the party's 'Fight Back' campaign slogan in the 1999 national and provincial elections which was interpreted by some as an inherently conservative and anti-change slogan which was aimed against blacks.¹⁸ This was remedied by a more conciliatory campaign slogan in 2004, 'South Africa Deserves Better', with inclusiveness rising again to 33 percent.¹⁹

¹⁸ Welsh, in Reynolds, 1999, 97.

¹⁹ Booyesen, in Piombo and Nijzink, 130.

The data for the NNP shows a steady decline in perceived inclusiveness from 39 percent to 27 percent between 1994 and 2004, which reflects the party's deteriorating reputation among voters, mainly in response to the breakup of the DA, the realignment of the NNP with the ANC, and the ensuing floor-crossing controversy.²⁰ Continuous shifts in NNP tactics portrayed an inconsistent and often contradictory image to its supporters and made it difficult for the party to forge and present a coherent political identity.

The overall trend suggests that voter perceptions of political parties have changed over time voters increasingly ambiguous about party images and some even judging them to be more inclusive. However, changes in perceptions about parties may also be a result of new voters entering the electorate.

Do South Africans view political parties as inclusive or exclusive to a particular racial group? In other words, does race determine how people see parties? Evidence suggesting that people see their own party through a racial lens would support the 'expressive' or identity voting framework, which sees voting as a means of expressing group allegiance. Donald Horowitz argues that individuals in ethnically divided countries seek affirmation of self-worth through their identities as members of groups. Voters derive psychic benefits from supporting ethnic parties because the very act of casting a vote for an ethnic party is an affirmation of identity.²¹ So as Karen Ferree explains, "voting is not an act of choice, based on a rational weighing of alternatives, but an expression of allegiance to a group."²² Voters do not use their vote to further self-interest. Indeed, they may actually vote in ways that work *against* their interests. People vote for their party because of the perceived link between it and their racial group. Elections then become a rubber stamp for demographics, a 'racial census' or a mere 'counting of heads'.²³

The main implication of 'identity' voting is that racial groups should have clear views of the party's they support as 'belonging' to them, as representing their racial group. As Mattes has suggested, if voting is an expression of identity, then voters should clearly connect the party they support with their identity group.²⁴ As Ferree explains, 'If the pattern of polarization in South Africa is driven by identity expression, then African voters should see the ANC as an 'African party' and whites should see the DP and NP (NNP) as 'white' parties.'²⁵

Yet the data offers very little evidence to support the 'identity voting' or 'racial census' hypotheses as envisaged by Horowitz and others. When disaggregated by race, Ferree found that neither whites nor black Africans view their 'natural' parties as exclusive representatives

²⁰ Schulz-Herzenberg, in Nijzink and Piombo, 2005, 171.

²¹ Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups*.

²² Ferree, "The Microfoundations of Ethnic Voting", 2.

²³ Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups*.

²⁴ Mattes, *The Election Book*.

²⁵ Ferree, "The Microfoundations of Ethnic Voting" 10.

of their racial groups.²⁶ She concludes that fewer than five percent of Africans viewed the ANC as an exclusive party. Furthermore, for the handful of Africans who viewed the ANC as exclusive, they largely associated it either with Xhosas (34 percent) or its “own supporters” (47 percent). Only 7 African respondents out of a total of 1379 associated the party with Africans.²⁷ Thus, the data are unambiguous on this point: African voters do not see the ANC as an ‘African’ party. For whites, a similar pattern emerges. In both 1994 and 1999, a majority of whites viewed the NP (NNP) and DP as parties that represented all South Africans. So far, it appears that the preconditions for the expressive voting thesis, as espoused by Horowitz and others, do not seem to be present.

More conclusively, I find that South Africa's biggest political parties are viewed by their own supporters as inclusive of the interests of all South Africans rather than as racial custodians or representatives. Across the three surveys, party identifiers overwhelmingly view their preferred political party as inclusive of the interests of all South Africans.²⁸ The only exceptions are those who support the FF and PAC.

8.2 Trust in political parties

I also compare percentages across the 1999 and 2004 surveys (there is no trust item in the 1994 survey) of trust in the ANC compared to opposition parties by racial categories. For example, how much do black South Africans trust opposition parties compared with the ANC?

One's race appears to have an impact on trust in political parties. In 1999 90 percent of Black Africans trusted in the ANC while only 42 per cent of whites did so (see table 8.1). Only 22 percent of black Africans trusted opposition parties while 49 percent of whites did. In 2004 trust in the ANC among black Africans and whites dropped to 77 per cent and 14 percent respectively. Notably, there is little difference trust between the two race groups in opposition parties at 17 and 23 percent. Almost the same percentage mistrust opposition parties among the two race groups at approximately 60 percent. It is also clear that black Africans place more trust in the ANC than whites place in ‘their’ opposition parties.

Table 8.1: Trust in political parties by race group, 1999 (%'s)

Black Africans	Yes**	No ***	Don't know
ANC	90	8	2
Opposition parties*	22	39	39
Whites	Yes	No	Don't know
ANC	42	55	3
Opposition parties	49	28	23

* DP, FF, IFP, NP, PAC, UDM

** Includes trust ‘just about always, most of the time, only some of the time’.

²⁶ Ferree, “The Microfoundations of Ethnic Voting”, 10. The author also performed similar statistical tests using identical data and found the results to match Ferree's results.

²⁷ Ferree, “Microfoundations of Ethnic Voting”, 10.

²⁸ This additional data is made available in Appendix 4.

*** Includes trust 'almost never' and 'never'.

Table 8.2: Trust in political parties by race group, 2004 (%'s)

Black Africans	Yes **	No ***	Don't know
ANC	77	17	6
Opposition parties*	17	62	21
Whites	Yes	No	Don't know
ANC	14	78	8
Opposition parties	23	60	17

* DA, IFP, UDM, ID, NNP, ACDP

** Includes 'quite a lot; a great deal'.

*** Includes 'not at all; not very much'.

8.3 Party images and partisanship

If party images affect party support we can expect to see a link between support for a political party and perceptions of party inclusiveness and exclusiveness. In the same way we can expect to find an association between support for a political party and trustworthiness. To explore the effects of party attributes on the direction of partisanship I look at bivariate relationships using the Idasa 1994, Opinion 99 and 2004 CNEP surveys.

Table 8.3: Party attributes x direction of partisanship

Inclusiveness	1994	1999	2004
ANC	-.547***	-.617***	-.313***
Opposition parties	.175***	.227***	.212***
Trustworthiness			
ANC	-	-.430***	-.317***
Opposition parties	-	.150***	.092***

Coding DV: ANC (1) x Independents (2) x Opposition parties (3)

Coding: (-1) exclusiveness (0) don't know (+1) inclusiveness

Coding: (-1) untrustworthy (0) don't know (+1) trustworthy

*** Indicates the correlation is significant at the 0.001 level. ($p < 0.001$)

Summary statistic: Kendall's Tau C

- No trust item available in the 1994 survey

Table 8.3 demonstrates that evaluations of party attributes do correlate with partisan choice in South Africa. Voter perceptions of inclusiveness and trustworthiness have a highly significant and moderate to strong relationship with the direction of support for the ANC party or opposition parties. Positive images of the ANC, whether it is inclusiveness or trustworthiness, correlate more strongly with the direction of partisanship than positive images of opposition parties. Party images remain powerful cues for partisanship. However, when we compare 1999 and 2004 figures it appears that the strength of coefficients declines over time, suggesting that, overall, party attributes may be declining in importance.

8.3.1 Inclusiveness: A sufficient or necessary condition for partisanship?

Although we see reasonably strong relationships between party attributes and partisanship, we are still unable to tell the exact nature of the relationship between inclusiveness and partisanship. Are perceptions of inclusiveness a necessary or sufficient condition for

partisanship? In other words, is it necessary or sufficient to see a party as inclusive before one can identify with it, or support it or does it merely increase the probability of doing so?

A necessary condition is a condition where the truth of a proposition or state of affairs must hold if the proposition is true, but that does not guarantee its truth. To say that X is a necessary condition for Y is to say that it is impossible to have Y without X. In other words, the presence of Y (ANC partisanship) is not possible without the presence of X (ANC inclusiveness). A sufficient condition is a condition whose truth guarantees the truth of a proposition or state of affairs. To say that X is a sufficient condition for Y is to say that the presence of X (ANC inclusiveness) guarantees the presence of Y (ANC partisan). In other words, it is impossible to see the ANC as inclusive and not be an ANC partisan. I test this proposition looking at the entire electorate for 1994, 1999 and 2004 using a series of cross tabulation tables.

I find that regarding the ANC as inclusive is a virtually necessary but not sufficient condition to be an ANC partisan. In 1994 and 1999 virtually all ANC partisans (apart from 1 percent who see it as exclusive or uncertain) view the party as inclusive before they will support it (see table 8.4). In other words, it is necessary to view the ANC as inclusive before you can be an ANC partisan.²⁹ It is not sufficient however, because some respondents who see the ANC as inclusive are also independents and opposition supporters. In 2004 it is neither necessary nor sufficient, but merely probable since 10 percent who see the party as exclusive are ANC partisans.

²⁹ My analysis assumes that the direction of causality is as follows: perceptions of parties shape partisanship. Although I cannot exclude the possibility that a particular party's partisans say the party is inclusive because they support that party, it seems logical that causality works in the opposite direction.

Table 8.4: ANC Exclusive or Inclusive? The Entire Electorate

	ANC Exclusive (-1)	Don't know (0)	ANC Inclusive (+1)
1994 Kendall's Tau C: -.421***			
ANC (1)	1	14	76
Independent (2)	11	34	11
Opposition (3)	88	52	13
1999 Kendall's Tau C: -.372***			
ANC (1)	1	2	46
Independent (2)	78	80	49
Opposition (3)	21	18	5
2004 Kendall's Tau C: -.295***			
ANC (1)	10	19	54
Independent (2)	57	75	40
Opposition (3)	33	6	6
	100%	100%	100%

By observing cell frequencies in table 8.5 it is clear that perceptions of opposition party inclusiveness are neither necessary nor sufficient conditions for being an opposition supporter. Less than half of the respondents who view opposition parties as inclusive are opposition supporters.

Table 8.5: Opposition Exclusive or Inclusive? The Entire Electorate

	Opposition Exclusive (-1)	Don't know (0)	Opposition Inclusive (+1)
1994 Kendall's Tau C: .150***			
ANC (1)	68	61	45
Independent (2)	9	18	15
Opposition (3)	23	21	40
1999 Kendall's Tau C: .175***			
ANC (1)	37	23	15
Independent (2)	53	67	68
Opposition (3)	10	10	17
2004 Kendall's Tau C: .175***			
ANC (1)	55	48	31
Independent (2)	31	50	52
Opposition (3)	14	2	17
	100%	100%	100%

Using the Opinion 99 data, Karen Ferree also found that positive perceptions of opposition inclusiveness are necessary but not sufficient conditions for Africans to support white parties and visa versa.³⁰ As she states, 'inclusive opposition credentials loosen African voters from the ruling party yet on their own probably do not push them all the way into the arms of the opposition. They should therefore be viewed as *necessary* conditions to cross-over voting, but not *sufficient* ones.³¹ Thus, winning votes requires a party to have the right set of racial credentials, but racial credentials alone are not enough. As Ferree states, 'racial credentials are necessary but not sufficient for support: a party must be viewed as inclusive for a voter to vote for it, but this alone is not enough to put a voter in a party's camp. All the same, racial credentials appear to be playing an important (though not solitary) role in driving patterns of

³⁰ Ferree, "Microfoundations of Ethnic Support", 20-23; Ferree, "Explaining South Africa's Racial Census", 812.

³¹ Ferree, "Explaining South Africa's Racial Census", 812.

polarized voting. Whites must view the ANC as inclusive to support it, but few whites do; and Africans must view the NP as inclusive to support it, but many Africans do not'.³²

8.3.2 The effects of exclusivity on partisanship

To assess whether perceptions of exclusivity affect how one identifies with parties, I observe cell frequencies to see if exclusive images attract or repel voters. Donald Horowitz would expect partisan identity to match closely with party exclusivity – in other words, exclusive images should attract voters, not repel them. Yet, there is little evidence to suggest that voters are attracted to party exclusiveness. Instead, the data in tables 8.4 and 8.5 strongly suggest that the opposite is true. Voters are overwhelmingly repelled by party exclusiveness. Of those that view the ANC as exclusive, only 1 percent are ANC partisans in 1994 and 1999, rising to 10 percent in 2004. The vast majority are either opposition supporters or independents. Similarly, a minority of respondents who regard opposition parties as exclusive are opposition partisans. The majority are ANC partisans or independents.

However, most South African voters who do identify with a party view parties that they *do not* support as exclusive.³³ Opposition partisans view the ANC as exclusive while ANC partisans view the majority of opposition parties as exclusive. Moreover, these evaluations almost always stress race as the basis for exclusion - both whites and Africans tend to see the parties of the other side as exclusive.

So far, Chapter Nine shows that a strong theory of racial voting does not hold: African voters do not vote for an African party because they see it as exclusive to Africans. This is evidence that South Africans generally buy the ideal of the rainbow nation: inclusive politics is worthy while exclusive politics is detrimental. However, what about a weaker version of racial voting where voters do not vote for some parties because they perceive them as exclusive of their interests or identity? This brings us to the concept of 'negative' and 'closed' partisanship. Negative partisans can name a party they would never vote for but have no positive partisanship. Closed partisans, on the other hand, positively identify with one party and also identify a party they would never vote for.³⁴ The evidence so far seems to suggest that partisanship in South Africa is driven by the impressions voters' hold of other parties. Voters might clearly and emphatically reject some parties, and this might be as important as whether or not they embrace others. In other words, voters are motivated by 'negative out-group (aka exclusivity) feelings' attached to party images. The reason for negative or closed partisan sentiment lies in perceptions of racial exclusivity as a voter senses he is unrepresented as a result of cues emanating from a party's image.

³² Ferree, "Microfoundations of Ethnic Voting", 22.

³³ This additional data is made available in Appendix 4.

³⁴ Rose and Mishler.

8.3.3 The effects of ambiguity on partisanship

Does uncertainty or ambiguity about a party's image attract or repel voters? Ferree makes the argument that uncertainty is not favourable for opposition parties.³⁵ She finds that very few voters who evaluated the ANC government performance negatively and viewed an opposition party as inclusive showed greater probability of being an opposition supporter. One might expect increasing levels of ambiguity about the profiles of political parties to encourage greater cross-voting, thus offsetting the polarization pattern seen in South Africa's voting outcomes. Yet, there is little evidence to suggest that voter uncertainty over party inclusiveness promotes partisanship or party support. Instead, most of the respondents who express uncertainty about the ANC's image are self-declared independents or opposition supporters. Very few respondents who hold ambiguous views about the ANC's party image are ANC supporters. The same pattern holds true for opposition parties. It therefore seems that ambiguity and uncertainty about a party's image repels partisan support in much the same way as negative party images do. If a voter is unsure about a party's inclusiveness she/he tends not to support it. In other words, it seems that the absence of a party image is equally detrimental for party support as a negative image.

8.3.4 The Black African electorate

Because Africans are the most numerous group in the country (and in the datasets) I look at the effects of inclusiveness, exclusiveness and ambiguity on their partisan behaviour in tables 8.6 and 8.7. Specifically, do inclusive, or positive, party images of opposition parties increase support among black voters?

Among black voters, inclusiveness is no longer a necessary condition for ANC partisanship since a growing number of ANC partisans regard the party as exclusive over the years. Although some black voters do view opposition parties as inclusive, very few are opposition partisans. The percentage of opposition partisans who deem opposition parties to be inclusive drops among Africans. Of those black Africans who stated that they regarded at least one opposition party as inclusive, only 11 percent were actually opposition partisans in 2004 and only 20 percent in 1994. Viewing opposition parties as inclusive does not appear to strengthen black voters support for these parties.

Uncertainty about the ANC's party image among black voters clarifies partisan choice to a greater extent compared to the entire electorate. In 1999 and 2004, only 4 percent of black Africans who expressed uncertainty about the ANC's inclusiveness were ANC partisans. Instead, in both years, 73 percent were independents and 23 percent were opposition partisans. This pattern is also reflected for opposition parties where small and declining percentages of opposition partisans are uncertain about party images. Considering the very small percentages of uncertain partisans in the ANC and opposition party categories, it

³⁵ Ferree, "Explaining South Africa's Racial Census", 812.

therefore appears among the black electorate, that uncertainty about a party image is a sufficient condition for being repelled from that party.

Table 8.6: ANC Exclusive or Inclusive? The Black African Electorate

	ANC Exclusive (-1)	Don't know (0)	ANC Inclusive (+1)
1994 Kendall's Tau C: -.179***			
ANC (1)	5	25	84
Independent (2)	11	33	10
Opposition (3)	84	42	6
1999 Kendall's Tau C: -.148***			
ANC (1)	11	4	51
Independent (2)	55	73	45
Opposition (3)	34	23	4
2004 Kendall's Tau C: -.204***			
ANC (1)	22	4	58
Independent (2)	41	73	39
Opposition (3)	37	23	3
	100%	100%	100%

Table 8.7: Opposition Exclusive or Inclusive? The Black African Electorate

	Opposition Exclusive (-1)	Don't know (0)	Opposition Inclusive (+1)
1994 Kendall's Tau C: .140***			
ANC (1)	85	74	65
Independent (2)	8	17	15
Opposition (3)	7	9	20
1999 Kendall's Tau C: .206***			
ANC (1)	59	38	32
Independent (2)	36	58	55
Opposition (3)	5	4	13
2004 Kendall's Tau C: .146***			
ANC (1)	71	52	42
Independent (2)	22	47	47
Opposition (3)	7	1	11
	100%	100%	100%

This section is a useful parenthetical exercise because it qualifies and underlines my key findings that perceptions about the inclusiveness and trustworthiness of political parties translate into partisan support. Moreover, it also shows that party images affect partisanship in different ways. Regarding the ANC as inclusive is a necessary but not sufficient condition to be an ANC partisan. Yet, positive party images of opposition parties do not appear to increase support among black voters. Exclusive party images overwhelmingly repel voters. And finally, uncertainty about a party's image also repels partisan support in much the same way as negative party images do. If a voter is unsure about a party's inclusiveness he tends not to support it. Among black voters, uncertainty over party images is a sufficient condition for being repelled from a party.

8.4 The social context and partisanship

Using the CNEP 2004 survey, I measure the impact of one's immediate social context and political discussants on partisanship. In particular, I look at frequency of discussion with other people; levels of political agreement; and perceived congruence and similarities in partisan affiliations between respondents and their regular political discussants.

8.4.1 Exposure to political information from regular personal discussants

In terms of the frequency of discussion with other people during the 2004 national election campaign, 30 percent of respondents reported discussing the campaign with family either often or sometimes, 35 percent reported discussing the campaign with friends, and 17 percent said they discussed the campaign with neighbors either often or sometimes.

When asked how often the respondent spoke to their spouse or partner about the 2004 election, 47 percent of respondents reported that they spoke either often or sometimes. Comparatively, South Africa scores higher than the United Kingdom (42 percent), Germany (43 percent), Hong Kong (26 percent) and Japan (32 percent), is on a par with Chile (47 percent), but falls below the United States (61 percent), Spain (62 percent), Italy (77 percent) and Greece (65 percent).³⁶ Clearly, political discussion with one's spouse is variable across CNEP countries. Gunther et al conclude that this is a result of a country's unique partisan politics.³⁷

8.4.2 Partisan congruence

When asked whether respondents thought that their family, friends or neighbours supported the same party as themselves, or different parties, 65 percent said that their family supported the same party, while 46 percent said their friends supported the same party. In addition, 45 percent reported that their neighbors supported the same party as themselves. When asked if the respondent and his spouse tend to agree on campaign issues 63 percent reported that they were in agreement either often or sometimes.

Comparatively, South Africa scores very highly in terms of partisan congruence. All countries surveyed, with the exception of the United States, show much lower percentages of partisan congruence between a respondent and his spouse compared with South African data.³⁸ High levels of partisan congruence between respondents and their closest discussants, like one's spouse, strongly suggests that South Africans are locked into a far more 'hermetically sealed' political environments than elsewhere.

A simple correlation shows the high match between the respondent and spouse's supported parties (Goodman and Kruskal Tau: .628**). When a cross tabulation between the respondent's

³⁶ Richardson and Beck, "The Flow of Political Information", 186.

³⁷ Ibid., 188, 205.

³⁸ Ibid., 189.

partisanship and that of his spouse is presented in Table 8.8 we again see a good fit. Of all ANC identifiers 85 percent perceived that their spouse also supported the ANC, while only 3 percent thought they had supported an opposition party. Similarly, 70 percent of opposition identifiers thought their partners had also supported an opposition party, while only 6 percent thought their spouses had supported the ANC. Gunther et al also find congruence between the vote preferences of the spouse and the respondent across most countries.³⁹ They also find strong correlations between partisanship of respondents and spouse.⁴⁰

Table 8.8: Fit between respondent's and spouse's partisanship: 2004 CNEP (%'s)

Respondent's PID	Spouse: ANC	Spouse: Opposition	Did not vote	Don't know	100%
ANC	85%	3%	2%	10%	100%
Opposition	6%	70%	9%	15%	100%

Other regular political discussants include family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers. Using a scale that measures the amount of congruent relationships a respondent has with the above-mentioned discussants, 49 percent of respondents have highly congruent relationships, 21 percent don't know, and 30 percent have incongruent relationships. In other words, almost half of the respondents in the sample exist in a homogenous political environment where their partisan identity is reflected strongly among their closest social discussants, whereas 30 percent of voters in the sample exist within a more pluralistic partisan environment, characterized by lower levels of partisan congruence and partisan bias. So, who lives in mono-partisan social worlds? And who lives in more pluralistic worlds? In terms of age, people living in mono-partisan worlds tend to be older while those living in more pluralistic environments tend to be younger (Cramer's V: .100*). In terms of race, white people have the highest proportion living in homogenous partisan environments (62 percent), and Indians the lowest (37 percent), while black Africans and Coloureds have roughly equal proportions in mono-partisan environments at 47 percent and 49 percent respectively (Cramer's V: .108*).⁴¹

8.4.3 Partisan congruence and partisanship

The effects of existing within a homogenous or pluralistic partisan relationship on the direction of partisanship are shown in table 8.9. Most people in homogenous relationships are ANC supporters (60 percent), while only 28 percent are independents and 12 percent are opposition partisans. However, people in pluralistic partisan networks have a much higher probability of being an independent (51 percent), than a partisan. The summary static (Kendall's Tau C: .150***) confirms a moderate and significant association between pluralistic relationships and being an independent, and between homogenous relationships and being an ANC partisan.

³⁹ Ibid., 191.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 202.

⁴¹ Class and ethnicity are not statistically significant.

Table 8.9: Congruence and direction of partisanship (%'s)

1994	Homogenous relationships	Don't know	Pluralistic relationships
ANC	60	44	36
Independent	28	44	51
Opposition	12	12	13
Total	100%	100%	100%

Summary statistic: Kendall's Tau C: .150***

8.4.4 Partisan congruence and party images

Where people are bound into homogenous social (and racial) environments, and politically congruent relationships, partisan reinforcement is bound to affect perceptions of partisan images, or how people see political parties. With a great deal of political information based along racial lines, I expect to find that respondents in highly congruent, or homogenous partisan relationships have a much firmer idea of the inclusiveness/ exclusiveness of political parties. On the other hand, I expect to see respondents in pluralistic or incongruent partisan relationships hold more ambiguous views about the inclusiveness/ exclusiveness of parties. The data appears to uphold this hypothesis – social networks are relevant to party images. Cross tabulations of the partisan congruence variable and the party inclusiveness variable shows that respondents who are in pluralistic relationships are more likely to express uncertainty over party images across the four biggest parties. Comparisons of the relevant percentages are highlighted by emboldened italics in table 8.10.

Table 8.10: Congruence x Party Inclusiveness: CNEP 2004 Survey

ANC Party	Exclusive	Don't know	Inclusive	Total
Homogenous relationships	17	5	78	100%
Don't know	25	15	60	100%
Pluralistic relationships	25	23	52	100%
DA Party				
Homogenous relationships	23	40	37	100%
Don't know	5	60	35	100%
Pluralistic relationships	5	52	43	100%
IFP Party				
Homogenous relationships	27	37	36	100%
Don't know	20	70	10	100%
Pluralistic relationships	9	71	20	100%
NNP Party				
Homogenous relationships	18	37	45	100%
Don't know	30	50	20	100%
Pluralistic relationships	5	68	27	100%

Taken together, the data suggests that a voter's immediate social context, particularly his regular political discussants, can affirm and influence partisan affiliations and the way people view parties. Many South Africans are locked into 'hermetically sealed' political environments. Individuals are therefore exposed to strong homogenous partisan signals from their immediate family and friends and these probably act to reinforce existing partisan proclivities. Furthermore, the extent of partisan congruence between a respondent and his/her closest discussants has an association with the direction of partisanship. ANC partisans are found to have the most homogenous partisan relationships, while independents and opposition

supporters have the most pluralistic relationships. The extent of partisan congruence also affects the way people see parties – people in pluralistic relationships are less certain about the inclusiveness of parties while those in homogenous relationships are more able to cast parties as either inclusive or exclusive. Whether causative relationships exist is hard to determine from a cursory glance at this data. However, it is most likely that the immediate social context acts as a reliable information cue for voters.

8.5 Multivariate relationships: Party images and partisanship

I perform multivariate tests to examine the ways in which party images and the social context influence partisanship. The first logistic regression uses the 2004 CNEP survey data and tests the simultaneous impact of party images (evaluations of party inclusiveness), the social context (partisan congruence with discussants) and race on the direction of partisanship.

The second set of logistic regressions include only the party image variables - inclusiveness and trustworthiness - and these tests are performed on the 1999 and 2004 data for comparative purposes.⁴² The 1994 survey does not contain the trust items and is therefore excluded from the multivariate analyses.

8.5.1 The impact of party images, the social context and race (CNEP 2004)

Table 8.11 shows the effects of party images (inclusiveness/ exclusiveness), partisan congruence and race on the direction of partisanship among the entire electorate and the black electorate.

Table 8.11: Party images, partisan congruence and race x partisanship - CNEP 2004

Party images	Entire electorate		Black electorate	
	ANC-Opp	ANC-IND	ANC-Opp	ANC-IND
ANC inclusiveness	5.839***	2.966***	5.880***	2.332***
Opposition inclusiveness	.320***	.494***	.325***	.535***
Partisan congruence	.840	.578***	.628*	.515***
Race	7.694***	3.096***	-	-
Constant	.747	.796	2.620***	3.625***
Nagelkerke R^2	.529***	.294***	.339***	.191***
Classification %'s	89%	71%	93%	70%
Hosmer & Lemeshow Test	.000	.528	.041	.995
Valid no. of cases	406	601	318	456
Total no. of cases	1200	1200	837	837

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ (Model Chi-Square)

Race: Black vs. Non-Black (reference category)

Evaluating the overall fit of the model:

The model chi-square is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) across all models. The Nagelkerke R^2 measure also shows that the model explains a large to reasonable amount of

⁴² The CNEP is the only survey which contains the partisan congruence item so it cannot be included in this regression analysis.

variance, between 53 percent and 29 percent in the entire electorate. Explained variance shrinks once the effect of race is removed to between 34 percent and 19 percent respectively among the black electorate. Predictive accuracy is high.

Interpreting the regression coefficients:

The multivariate analyses confirm the findings in the bivariate sections. First, the direction of the coefficients confirms that voters with positive evaluations of party images are far more likely to identify with that party while those with negative evaluations will not. Looking at ANC vs. opposition among the entire electorate, respondents are five times more to be ANC partisans than opposition partisans when they view the ANC as inclusive. If people think the opposition is inclusive the odds of being a partisan decline. Yet, even after all of these racially charged variables are introduced race continues to make a significant impact. If respondents are black (as opposed to non-black) the odds of being an ANC partisan increase dramatically.

Looking at partisanship among the entire electorate, respondents are only three times more likely to be ANC partisans than independents when they view the ANC as inclusive. They are five times more likely to be ANC partisans than opposition supporters. Perceptions about party inclusiveness therefore seem to matter to independents, but to a lesser extent than partisans. Partisan congruence is statistically significant only among ANC vs. independents. As relationships become more pluralistic with people being less exposed to strong homogenous partisan signals from their immediate family and friend they are less likely to be ANC identifiers and more likely to be independents. In other words, people in politically congruent or homogenous relationships are ANC supporters; those who are not are likely to be independents.

Among the black electorate, the pattern is largely the same. Evaluations of party inclusiveness remain statistically significant and powerful determinants of partisan support even when the effects of race are removed. Most voters must see a party as inclusive before they can support it. Partisan congruence is now statistically significant among ANC vs. opposition and ANC vs. independents. Thus, black African respondents who are in politically congruent or homogenous relationships are likely to be ANC supporters; those who are not are likely to be independents or opposition identifiers.

8.5.2 The impact of party images: The Entire electorate (Opinion 99 & CNEP 2004)

Table 8.12 shows the impact of party attribute evaluations (inclusiveness/ exclusiveness and trust) on the direction of partisanship among the entire electorate in years 1999 and 2004.

Table 8.12 Direction of partisanship among entire electorate

	ANC-Opposition		ANC-Independents	
Party images	1999	2004	1999	2004
ANC inclusiveness	4.650***	5.111***	2.495***	3.278***
ANC trust	5.300***	3.675***	3.372***	2.005***
Opposition inclusiveness	.494**	.277***	.643***	.473***
Opposition trust	.409***	.698*	.690***	.656***
Constant	.494***	1.791**	.076***	.257***
Nagelkerke R^2	.731***	.580***	.434***	.291***
Classification %'s	92%	90%	74%	72%
Hosmer & Lemeshow Test	.047	.193	.000	.356
Valid no. of cases	854	1170	1933	1052
Total no. of cases	2200	1200	2200	1200

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ (Model Chi-Square)

DV=ANC/ opposition identifiers

DV=ANC/ independents

Evaluating the overall fit of the model:

The model chi-square is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) in both 1999 and 2004. The Nagelkerke R^2 measure shows that the model explains a large amount of variance (73 percent in 1999 and 58 percent in 2004). This declines when ANC partisans are compared to independents (43 percent in 1999 and 29 percent in 2004). Predictive accuracy is high between 92 percent and 72 percent. This model shows strong predictive capacity.

Interpreting the regression coefficients:

Respondents who perceive the ANC party to be inclusive and trustworthy are approximately five times more likely to be an ANC partisan than an opposition identifier. In a similar fashion, respondents who perceived opposition parties as inclusive or trustworthy are less likely to support the ANC.

When I compare ANC identifiers with independents the picture does not change dramatically. ANC partisans are three times more likely than independents to view their party as inclusive or trustworthy. This confirms the pattern found in the previous multivariate test with the CNEP survey (table 8.11). Perceptions of inclusiveness and trust deeply affect how independents view parties. This suggests that perceptions of inclusiveness or exclusiveness are not necessarily a result of partisan predispositions. Independents also have clear view of party images and they may affect whether independents are able to vote for a particular party in an election. People who do not feel close to any party may well take the evaluations of party attributes into account before they decide to support any party at the polls.

8.5.3 The impact of party images: The Black electorate (Opinion 99 & CNEP 2004)

Table 8.13 shows the impact of party attribute evaluations (inclusiveness/ exclusiveness and trust) on the direction of partisanship among the black African electorate in years 1999 and 2004.

Table 8.13: Direction of partisanship among black electorate:

	ANC-Opposition		ANC-Independents	
	1999	2004	1999	2004
ANC inclusiveness	3.646***	5.831***	1.556***	3.175***
ANC trust	4.8037***	2.320***	2.910***	1.533***
Opposition inclusiveness	.509**	.265***	.642***	.499***
Opposition trust	.430***	.798	.749***	.685***
Constant	.764***	3.508***	.227***	.345***
Nagelkerke R^2	.570***	.407***	.255***	.176***
Classification %'s	92%	94%	67%	67%
Hosmer & Lemeshow Test	.000	.172	.000	.080
Valid no. of cases	625	443	1090	773
Total no. of cases	1170	837	1170	837

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ (Model Chi-Square)

DV=ANC/ opposition identifiers

DV=ANC/ independents

Evaluating the overall fit of the model:

The model chi-square is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). The Nagelkerke R^2 measure shows that the model still explains a large amount of variance (57 percent in 1999 and 41 percent in 2004). This declines when ANC partisans are compared to independents (26 percent in 1999 and 18 percent in 2004). Although less of the variance is explained once the effects of race are removed from the analysis predictive accuracy remains high. By isolating black Africans the model continues to show strong predictive capacity.

Interpreting the regression coefficients:

We see that the direction of the coefficients remains the same although the strength of the coefficients diminishes when race is removed. Black South African voters rely on party attribute evaluations before they show a party support.

8.6 Summary and conclusions

As I expected, voter perceptions of the inclusiveness and trustworthiness of political parties do influence partisan support. Voters with positive evaluations of a party are far more likely to identify with that party, while those with negative evaluations will not. Moreover, positive images of the ANC seem to exert a more powerful influence over partisanship than positive images of opposition parties.

I also argued that race-based sociological cues should take on a particular significance in South Africa's divided society. Notions of exclusion are primarily race-based, and play a restrictive role in partisan predispositions by affecting the way in which both partisans and independents are likely to choose among parties. Racial stereotypes persist and are thus powerful and pervasive influences on partisanship. It appears that South African voters use sociological cues to decide which parties represent their particular group interests best. As Green et al might argue, voters compare their self-image to what they perceive as the social bases of parties and then conduct a matching process to find an appropriate fit between the two.⁴³ A process of psychological self-categorisation and group evaluation appears well-established in South Africa where parties have cultivated symbols and group imagery around race.

As expected, my tests also showed that the influence of racialised party images on partisanship has endured over time. I expected voter perceptions of parties to remain quite static because the parties themselves have not yet dramatically changed their images. Green et al argue that the psychology of group attachments and related institutional incentives change slowly over time. This accounts for the continued influential predominance of social factors such as race on partisanship. As they state, 'Partisan identities... persist because group stereotypes persist, and the location of the self amid various social groups persist'.⁴⁴ Partisanship remains stable precisely because citizens' perceptions of one's social identity persist over time as well as the images of parties and the types of social, economic or ideological groups that affiliate with each party.⁴⁵

Furthermore, party images affect partisanship in different ways. A positive, or inclusive, image of the ANC is almost a necessary condition for being an ANC partisan. Yet, positive images of opposition parties are not always prerequisites for being an opposition partisan – a few opposition supporters do regard their party as exclusive to one group. Black South African voters also rely on positive attribute evaluations before they can identify with a party. Yet, positive images of opposition parties do not appear to increase support among black voters. Viewing an opposition party as inclusive is insufficient to push black voters into the arms of the opposition. Clearly, additional factors, apart from party attributes, also drive partisanship.

Negative, or exclusive, party images overwhelmingly repel voters. Very few voters support parties they believe to be exclusive to only one group. Thus the data shows little evidence of conscious or explicit 'identity' or 'racial census' voting. It may, however, point to the development of 'negative partisans' within the South African electorate. These partisans can name parties they would never vote for but offer no positive identification of a party that they

⁴³ Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 109.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 137.

can support, and therefore become generally 'anti-party'.⁴⁶ The increases in non-partisans may be a result of a growth in 'negative partisans', as citizens move away from their traditional political party, but the lack of a plausible alternative party (due to negative perceptions of other parties). This simply pushes them into the non-partisans category. This explanation links the early dealignment trend to two developments in the South African party system; firstly, dissatisfaction with the performance of governing party performance and secondly, exclusive images of opposition parties. In addition, notions of exclusivity should also produce a number of 'closed partisans' who positively identify with one party but also identify a party they would never vote for. If the strength of partisanship among these voters were to diminish in future, they will simply become 'negative' partisans.

Uncertainty or ambiguity about a party's image deters partisan support in much the same way as do negative party images. If a voter is unsure about a party's inclusiveness he tends not to support it. Among black voters uncertainty about whether a party is inclusive or not is actually a sufficient condition for being repelled from a party. Instead of encouraging greater partisan volatility or cross-voting, ambiguity over party images drives voters away.

Perceptions of inclusiveness and trust deeply affect how independents view parties. This suggests that perceptions of inclusiveness or exclusiveness are not necessarily a result of partisan predispositions. Independents also have clear view of party images and they may affect whether independents are able to vote for a particular party in an election. People who do not feel close to any party may well take the evaluations of party attributes into account before they decide to support a party at the polls.

South Africa therefore appears to be different to other new democratic regimes, such as the post-communist countries, where parties are still developing powerful group images. Instead, it tends to mirror older and more established party systems where the relationship between party imagery and partisanship is entrenched.⁴⁷

A voter's immediate social context also appears to affect partisanship. Partisan homogeneity is comparatively high in South Africa. When voters are locked into 'hermetically sealed' political environments they are exposed to highly congruent, or homogenous, partisan signals from their immediate family and friends. ANC partisans are found to have the most homogenous partisan relationships, while independents and opposition supporters have the most pluralistic partisan relationships. The extent of partisan congruence also affects the way people see parties – people in homogenous relationships are more able to cast parties as either inclusive or exclusive while those in pluralistic relationships are less certain about the inclusiveness of parties. The more homogenous partisan messages a voter is exposed to the

⁴⁶ Rose and Mishler.

⁴⁷ Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 13; 202.

more likely his/her existing partisan proclivities are reinforced. Since most South Africans inhabit homogenous racial spaces, the transmission of homogenous partisan messages is likely to further entrench racial uniformity in behaviour.

Perhaps the most pressing analytical point that can be drawn from this analysis is that in order to understand electoral behaviour fully it is necessary to investigate how respondents feel about the political parties from which they must choose. Party images are an essential summary statement of how the voter feels about the political alternatives that are available. Wattenberg argues that to fully understand the impact of partisanship on electoral behaviour, it is essential to know how each of the major parties are perceived – ‘If we can understand what the partisan preferences in each society represent about people's attitudes toward the parties, we will be much more likely to judge accurately what, if any, the long-term implications will be’.⁴⁸

I conclude that perceptions about party attributes are likely to continue to affect partisanship in South Africa by limiting the choice of political parties from which one can align with. Racialised party attributes play a fundamental role in explaining racialised voting patterns in South Africa. Racial demographics provide South African voters with an information cue to estimating both a party's representivity and trustworthiness. Instead of being driven by primordial group attachments, partisanship is instead informed by racial information, guiding the voter and providing an easy-to use and cost effective information tool. Party image evaluations therefore depend on matching one's own self-perception with a wider social group and whether a political party represents that particular group. By thinking about who political parties stand for South African voters continue to learn much about politics from demographic cues. Second, a voter's immediate social context acts as a reliable information cue, offering strong homogenous partisan signals, which reinforce existing attitudes about party and candidate images.

The appearance of racial voting is the result of a convergence of beliefs about parties' credentials as well as the social networks from where the information comes. The indirect impact of race on voter behaviour is bound up to some degree in voter evaluations of parties and in the information networks within which voters find themselves (as seen by the decrease in the strength of the race coefficient when I control for party attributes and partisan congruence). Information networks may therefore be a key factor in explaining how strong cleavage voting occurs even when people are not explicitly expressing racial identities. By using race as a cue, voters are acting in accordance with their interests.

Finally, I argue that the strong influences of party images and partisan congruence have negative consequences for electoral politics by minimizing the potential for partisan change

⁴⁸ Wattenberg, 38.

and maximizing electoral predictability. First, where racial cues are powerful guides for partisan behaviour they are likely to undermine any electoral shifts that potentially result from short-term factors like economic performance and presidential popularity. Government evaluations therefore may not be sufficiently powerful to affect partisanship unless they can overcome or alter the social imagery associated with parties.⁴⁹ In particular, the likely existence of both 'negative' and 'closed' partisans has clear implications for electoral politics. While stability is maintained, potential for partisan fluidity is very much diminished. The chance of ANC defectors becoming partisans of other parties is unlikely.

A second consequence of party images and partisan congruence lies with selective exposure, or excessive exposure to supportive information within ones immediate social context, which may hold negative implications for the quality of democracy, in so far as the ability of the voter to make independent and informed choices is undermined.⁵⁰

Only transformations in the social stereotypes of the parties are likely to cause major changes to aggregate partisanship. But large scale transformations of the party system and electoral support usually only occur under specific and unusual circumstances.⁵¹ Major partisan shifts are therefore unlikely until parties change their racialised images or a major policy related event transforms the social bases of a major political party. Indeed, South Africa's political parties limit their electoral prospects and long term successes when they show their inability to build multi-racial support based on a coalition of groups. Most of the parties and party elites have failed so far in attracting broad based support, often relying on implicit racial cues for electioneering purposes. This merely entrenches partisan stagnation by discouraging voters who perceive parties to be exclusive custodians of other groups. It does seem, as Green et al suggest, that 'the psychology of party attachment often dovetails with the parties interests in maintaining their distinctive and widely recognized brand labels' which are often racially defined in South Africa.⁵²

The findings therefore hold implications for the conduct of party politics. The problems of dealignment among opposition partisans, as seen in Chapter Five, do not lie with necessarily voters. Instead, the limited appeal of many opposition parties is a primary factor.⁵³ To seriously contest future elections, these parties need to be more attentive and responsive to subtle shifts in political identities. Parties wanting to build multi-ethnic and racial coalitions will need to address the way in which they are perceived in terms of racial exclusivity. Those that struggle to present genuinely inclusive racial and ethnic imagery will not attract widespread

⁴⁹ Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 205.

⁵⁰ Gunther, Montero and Puhle, xiii.

⁵¹ Green, Palmquist and Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds*, 87-88.

⁵² Ibid., 13.

⁵³ Other authors have also noted the limited appeal of opposition parties such as Habib and Naidu, 'Are South Africa's elections a racial census?', 6; and Adam Habib, and Rupert Taylor, "Parliamentary opposition and democratic consolidation in South Africa", *Review of African Political Economy*, 26, 80 (1999): 261-267.

support. Undoubtedly, more representative candidate selection remains a crucial tool for South African parties wanting to build a pluralistic and multiracial support base. Finally, any chance of increased political competition still seems to pivot around intra-ANC contestation. Demographic changes to the party's core support base may force new shifts in policy positions, which could deepen the ideological rift with the tripartite alliance and alter its party profile.

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Chapter 9

Cognitive Mobilisation

The cognitive awareness approach argues that as socio-economic development and modernisation proceed, improvements in the political skills and resources of contemporary electorates contributes to growth in the public's overall level of political sophistication, or what is described as a process of 'cognitive mobilisation'.¹ Cognitive mobilization involves two separate developments. First, the public's ability to process political information has increased, through the higher levels of education and political sophistication among the electorate. Second, the cost of acquiring political information has decreased, through the expansion of the mass media.²

Cognitively mobilized voters possess the level of political skills and resources necessary to become self-sufficient in politics. They are more likely to connect information about government performance with existing economic and social conditions and are thus able to engage politically without relying on external partisan cues or structural factors like class and race.³ Moreover, the voters' need for informational cues, such as those which emanate from party images or their social context, should decline as the political skills of the public increase and information costs decrease.⁴ Therefore, in situations where political skills and resources are limited there is likely to be greater reliance on informational shortcuts.⁵

The cognitive mobilisation scholarship also demonstrates that the process of cognitive mobilization has produced an electorate that is divided in their basis of mobilization. Depending on their cognitive ability, voters differ in the way they make up their minds. Better educated and the politically sophisticated voters place more weight on issues and performance evaluations as a basis of their electoral decision making, whereas less sophisticated voters rely more on partisanship and other social cues.⁶ Since evaluations require some cognitive ability to become operational the partisan choices of better-informed voters should be more broad based, with evaluative factors and cognitive reasoning competing with other information shortcuts. For voters with limited cognitive skills and less access to information, the high costs of gathering information are bound to make low cost information cues more important. Thus, low-cost information cues that require relatively less

¹ Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution*; Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*; Dalton, *Citizen Politics*, 2nd ed; Dalton, "Partisan mobilisation"; Popkin.

² Dalton, "Partisan mobilisation", 3.

³ Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*, 18.

⁴ Shively, "The Development of Party Identification"; Popkin, 70.

⁵ Popkin, 16.

⁶ Sniderman, Brody and Tetlock; Dalton, "Partisan mobilisation", 7.

effort should dominate the electoral choices of less-informed citizens. Social group references provide one common source of political cues that are used to simplify political decisions.

Yet there is a contrary argument that information cues or shortcuts are equally, or more important, for high level sophisticates.⁷ Among the cognitively mobilised, information cues can act as substitutes when there is too little information, while on the other hand, they also substitute when voters are confronted with too much information. In other words, high information voters are as likely, or indeed more likely, to make use of cues as low information voters.

Several interrelated hypotheses underpin this chapter. First, I expect to find significant variations in citizens' cognitive abilities among South Africa's divided society where access to education and news information remain highly unequal. Only educated sections of the population, whose access to political news information is higher, are expected to show signs of cognitive mobilisation. Since preconditions for increases in cognitive mobilisation include modernization and inclusive educational policies, both of which are underway in South Africa, I also expect to see increases over time in the proportion of the electorate who are cognitively mobilized.

Second, the need for information cues should decline as cognitive mobilisation increases. Less cognitively mobilised voters should show a greater reliance on information cues and shortcuts while cognitively mobilised voters should be less reliant on cues.

Third, depending on the level of cognitive ability I expect to find significant variation in the types of cues used by voters. Cognitive voters are expected to be more capable of cognition driven reasoning therefore more dependent on evaluative factors and less dependent on social reference cues. Among voters with low cognitive abilities and access to information, the use of information short cuts such as party images and social networks is expected to be more influential and persuasive. I assume that dependency on social (especially racial) cues among less cognized voters results from several factors. First and foremost, the nature of past political conflicts in South Africa has racialised the current political landscape. Additionally, South African political parties have also shown great ability to consolidate relatively diverse interest groups to single, and in the case of the ANC, dominant political coalitions, often borrowing from or relying on the politicized racial divisions and conflicts of the past. Current campaigning methods and strategies provide many voters with easy racial cues about which party represents which group, further simplifying partisan decision-making. In addition, campaign strategies and messages are often emotionally compelling in South Africa by using symbols linked to the liberation struggle or racially defined social issues such as crime.

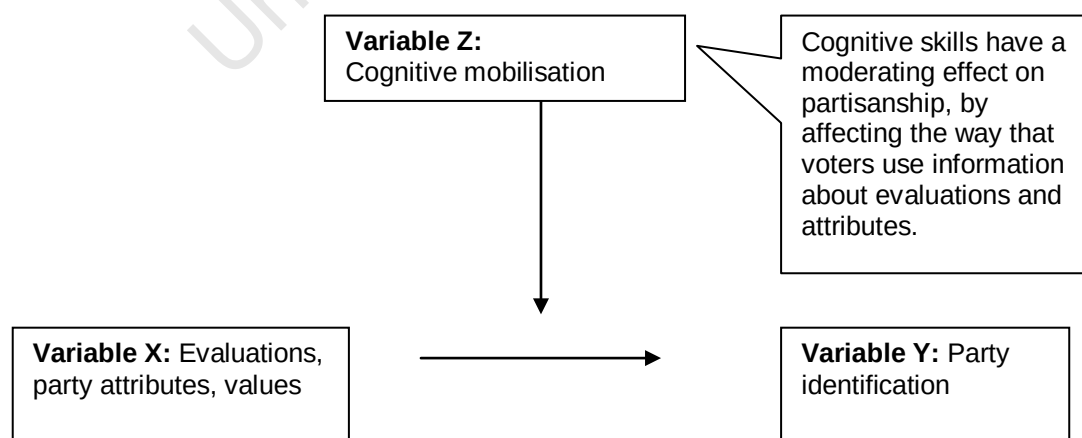
⁷ Miller, Wattenberg and Malanchuk, 521; Dalton, *Citizen Politics*, 3rd ed, 209.

These arguments should be considered in conjunction with the uneven levels of cognitive mobilisation in the South Africa electorate. The denial of quality formal education under apartheid, resulting in a 'lost generation', should mean that information shortcuts such as racialised party images are used by many voters who may lack the requisite skills to process complex political information.

Moreover, if partisan choice is contingent or context sensitive then it is also likely that voters will arm themselves with information sources from their immediate social context. Again the geographical and social divisions of South African society often mean that one's immediate locality is racially defined. If the social context has a direct impact on the respondent's partisanship by providing new information and electoral cues then it seems likely that it should relate closely to those of intermediaries to whom s/he is closest.

As such, cognitive mobilization is regarded and treated as a modifying or moderating variable in the statistical analyses and is therefore expected to have an indirect impact on partisanship through interaction effects.⁸ Figure 9.1 illustrates how cognitive mobilisation can play an indirect role in voter behaviour by affecting how information shortcuts are used. The general thrust of my argument is that cognitive mobilisation will mediate how voters process different types of information. Under conditions where voters have low cognitive skills I expect them to make greater use of low-cost cues and to rely on sociological cues such as party attributes and the social context. Where voters are more 'sophisticated' they should show greater reliance on evaluative factors. Cognitive mobilisation therefore plays an important but indirect role in forming and sustaining partisanship.

Figure 9.1: The moderating effects of cognitive mobilisation on partisanship



⁸ Moderating or 'interaction effects' are said to exist when a relationship between the two variables differs substantially for the categories of the test variable. Therefore there is a marked contrast in findings for different categories of the test variable. See Bryman and Cramer, 222-9.

A final question concerns further investigation of the role of race and its influence on partisanship. If voters increasingly turn to shortcuts other than racially-driven cues, race may become a less useful predictor of interests for voters over time.

This chapter starts by examining levels of formal education, and access to and use of political information and news media. Cognition-driven reasoning depends on skills and political information. These variables show whether developmental changes in South Africa have, over time, increased levels of education and skills among voters or access to political information. I measure levels of cognitive sophistication using items that ask about people's media usage⁹ and their skills¹⁰.

In addition, political awareness and motivation to acquire and digest information must be taken into account.¹¹ Levels of political interest and discussion among the South African populace are also presented as indicators of cognitive engagement.¹² Additional indicators such as political knowledge are discussed as well.¹³ Finally, I examine relations between education and related variables such as political interest, discussion and newspaper usage.

Dalton states that 'cognitively mobilized voters are those who possess both the skills *and* motivation to grapple with the complexities of politics on their own' (my italics).¹⁴ His framework categorizes voters by whether they are partisan or non-partisan on one hand, and whether they are 'cognitively mobilised' on the other. The two dimensions yield four categories which allow one to examine likely increases in partisan shifts especially among non-partisans or 'independents' and the different types of partisans. When I apply Dalton's typology to the South African data I operationalise the concept 'cognitive mobilisation' by using two indicators: when a respondent has completed high school and any post-secondary education *and* when a respondent is 'very interested' in politics. I also attempt to identify structurally predisposed social groups for whom cognitive mobilisation is important.

Finally, I turn to test cognitive mobilisation as a moderating variable. There are different ways one can test for the moderating effects of cognitive mobilisation.¹⁵ Using contingency tables and summary statistics, I look at interaction effects by examining the zero order correlation between partisanship and the specific evaluation, and then compare this to the conditional

⁹ *How often do you get news from the following sources? Radio, Television, Newspapers.*

¹⁰ *What is the highest level of education that you have completed?* List of levels.

¹¹ Popkin, 36.

¹² *How frequently did you talk about the candidates, parties or issues with your: A. Family B. Friends C. Neighbours D. Co-workers. Or List of actions that people take as citizens: A. Discussed politics with friends; and 'How interested are you in public affairs? Not interested, somewhat interested, very interested'.*

¹³ *Generally, politics seems so complicated that people like me cannot understand what is happening.*

¹⁴ Dalton, "Partisan mobilisation", 5; Dalton, "Cognitive Mobilisation and Partisan Dealignment", 267.

¹⁵ Available statistics include the use of contingency tables / cross tabulations where you hold your test variable constant and examine percentages. Another method is the use of the partial correlation coefficient. See Bryman and Cramer, 222-9; 232. Also see De Vaus, 297-315.

correlations that controls for the effects of cognitive mobilisation. I observe the moderating effects of cognitive mobilisation on sociotropic and egocentric economic evaluations, and political evaluations such as Presidential performance and approval of government's economic performance and providing social services. I also test party image evaluations and social networks. Finally, I employ the use of logistic regression to test the cognitive model which incorporates multiple moderating variables and their interaction effects to assess the impact of cognitive mobilisation on partisanship. Variables are coded so that low scores are equivalent to low levels of education, low amounts of information, and low levels of political engagement or interest in politics. The higher the score the more cognitive engagement occurs.

To anticipate, I find that the proportion of cognitively mobilised voters is small, and constitutes no more than one-tenth of the populace, with the highest percentages found mainly among white voters, urban residents and younger people (between 18 and 29 years). The large proportion of non-partisan or 'floating' voters is disproportionately concentrated among the less sophisticated sectors of the public – they are not cognitively mobilised and will probably remain on the periphery of electoral politics.

I also find that the types of cues used by voters are dependent on their cognitive ability. Cognitive mobilisation has an indirect and moderating effect by making voters emphasise different factors when choosing among parties. Voters with higher levels of cognitive engagement and skills show greater reliance on performance evaluations when deciding which party to support while less cognised voters showing greater reliance on low-cost information sources like social networks.

I conclude that partisanship has weakened in South Africa, not because of a rise in cognitive mobilisation but because of a rise in non-mobilised voters, or 'apoliticals'. Moreover, most partisans lack the cognitive skills or political information that would enable them to shift their party support on the basis of party performance or policy positions. I further conclude that the high proportions of apoliticals, voters are typically non-active, uninvolved and detached from politics, have consequences for responsive and accountable governance.

9.1 Level of formal education and use of news media

Perhaps the single most important source of information for the electorate is the news media.¹⁶ In addition, education is important not because it 'deepens' but because it broadens the electorate – by increasing the number of issues that citizens see as politically relevant and by increasing the number of connections they make between their own lives and national and

¹⁶ Popkin, 25.

international events.¹⁷ Therefore, increases in education and news information are likely to affect how voters process information. As Popkin states, 'educated voters have more ability to absorb and process information than do less-educated voters.'¹⁸

One might expect that as the South African government's inclusive education policies unfold, older, less educated generations will slowly leave the electorate and be replaced by younger, more educated people. This subsection examines whether cognitive skills have, in fact, increased due to broadened access to education and news media.

Have cognitive skills increased among the South African population?

The 2001 census data in table 9.1 offers the most accurate picture of the educational composition of the South African populace. Only 18 percent of the population has completed a formal education, including both matriculation and tertiary level. The vast majority either have either no education (14 percent) or only some formal education (58 percent). While surveys are not accurate yardsticks for assessing actual education figures in the total populace the survey education data presented in Table 9.2 shows little evidence of a significant rise in formal education amongst the voting age public over the years. Between the years of 1994 and 2003 Mattes finds that there is no clear evidence of any trends among the adult population in the reduction of people without formal education or an increase in those who have finished high school or have some university education.¹⁹

Table 9.1: Levels of education in the population across years, Census 2001 data²⁰ = 100%

Level of education	Number	%s
No education	6,389,651	14
Some formal education	26,004,947	58
Formal education*	7,975,364	18
Not applicable	4,449,817	10
Total	44,819,780	100%

*Includes those who have completed high school or have some university education

Table 9.2: Levels of education in the population across years, Survey data = 100%

Level of education	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2004	2006
None	3	2	5	9	4	6	6	6	6
Some formal education	60	55	62	63	55	52	61	59	51
Formal education*	37	43	33	28	41	42	33	35	43

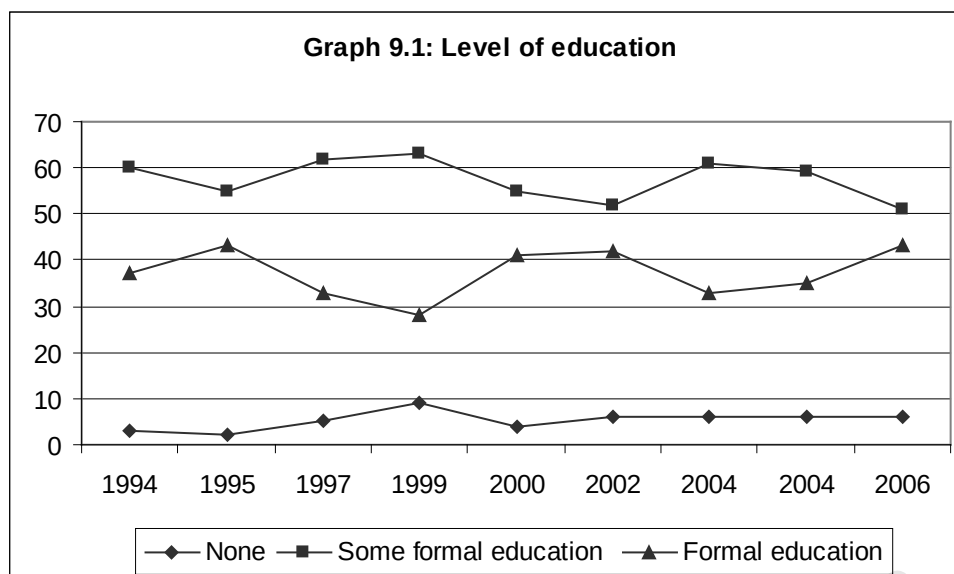
* Includes those who have completed high school or have some university education.

¹⁷ Ibid., 36.

¹⁸ Ibid., 37.

¹⁹ Mattes, "Voter information", 42.

²⁰ Census 2001 Community Profiles database, Pretoria: Statistics South Africa, 2003.



Have the costs of obtaining political information decreased?

As the cognitive skills of Western publics have improved, so too have their political resources.²¹ Television now plays a primary role in informing and educating the public in most Western democracies and is cited as the most frequently used information source.²² Looking at the South African data it appears that the proportions of people who view TV news and read newspapers have not increased, while listening to radio news has. Mattes confirms these figures when he states that there is no clear evidence that access to news has significantly increased over the past decade.²³ It is not necessarily expected that TV and newspaper usage would increase. Although increased electrification, rising incomes and transformed media might all lead to greater media consumption, in the 1990's South Africans were already highly politicized, because of the circumstances of political transition. This meant that access to and use of media was probably unusually high by comparison with other countries at similar levels of development.

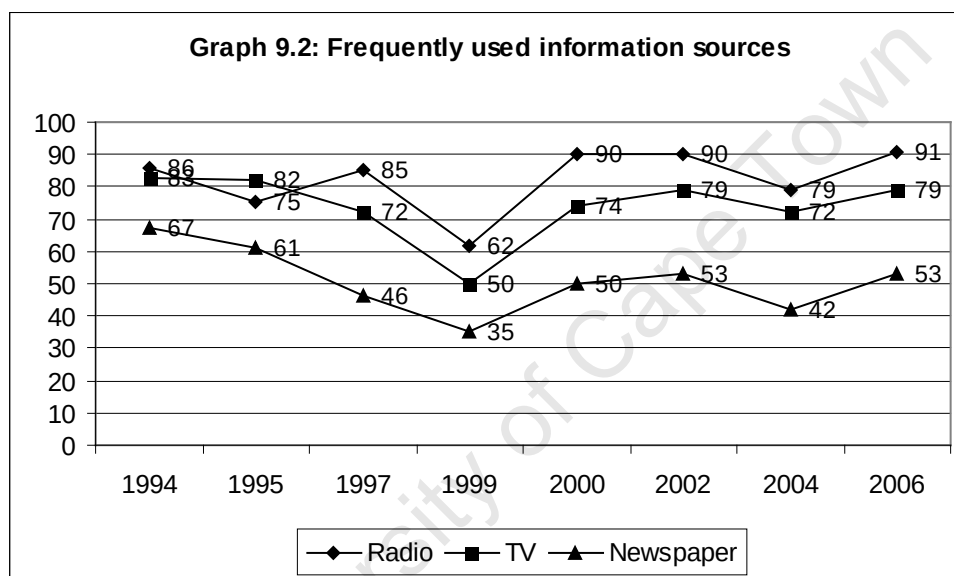
²¹ Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*, 19.

²² Ibid., 21.

²³ Mattes, "Voter information", 43.

Table 9.3: Access to sources of political news information across years - 100%²⁴

Frequency	1994	1995	1997	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
Newspaper								
Never	16	12	26	24	25	32	25	28
Occasionally	17	27	28	26	22	26	22	24
Frequently	67	61	46	50	53	42	53	48
TV								
Never	10	7	16	16	14	14	15	18
Occasionally	7	11	12	10	7	14	6	12
Frequently	83	82	72	74	79	72	79	70
Radio								
Never	7	10	8	4	6	8	5	11
Occasionally	7	15	7	6	4	13	4	11
Frequently	86	75	85	90	90	79	91	78
%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100



All surveys show that radio, which offers comparatively less news, is the most frequently used information medium for political news in South Africa, followed by TV and then newspaper articles. While an average of 78 percent of the voting population use radio and 70 percent use TV, only 48 percent use newspapers frequently. In other words, since 1995 no more than half the voting population has used newspapers with the same frequency as TV or radio. These findings contrast with Dalton's findings in western countries which show that radio is one of the least important sources of political information, with TV, followed by newspapers or magazines as the most important sources.²⁵ Moreover, there is little evidence in the data to show that access to news has increased significantly in South Africa since 1994. Frequent newspaper usage has declined over the years, with radio usage increasing very slightly. In

²⁴ The question wording for Opinion 99 and the CNEP surveys differ and are not comparable so they have been excluded. The rest of the surveys have the question item: 'How often do you get news from the following sources?'

²⁵ Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*, 21.

contrast, public media use has generally remained stable or increased over the years in Western European countries and the United States.²⁶

In South Africa's national and provincial 2004 elections Gavin Davis shows that the broadcast media remained the main source of political information for most South Africans, expanding significantly since 1994.²⁷ In 1997, 52 percent of South Africans listened to the radio on a daily basis, 44 percent watched television, and 16 percent read newspapers. By the 2004, election media usage had risen: over 23 million watched television at least once a week and over 27 million listened to the radio.²⁸ During the 2004 campaign radio was the most widely accessible and used media with 91 percent of South Africans listening to the radio in 2004. The average time spent listening to the radio in 2004 was four hours per day & 32 hours per week.

However, print media lagged far behind with only 39 percent saying that they read any newspaper. While in 1999, whites made up the bulk of the newspaper readership, by 2004, of the 8 million newspapers read each day, over 5 million were read by black South Africans.²⁹ However, since 1994 media ownership, editorial leadership and readership have diversified. Partisan bias has also declined particularly during election coverage.³⁰ South Africans also generally trusted the media during the 2004 campaign – most CNEP respondents did not see the media in South Africa as favouring a particular political party.³¹ These factors should increase the quality of political news and also help balance the loss of deeper political news analysis provided by newspapers.

The use of news media and the level of formal education serve as indicators for the amount of political news information to which voters are exposed and the cognitive skills they possess to make use of the information. Overall, there is little evidence to suggest that either have increased in a remarkable way between 1994 and 2006.

9.2 Political awareness and engagement in politics

Although a large amount of voters are frequently exposed to political information through news media, especially on radio and television, this does not necessarily translate into being politically aware and cognitively engaged in political developments. Public opinion longitudinal data shows the growing politicization of western societies and a greater attention paid to

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Davis, "Media coverage", 232.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid., 237.

³⁰ Ibid., 248.

³¹ Cherrel Africa, "To What Extent Do Election Campaigns Enhance The Quality Of Democracy in South Africa." (Presentation, A.W. Mellon Foundation Seminar Series, University of Cape Town, 28 November 2006).

politics and government affairs.³² To measure political awareness and cognitive engagement in politics surveys ask voters about their attention to and interest in public affairs and the frequency in which they engage in political discussion.

Tracked over time, the data shows that, on average, the vast majority of voters (76 percent) are either not interested or marginally interested in politics. On average, only 24 percent or one-fourth of voters declare themselves to be very interested in politics, and only 16 percent follow politics most of the time. In fact, the percentage of voters who are not at all interested in politics rises over the years. Again, this data contrasts with Dalton's work that shows unmistakable increases in political interest over time across several western nations.³³

*Table 9.4: Follow politics*³⁴

Follow politics	1995	1997	1999	2000	Average
Hardly at all	18	25	21	22	21
Some of the time	64	59	62	66	63
Most of the time	18	16	17	12	16

*Table 9.5: Interest in politics*³⁵

Interest in Politics	2002	2004	2004 CNEP	2006	Average
Not interested	25	47	41	38	38
Somewhat interested	45	29	46	33	38
Very interested	30	24	13	29	24

Table 9.6 shows the frequency with which people engage in political discussion. The proportion of voters who engage frequently in political discussion with those around them has remained low and relatively static over time, averaging around 15 per cent. By contrast, those who never engage or only occasionally engage make up a significant majority at 38 per cent and 47 per cent respectively. In other words, 85 per cent of voters do not engage with people around them in frequent political discussions.

*Table 9.6: Frequency of political discussion*³⁶

Frequency	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2004	2006	Average

³² Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*, 22.

³³ Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*, 22.

³⁴ 1994: no relevant item. 1995: Do you follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, some of the time, only now and then, or hardly at all?

1997: Would you say you follow what goes on in government and politics always, some of the time, rarely, never?

1999: Do you follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, some of the time, only now and then, or hardly at all?

2000: Would you say you follow what goes on in government and politics always, some of the time, only now and then, hardly at all?

³⁵ Afrobarometer 2002; 2004; 2006: How interested would you say you are you in public affairs? Not interested, somewhat or very interested?

CNEP: More generally, how interested are you in politics? Very, somewhat, not interested?

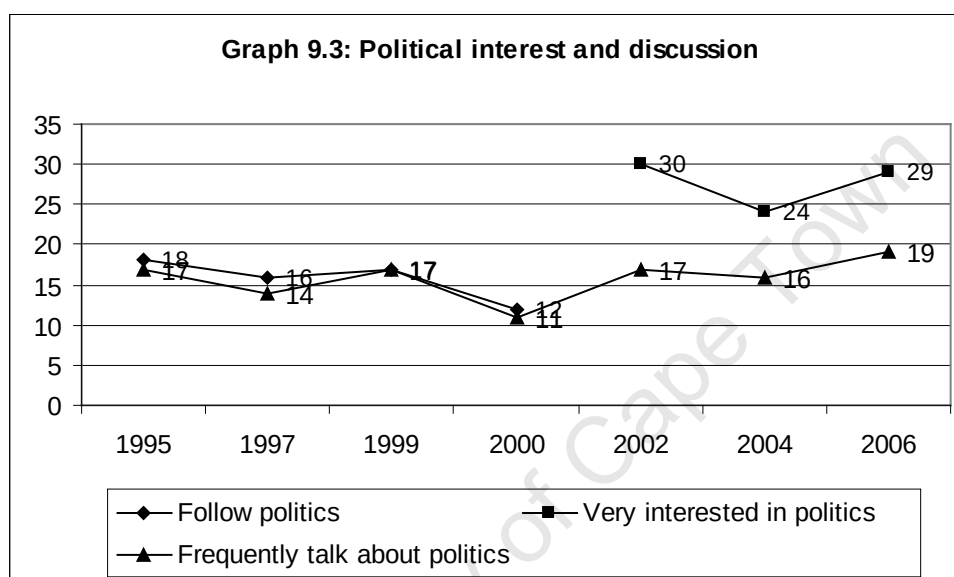
³⁶ 1995; 1997; 1999; 2000; 2004; 2006: When you get together with friends or family, would you say you discuss political matters frequently, occasionally or never?

2002: Have you discussed politics with friends or neighbors in the past year? Yes, often; Yes, several times, Yes, once or twice; No.

CNEP: How frequently did you talk about the candidates, parties or issues with your family and friends (during the election campaign)?

discussion							CNEP		
Never	24	38	37	37	37	42	52	34	38
Occasionally	59	48	46	52	46	42	38	47	47
Frequently	17	14	17	11	17	16	10	19	15
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

When we consider interest in public affairs and frequency of political discussion together in Graph 9.3 it is apparent that the level of political engagement among the South African voting population is relatively low. Voters in general do not actively seek political information, nor are they motivated to gather and discuss information from the most available and closest sources.



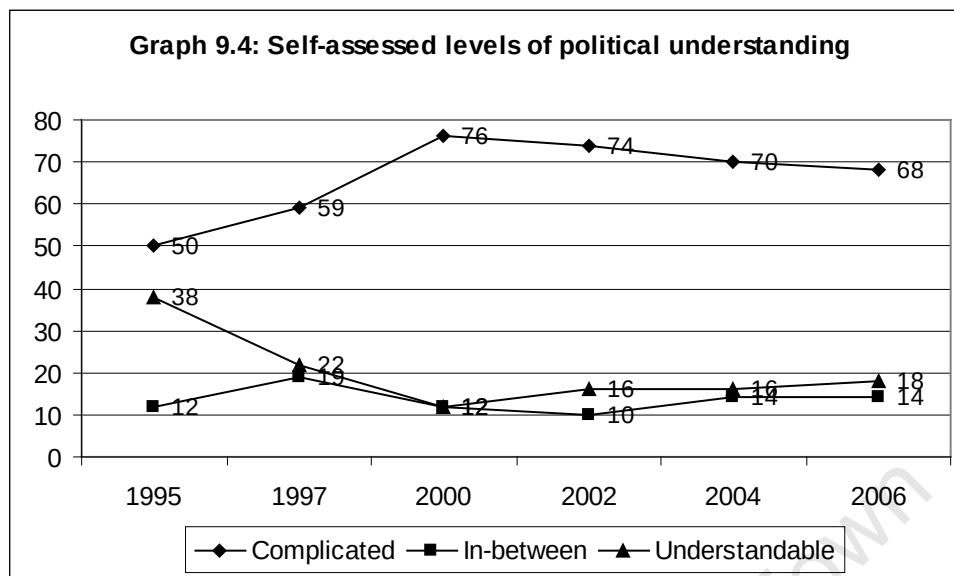
9.3 Levels of political knowledge

Since political information is a bi-product of everyday life and comes from multiple sources, the amount and quality of political information that voters possess is difficult to measure. However, items that tap voters' self-assessed levels of confidence in understanding political developments offer further insight into the efficacy and competence or the cognitive abilities of voters. The proportion of South Africans who believe that politics and government is sometimes too complicated to understand is high at an average of 64 percent, while those who do profess to understand politics constitutes only 21 per cent of the voting population.

Table 9.7: Self-assessed levels of political understanding ³⁷

Understand	1995	1997	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
Complicated	50	59	76	74	70	68	64
In-between	12	19	12	10	14	14	15
Understandable	38	22	12	16	16	18	21
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100%

³⁷ 2000; 2002; 2004; 2004 CNEP; 2006: Politics and government sometimes seem so complicated that you can't really understand what is going on.



9.4 Linkages between education, political interest and involvement

Dalton points out that evidence from survey research in the western democracies is virtually unanimous in indicating that education is strongly linked to a citizen's level of political knowledge, interest and involvement. He argues, 'A doubling of the public's educational level may not necessarily double the level of political sophistication, but some increase should occur'.³⁸ Popkin also mentions that while educational level apparently makes no difference in television news viewing, it does make a difference in newspaper reading, and an even larger difference in the reading of news magazines in the USA. In the established democracies, educated people are therefore more likely to read newspapers and news magazines.³⁹ Furthermore, educated people are more likely to discuss news stories than the less-educated.⁴⁰ Do educated South Africans show more interest in politics, read more newspapers, and discuss politics more frequently than their less educated counterparts? This section looks at the linkages between education and political interest, frequency of discussion and newspaper reading.

Table 9.8 shows bivariate relations between education and indicators of political interest and involvement. There is a modest but significant relationship between education and levels of political interest.⁴¹ Second, education also relates to the frequency of political discussion and it appears to increase in later years. The more educated one is the stronger the association

³⁸ Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*, 19.

³⁹ Popkin, 37.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Dalton finds that political interest and education are modestly correlated (the tau-b is .22 across all time points) among the American electorate Dalton, "Partisan mobilisation", 5.

with having political conversations with friends and family. Finally, the strongest and most substantial relationship appears to occur between education and the amounts of newspaper reading one does. Thus, it seems that, in line with international literature, educated South Africans do read more newspapers, show a greater interest and discuss politics more frequently than less educated citizens. Education can therefore change partisan orientations.

Table 9.8: Linkages between education and political interest and involvement

Item by type	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2004	2006
Interest in politics	.145**	.237**	.177**	.148**	.077**	.130**	.049*	.101**
Freq. political discussion	.124**	.175**	.241**	.142**	.147**	.173**	.172**	.211**
Newspaper reading	.167**	.326**	.310**	.375**	.390**	.320**	.219**	.355**

**Indicates the correlation is statistically significant at .000.

*Indicates the correlation is statistically significant at .05.

Summary statistic: Kendall's tau-c

9.5 Variations in cognitive skills among South African voters

I expect to find significant variations in cognitive abilities among South Africa's divided society where access to education and news information remain highly unequal. I also expect to see increases over time in the proportion of the electorate who are cognitively mobilized. Dalton states that 'cognitively mobilized voters are those who possess both the skills *and* motivation to grapple with the complexities of politics on their own.'⁴² When I operationalise the 'cognitive mobilisation' concept through a strict application of Dalton's operationalisation and include only those respondents with higher education (a college or university degree) and those who declare themselves to be 'very interested' in politics, the South African data shows a very small percentage of cognitively mobilised voters. Table 9.9 shows an average of only 4 percent of cognitively mobilized voters over the years, with no evident increases, while those who are not cognitively mobilized average a massive 96 percent of the sample.

Table 9.9: Variations in cognitive mobilisation among voters over years - %'s ⁴³

	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2004	2006	Ave
Cognitively mobilized	4	4	3	3	7	3	2	7	4
Not cognitively mobilized	96	96	97	97	93	97	98	93	96

However, the stringent application of Daltons' operationalisation to the South African data is unhelpful primarily because Dalton relies on the possession of some tertiary education as well as high levels of political interest. This is appropriate for advanced industrial democracies where levels of formal and higher education are greater, producing larger numbers of college graduates. However, in a country with significantly lower levels of education like South Africa, particularly in tertiary or higher education, it is conceptually and methodologically difficult to apply the same criteria as Dalton uses in the United States.

⁴² Ibid.; Dalton, "Cognitive Mobilisation and Partisan Dealignment", 267.

⁴³ The 'cognitive mobilisation' variable was created using those who responded positively to having some 'formal tertiary education' *and* those who were 'very interested in politics'. The variable 'interest in politics' is missing for 1994.

Since both items - skills and psychological involvement/motivation – make an independent contribution to the underlying ‘cognitive mobilisation’ concept and are therefore necessary,⁴⁴ I continue to use both but relax the constraint on education by also including those with a matriculation qualification plus those with higher tertiary education, while continuing to apply the stringent criterion of ‘high political interest’. Compared to their fellow South Africans, a completed matriculation still ensures a relatively high level of formal education.

When the education variable is relaxed a slightly different picture emerges in Table 9.10. The proportion of cognitively mobilized voters increases to an average of ten percent over the years, while those who are less cognitively mobilized average around ninety percent of the sample.

*Table 9.10: Variations in cognitive mobilisation among voters (relaxed version) - %'s*⁴⁵

	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2004	2006	Ave
Cognitively mobilized	10	9	7	6	14	10	6	15	10
Not cognitively mobilized	90	91	93	94	86	90	94	85	90

Cognitive mobilisation among the vast majority of the populace remains low over the past twelve years. It is therefore likely that most voters continue to rely on partisan and other cues to guide their political decisions or simply do not engage in the political process altogether. The proportion of voters who are politically interested and well-educated and who probably orient themselves to politics using evaluative factors remains limited to roughly one-tenth of the population.

The social characteristics of cognitively mobilised voters

In the USA, Dalton and Popkin find a concentration of cognitively mobilised voters among the better educated, younger, and middle class voters.⁴⁶ I perform tests that show the bivariate associations in table 9.11 between four major sociological variables to find out the social characteristics of cognitively mobilised voters in South Africa.

*Table 9.11: Cognitive mobilisation * sociological variables*⁴⁷

	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2004	2006
Race (black/non-black)	.172***	.147***	.249***	..069*	.130***	.086***	.083*	.053
Class	.139***	.196***	.253***	.183***	.212***	.104***	.199***	.198***
Urban-Rural	.055**	.085***	.027	.024	.125***	.106***	.052	.106***

⁴⁴ Dalton, “Partisan mobilisation”, 5.

⁴⁵ The revised ‘cognitive mobilisation’ variable was created using those who responded positively to having matriculated plus those with higher tertiary education *and* those who were ‘very interested in politics’.

⁴⁶ Dalton, *Citizen Politics in Western Democracies*; Popkin.

⁴⁷ The sociological variables are as follows: Class: (1) middle class; (2) workers; (3) unemployed; (4) other. Race: (1) black; (2) non-black. Urban-rural: (1) Urban; (2) rural. Age: (1) 18-29; (2) 30-44; (3) 45-59; (4) 60 plus.

Age	.029	.022	-.099***	.039	.117***	.083***	.065	.080**

Summary statistic: Cramer's V (nominal by nominal)

As one would expect, there are moderate and significant relationships between sociological variables and cognitive mobilisation. The occupational class emerges as the strongest coefficients with the middle classes tending to have the highest numbers of cognitively mobilised voters. Less cognitively mobilised are found mainly among the unemployed and workers. Cross tabulation percentages confirm that the unemployed have the highest percentages of less-cognitively mobilised voters. In terms of race, black voters tend to have highest proportions of less cognitively mobilised voters whereas whites tend to have the highest percentages of cognitively mobilised voters. In terms of urban versus rural location - less cognitively mobilised voters are consistently found among rural voters whereas urban voters have the highest percentage of cognitively mobilised voters. With respect to age in 1999, cognitively mobilised voters are found in older age groups but thereafter the cognitively mobilised voters are found among the youngest age groups. It appears, as in the USA, that cognitive mobilisation occurs among the younger, better educated, middle class voters in South Africa. The potential mediating effects of cognitive mobilisation on voter behaviour are therefore to be found primarily among these voters.

9.6 Dalton's typology: cognitive mobilization and partisanship

Several studies have developed typologies of citizens that capture multi-dimensional effects of cognitive mobilisation and partisanship. One such typology has been developed by Dalton.⁴⁸ While some voters remain oriented to politics based on their partisan attachment, cognitive mobilisation produces another group of politically interested and well-educated voters who orient themselves to politics on their own. This combination of both traits produces a framework that categorises voters by whether they are partisan or non-partisan on one hand, and whether they are 'cognitively mobilised' on the other, as illustrated in Table 9.12.

Table 9.12: Cognitive skills vs. level of partisanship

Cognitive mobilisation		Strength of Partisanship	
		Independent	Partisanship
	High	Apartisan	Cognitive Partisan
	Low	Apolitical	Ritual Partisan

The cross-classification of the two dimensions in the framework yield the following four categories that represent distinct mobilisation patterns. The important feature of this typology is that it distinguishes between different types of citizens who are normally combined when either mobilization dimension is considered separately.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Dalton, *Citizen Politics*, 2nd ed, 215.

⁴⁹ Dalton, "Partisan mobilisation", 5.

- Cognitive partisans score highly on both mobilization dimensions. They have strong party attachments but they are psychologically involved in politics even when party cues are absent. Both the partisan and cognitive dimensions influence their perceptions and behaviors.
- Apartisans are not attached to any political party but are cognitively mobilised with high levels of political involvement and sophistication and possess the skills and resources necessary to orient themselves to politics without depending on party labels. They are the new 'independents' but they are independents of a much different sort than the Apoliticals (to be discussed below). Apartisans are comprised of politically sophisticated citizens while apoliticals are on the periphery of politics. They tend to vote on the basis of current issues demand more responsiveness to public opinion. These Apartisans are nearly the polar opposite of the traditional image of non-partisans presented in *The American Voter*. They are better educated, knowledgeable about politics, and politically engaged, even if they remain someone distant from political parties.
- Ritual partisans are mobilised by their strong party attachments, but are not cognitively mobilised. They support their preferred party and participate in party-related activities such as voting or campaigns. However, their party support should be almost a habitual activity, and political involvement or understanding is less likely to extend to areas where party cues are lacking.
- Apoliticals are neither attached to a political party nor are they cognitively mobilised in politics; this group conforms more closely to the independents originally described by Campbell et al.⁵⁰ They are located at the periphery of politics, are less involved in political issues and candidates and generally politically less sophisticated.

On average only 3 percent of South Africa's entire electorate qualify as the 'new independents', or apartisans. With high levels of cognitive mobilisation they have the political resources to follow the complexities of politics and are free of affective party ties. They are less consistent in their voting patterns because their voting behaviour is not dependent on long standing party predispositions. They also inject more issue voting into elections and demand that candidates are more responsive to public opinion.⁵¹ Yet, very few South African

⁵⁰ Campbell et al, 143-45. Non-partisans (independents) were at the edge of the electoral process, were uninvolved in elections, unsophisticated about politics and these factors would negatively affect participatory democracy. However, the new 'apartisan' later dispelled concerns outlined in early literature, which held a negative view of non-partisans.

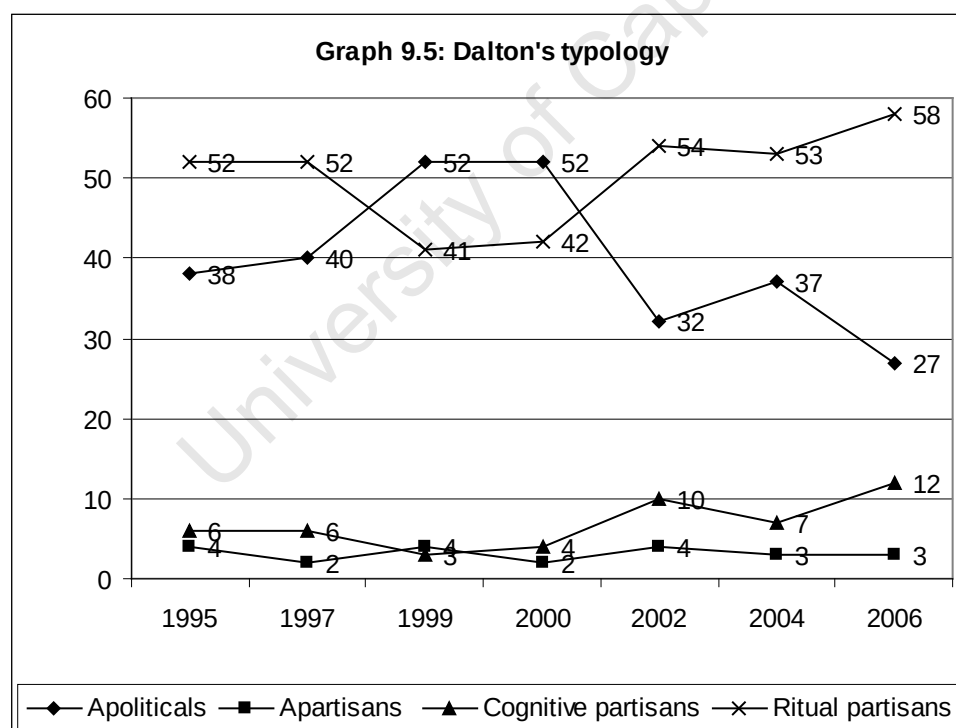
⁵¹ Dalton, *Citizen Politics*, 2nd ed, 215.

voters can be described in this way, nor has this group increased since the advent of democracy, remaining quite static over time.

Having observed in Chapter Five that South Africa's levels of partisanship weakened after 1994 a central question was whether these new independents were located primarily among the apartisan or the apolitical categories. One might presume that social change over the past may have given growth to new, cognitively mobilised independents. Yet, according to Dalton's typology shown in table 9.13, on average only 3 percent are 'apartisans' while 40 percent of the entire electorate are 'apolitical'. Much of the 'floating' or independent non-partisan electorate constitute 'apoliticals' rather than apartisans.

Table 9.13: Cognitive skills and partisanship in South Africa over time - %'s

	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2004 cneq	2006	Average
Apoliticals	38	40	52	52	32	37	46	27	40
Apertisans	4	2	4	2	4	3	1	3	3
Cognitive partisans	6	6	3	4	10	7	4	12	7
Ritual partisans	52	52	41	42	54	53	49	58	50
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100



American research suggests that apoliticals are the least likely to become involved in the electoral process and are the most unsophisticated about politics. Yet, this remains a hypothesis in the South African case. We are still unclear whether there exists a relationship between either knowledge about politics and turnout in elections. When I test for a relationship between Dalton's four-fold typology (using my version of cognitive mobilisation)

and turnout in South African elections I find a clear and definite association. Apoliticals, followed by apartisans are the least likely to turnout in elections while cognitive and ritual partisans are the most likely across all the surveys. In 1995 when asked about their intention to vote in the local elections only 72 percent of apoliticals and 83 of apartisans percent stated they will vote, whereas 95 percent of cognitive partisans and 89 percent of ritual partisans stated that they will vote.⁵² Again, in 1997 only 34 percent of apoliticals said that they had voted in the local election while 53 percent, 65 percent and 55 percent of apartisans, cognitive and ritual partisans respectively stated that they had voted.⁵³ In 1999, when asked how likely you are to register to vote for the 1999 national elections only 35 percent of apoliticals stated they were very likely to do so. However, 74 percent of apartisans, 83 percent of cognitive partisans and 62 percent of ritual partisans said it was very likely that they would register.⁵⁴

A similar pattern holds across the Afrobarometer survey series. In 2004, when asked whether one voted in the last election only 63 percent of apoliticals and apartisans had done so, whereas 82 percent of cognitive partisans and 76 percent of ritual partisans had voted.⁵⁵ And again, for 2006 only 64 percent of apoliticals and 70 percent of apartisan stated that they voted in the last election, whereas 88 percent of cognitive partisans and ritual partisans did so.⁵⁶ The South Africa data provides strong evidence over time that apoliticals are indeed less likely to engage politically, particularly at elections, compared to their cognitively mobilised counterparts.

Studies pointing to a rising proportion of sophisticated non-partisans in the established democracies of the global North are countered by a rival interpretation that suggests that the growth of independents is disproportionately concentrated among the less sophisticated sectors of the public.⁵⁷ This interpretation seems to accord with the South African data. Robert Putnam points to findings that show how poverty and economic deprivation in American society negatively affect the flow of political information and political participation.⁵⁸ Popkin and Dimock argue that American voters with scant political knowledge have greater difficulty in perceiving differences between parties and candidates and are less likely to participate actively. They state, 'The less a person knows about government, the more likely it is that the voter will judge representatives by their personal character and the less a voter knows, the less likely it is that he or she will vote.'⁵⁹ They find that persons in the top third of the cognitive engagement scale are more than 20 percent more likely to vote than persons in the bottom third.⁶⁰ And they conclude that people who do not understand the basic features of

⁵² Cramer's V: .223***

⁵³ Cramer's V: .141***

⁵⁴ Cramer's V: .191***

⁵⁵ Cramer's V: .100***

⁵⁶ Cramer's V: .144***

⁵⁷ Dalton, "Partisan mobilisation", 3.

⁵⁸ Putnam, 343.

⁵⁹ Popkin and Dimock, 2.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 12.

political institutions are less likely to grasp the connections between issues, candidates, parties and offices.

For comparative purposes, it is instructive to note that the proportion of 'apartisans' in South Africa (3 percent) is five times as small as that measured in the United States in 1952 (16 percent); 1980 (18 percent), or in 1992 (24 percent).⁶¹ This is despite the use of a relaxed operationalisation of Dalton's cognitive mobilisation concept in the South African data. Indeed, if one was to compare South African data with United States data using his strict application the proportion of apartisans would be lower.

Dalton notes that the expansion of new independents in the US means that this group now comprises a fifth of the public.⁶² The shifting balance between ritual partisans and apartisans encapsulates a fundamental change in the characteristics of the American electorate during the later half of the 20th century. The basis of political mobilization is shifting from long-term, habitual party cues that were used as a heuristic by an unsophisticated public, to a more evaluative and sophisticated electorate that makes their electoral choices on the issues and candidates of the campaign, only partially based on their partisan affiliations.

Table 9.14: South African and United States data compared - %'s

	1964-66 USA	2000 USA	1995-2006 SA Average
Apoliticals	16	20	40
Apartisans	10	20	3
Cognitive partisans	27	33	7
Ritual partisans	47	27	50
Total	100	100	100

*Source US data: American National Election Studies, 1964-2000.*⁶³

An additional concern in this study is whether social change has caused the amount of cognitive partisan to increase in the past decade. According to table 9.13 cognitive partisans average approximately 7 percent of the entire electorate over the years, and only in later years do they show small signs of growth. Of all partisans they make up only 12 percent. The proportion of the electorate with strong party attachments and psychological involvement in politics remains small. Yet, the voting intention/turnout data provided earlier suggests that this group is consistently the most likely to participate at elections. On the other hand, ritual partisans, or voters who are mobilised by their strong party attachments but are not cognitively mobilised, make up half the population and appear to be increasing. The vast majority of partisans are not cognitively mobilised and are likely to continue being guided by partisan cues rather than their interest in political affairs.

⁶¹ Mattes, "Voter information", 60.

⁶² Dalton, "Partisan mobilisation", 15.

⁶³ Ibid., 6.

Thus, unlike advanced industrial democracies where the process of cognitive mobilisation is decreasing the proportion of the public who need to rely on partisanship to guide their political behaviour, there is little evidence of this occurring in South Africa. Instead, the data suggests that partisanship has weakened in South Africa, not because of a rise in cognitive mobilisation, but due to a growth in non-mobilised voters, or apoliticals. These citizens are less cognitively mobilised and are most likely to abstain from participating in electoral politics. And among those voters who are partisans, the vast majority probably do not have the cognitive skills or political information that would enable them to shift their party support on the basis of ongoing party performance or policy positions.

Ongoing processes of socio-economic change have not yet significantly increased the number of apertisans. One caveat must be noted however. Dalton does state that the effects of such a process are gradual.⁶⁴ A significantly longer time span than what is available in the South African data is required before the cognitive mobilisation process may be evident in a society. For example, Dalton measures cognitive mobilisation in the United States over a much longer timeframe of forty years (1952-1992). On the other hand, Ronald Inglehart found that the percentage of apertisans in Europe increased significantly over a single decade (1976-87).⁶⁵ The slight increase in cognitive partisans we have observed may thus indicate the very beginning of this process in South Africa.

9.7 Cognitive mobilisation and partisan choice

To what extent is party preference shaped directly by cognitive mobilisation? The direction of the correlation coefficients shown in Table 9.15 suggests that ANC identifiers tend to be drawn from the more cognitively mobilised voters. Yet, only two of the three years that are statistically significant show this association and the coefficients are very weak. In short, it is difficult to say that there is any direct association between party choice and levels of cognitive mobilisation in South Africa. Partisan choice does not vary according to the level of a voter's political sophistication. This finding is unsurprising since the literature does not argue for a direct effect on party choice but rather that cognitive mobilisation has an indirect or moderating effect by shaping how voters use information to make partisan decisions. I now turn to measuring the possible effects of cognitive mobilisation as a moderating variable.

Table 9.15: Cognitive mobilisation and party choice⁶⁶

	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2004 CNEP	2006
Non-ANC (0) vs. ANC (1)	.032	-.009	.082***	-.089***	-.004	-.021	-.050	-.083***

Summary statistic: Phi (2x2 nominal)

⁶⁴ Dalton, *Citizen Politics*, 2nd ed, 216.

⁶⁵ Ronald Inglehart, *Cultural changes in advanced industrial societies: predictions and findings* (Leiden: Universiteit Leiden, 1991) 366.

⁶⁶ Coding cognitively mobilised (0); not cognitively mobilised (1)

9.8 The indirect or 'interaction' effects of cognitive mobilisation

I examine the role of cognitive mobilisation as a moderating or interaction variable. Cognitive mobilisation has a moderating effect by making voters emphasise different factors when choosing among parties.⁶⁷ Voters with low levels of cognitive engagement and skills select and evaluate different factors when deciding which party to support, compared to those with higher cognitive levels. For instance, cognitively mobilised, or politically sophisticated voters should show greater use of sociotropic evaluations since they require greater use of skills to make the link between government policy and economic conditions.⁶⁸ And less informed voters may be more inclined to rely on cues from their immediate social context. The more sophisticated respondents should therefore differ appreciably from less sophisticated ones in the types of evaluations they use. In short, I expect cognitive mobilisation to act as a mediating factor that influences the relative importance of other factors determining partisan behaviour.

The contingency tables and summary statistics below compare the zero order correlation between partisanship and different evaluations or information cues to the conditional correlations that show the interactive effects of cognitive mobilisation. In other words, I test cognitive mobilisation by starting with a single causal model (zero order correlation) to explain party support for the electorate as a whole. Then I divide the electorate into two sub-samples according to their level of cognitive mobilisation to determine whether there is a difference in the bases on which the less-informed and better-informed voters vote.⁶⁹

9.8.1 Sociotropic economic evaluations

The data provides strong evidence that sociotropic economic evaluations are more useful sources of information for cognitively mobilised voters and that they guide their partisan decisions to a greater extent than less sophisticated voters (see table 9.16). The data supports the theory that cognized voters are better equipped to make assessments of the current wider economic landscape and connect their judgements to their partisan decisions.

Table 9.16: Correlations between the direction of partisanship x sociotropic evaluation, by levels of cognitive mobilisation

	Variables	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006
Zero-order	All voters	.183***	.202***	.179***	.174***	.137***	.179***
Conditional correlations	Cognitive mobilised voters	.343***	.209***	.197*	.218***	.304***	.304***
	Non-cog mobilised voters	.168***	.191***	.205***	.166***	.118***	.142***

Summary statistic: Kendall's tau-c

⁶⁷ Kuan and Lau, 575.

⁶⁸ Campbell et al 1960; Fiorina.

⁶⁹ Kuan and Lau test for cognitive mobilisation using a similar method.

9.8.2 Egocentric economic evaluations

When one considers the moderating effects of cognitive mobilisation on egocentric or personal 'pocketbook' economic assessments in table 9.17 it seems that less cognitively mobilised voters use these evaluations more frequently (as indicated by more frequent statistical significance over the years). But in some years (2000 and 2006) cognised voters also make greater use of these evaluations. Overall, the data seems unclear and does not tell us much.

There is evidence from Canada, Hungary, Mexico, and Taiwan that more politically sophisticated respondents are more likely to make use of pocketbook evaluations in their decisions to support or oppose the incumbent government because they are more likely to make a cognitive link between government policy and their own economic conditions.⁷⁰ These findings challenge the conventional wisdom on political sophistication and economic voting which argues that less informed voters rely more on personal circumstances.⁷¹ Neither arguments gain clear-cut support from the South African data which offers a somewhat mixed picture.

Table 9.17: Correlations between direction of partisanship x egocentric evaluation, for firstly the total sample and then sub-samples by cognitive mobilisation

	Variables	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006
Zero-order	All voters	.095***	-.028	.115***	-.012	-.054*	.081***
Conditional correlations	Cognitive mobilised voters	.007	-.055	.276**	.018	-.069	.173**
	Non-cog mobilised voters	.103***	-.018	.098***	-.015	-.057*	.055*

Summary statistic: Kendall's tau-c

9.8.3 Political evaluations: Approval of Presidential Job Performance

Presidential job performance evaluations are helpful sources of information to both cognised and less cognitively mobilised voters. However, cognised voters make greater use of these particular evaluations across the years (shown by stronger coefficients). In fact, in some years less cognitively mobilised voters have a lower conditional correlation than the zero-order correlation suggesting less use of these evaluations.

Table 9.18: Correlations between direction of partisanship x President's performance, for firstly the total sample and then sub-samples by cognitive mobilisation

	Variables	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006
Zero-order	All voters	.354***	.475***	.331***	.297***	.375***	.327***
	Cognitive	.495***	.415***	.400***	.289***	.521***	.340***

⁷⁰ Brad T Gomez, "Cognitive Heterogeneity and Economic Voting: A Comparative Analysis of Four Democratic Electorates," *American Journal of Political Science* 50, 1 (2006), 22.

⁷¹ Campbell et al 1960; Fiorina.

Conditional correlations	mobilised voters						
	Non-cog mobilised voters	.339***	.475***	.323***	.299***	.357***	.315***

Summary statistic: Kendall's tau-c

9.8.4 Political evaluations: Approval of Economic and Social Services Policy

Cognitively mobilised voters clearly make far greater use of policy evaluations than their less-cognised counterparts across all years. Again, I find consistently lower conditional correlations for the non-cognitively mobilised voters compared to the zero-order correlation suggesting far less use of these evaluations.

Table 9.19: Correlations between direction of partisanship x Policy performance⁷², for firstly the total sample and then sub-samples by cognitive mobilisation

			2000	2002	2004	2006
Economic Policy	Zero-order	All voters	.228***	.213***	.273***	.246***
	Conditional correlations	Cognitive mobilised voters	.243**	.323***	.323***	.310***
		Non-cog mobilised voters	.220***	.193***	.268***	.222***
Social Services Policy	Zero-order	All voters	.290***	.274***	.329***	.282***
	Conditional correlations	Cognitive mobilised voters	.459***	.302***	.370***	.323***
		Non-cog mobilised voters	.277***	.267***	.325***	.268***

Summary statistic: Kendall's tau-c

9.8.5 Party Image evaluations

Only two surveys (Opinion 1999 and CNEP 2004)⁷³ include both the cognitive mobilisation and the party image variables.⁷⁴ There are strong correlations between ANC partisanship and positive evaluations of the party. Similarly, there is a modest correlation between partisanship for opposition parties and positive evaluations of opposition party images. It appears that cognitively mobilised voters make greater use of party images than less mobilised voters. This is at odds with my expectations, since I anticipated that less cognised voters would make greater use of low-cost sociological information shortcuts. I mention earlier in this chapter that recent American literature asserts that certain information cues or shortcuts are equally important, or more important, for high level sophisticates as for low level sophisticates. My findings appear to support this revisionist thesis. Miller, Wattenberg and Malanchuk's 1986 study also found that college-educated voters are the most likely to judge parties and

⁷² I use two separate summated unweighted factor-based scales for bivariate analysis (consisting of average scale scores for each respondent) based on factor analysis data reduction techniques (two rotated factors extracted). The item wording for 2000-2006 is: *How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters? List of issues*. The equivalent indicators for 1997 and 1999 are a 4-point and 11-point index/ scale respectively that taps government performance in policy areas.

⁷³ 1994 survey does not include all variables used to construct the cognitive mobilisation variable.

⁷⁴ *Does X political party look after interests of all in South Africa or after the interests of one group only? Which group?*

candidates by their personal attributes.⁷⁵ This is contrary to conventional wisdom which argues that sophisticated voters are less likely to turn to personal attributes like race, or personality characteristics. It appears that cognitively mobilised voters treat party attributes as useful resources when making partisan calculations. Party images are not necessarily 'superficial, emotional, or purely short-term' as previously assumed.⁷⁶

The claim that sophisticates are as likely, or indeed more likely, to make use of party attributes than low information voters suggests a possible curvilinear relationship between cognitive skills and the use of party attributes as information shortcuts. Despite their level of cognitive abilities most voters use party attributes to gain important information – but as a voter's level of cognitive awareness increases so does his use of this widely regarded shortcut.

Several patterns in the data also warrant further discussion. First, the party image coefficients show stronger relationships compared to the other evaluations. Racialised party attributes are clear and helpful information cues for voters regardless of their level of cognitive mobilisation. Second, less cognised opposition identifiers make greater use of these information shortcuts than less cognised ANC identifiers. There appears to be greater need for opposition supporters to use party images as information shortcuts compared to ANC supporters. This may be because ANC partisans have more deeply-rooted partisan ties than opposition supporters and because they can turn to incumbent performance to inform their partisan decisions. To the contrary, opposition partisans cannot rely on performance evaluations to assess their party's credibility and only have party images to turn to.

Table 9.20: Correlations between direction of partisanship x party images⁷⁷, for firstly the total sample and then sub-samples by cognitive mobilisation

Opinion 1999		Variables	Phi
ANC inclusivity	Zero-order	All voters	-.488***
	Conditional correlations	Cognitive mobilised voters	-.646***
		Non-cog mobilised voters	-.466***
Opposition inclusivity	Zero-order	All voters	.240***
	Conditional correlations	Cognitive mobilised voters	.290*
		Non-cog mobilised voters	.249***
2004 CNEP		Variables	Phi
ANC inclusivity	Zero-order	All voters	-.335***
	Conditional correlations	Cognitive mobilised voters	-.563***
		Non-cog mobilised voters	-.325***
Opposition inclusivity	Zero-order	All voters	.234***
	Conditional correlations	Cognitive mobilised voters	.521
		Non-cog mobilised voters	.246***

Summary statistic: Phi (2x2 nominal)

⁷⁵ Miller, Wattenberg and Malanchuk, 521.

⁷⁶ Dalton, *Citizen Politics*, 3rd ed, 208.

⁷⁷ Coding: ANC inclusivity: (1) inclusive, (2) exclusive; Opposition inclusivity scale (-1) exclusive (+1) inclusive.

9.8.6 Social networks

I also test whether less cognitively mobilised voters are more influenced by their immediate social context using the partisan congruence variable than cognitively mobilised voters.⁷⁸ In other words, does a higher level of partisan congruence in one's social context make a greater impact on the partisan choice of less cognized voters or not?

The coefficients in table 9.21 show a significant and moderate association between less sophisticated voters and the use of cues from one's social context, while there is no significance for cognitively mobilised voters. In other words, less cognitively mobilised voters do use cues from their social networks to a greater extent. This is the first evidence of social cues playing a far greater role as information cues among less cognized voters. So while racialised party images act as useful cues for both cognized and less cognized voters, partisan cues from one's social context appear to be useful only to less cognized voters.⁷⁹

Table 9.21: Correlations between direction of partisanship x partisan congruence, for firstly the total sample and then sub-samples by cognitive mobilisation

2004 CNEP	Variables	Tau C
Zero-order	All voters	-.225***
Conditional correlations	Cognitive mobilised voters	-.163
	Non-cog mobilised voters	-.235***

Summary statistic: Kendall's tau-c

9.9 Summary and conclusions

In terms of formal education and news media there is little evidence to suggest that either have increased in a remarkable way between 1994 and 2006. This suggests that cognitive skills have not increased. Nor have the costs of obtaining political information necessarily decreased. This is perhaps due to advanced level of politicization around the time of the founding democratic elections in 1994.

It appears that South African voters' levels of political awareness and cognitive engagement are quite low and have not increased. Voters are generally not motivated to actively seek and gather political information. In addition, on average those who believe that politics is understandable constitute only one fifth of the voting population.

There are significant variations in citizens' cognitive abilities. The proportion of cognitively mobilised voters, who are politically interested and well-educated, and who probably orient themselves to politics on their own, remains at roughly one-tenth of the population. Up to 90

⁷⁸ See Chapter 9: Party Images and Social Networks for full discussion of the Partisan Congruence variable.

⁷⁹ I also test for a relationship between cognitive mobilisation and congruence to see whether cognitively mobilised voters are in the most congruent partisan relationships but find very weak associations and no statistical significance.

percent are more likely to rely on partisan and other low-cost cues to guide their political decisions, or simply do not engage in the political process altogether. Certain social groups show a predisposition to being cognitively mobilised – in particular, white voters, urban residents and younger people (between 18 and 29 years) have the highest percentages of cognitively mobilised voters.

The large proportion of non-partisan or 'floating' voters is disproportionately concentrated among the less sophisticated sectors of the public – they are not cognitively mobilised and will probably remain on the periphery of electoral politics. Partisanship has weakened in South Africa, not because of a rise in cognitive mobilisation but because of a rise in non-mobilised voters, or 'apoliticals'.

Among partisan voters who are partisans, the vast majority probably do not have the cognitive skills or political information that would enable them to shift their party support on the basis of ongoing party performance or policy positions. There is little evidence to suggest that the proportion of 'ritual partisans', or voters who rely on partisanship to guide their political behaviour has decreased, due likely to an absence of increases in cognitive mobilisation in South Africa. Additionally, a process of socio-economic change has not yet significantly increased the number of 'apartisans' or the proportion of the electorate who are cognitively mobilized with strong party attachments.

By knowing more about the different types of voters that exist in South Africa we can extend our knowledge beyond the initial understanding of partisanship as a one dimensional, affective tie. People are not mobilised simply by being partisan or not. Instead, each type of citizen brings different decision making criteria into their electoral choices and this should carry over to other aspects of political behavior. Dalton's typology therefore helps us to identify potential consequences for mobilization patterns and electoral volatility. Indeed, the data suggests that despite an increase in non-partisans, South Africa's independents are typically inactive, uninvolved and detached from politics. As Dalton states, 'if the growth of independents merely expanded the number of these (apolitical) non-partisans, it would be a negative development for the contemporary electoral process.'⁸⁰ Additionally, the high number of ritual partisans who are typically mobilized by habitual cues, whilst giving less weight to evaluations of performance and policy criteria may also bode negatively for responsive and accountable governance. These partisans are less likely to punish incumbents and hold government to account at elections.

Finally, I find that the variation in the types of cues used by voters is dependent on their cognitive ability. Cognitive mobilisation has an indirect and moderating effect by making voters emphasise different factors when choosing among parties. Voters with higher levels of

⁸⁰ Dalton, *Citizen Politics*, 2nd ed, 213.

cognitive engagement and skills show greater reliance on performance evaluations when deciding which party to support compared to those with lower cognitive levels. This fits with my hypothesis that evaluations generally require greater use of cognitive skills to make the linkages between economic conditions and government policy.

Yet, I also hypothesized that less cognitively mobilised voters should show a greater reliance on social reference cues like party images and social networks. While I find that this holds true for social networks it is not the case for party images. It appears that racialised party attributes are clear and helpful information cues for voters regardless of their level of cognitive mobilisation. Yet the fact that less cognized voters are more likely to rely on low-cost information sources like social networks and egocentric evaluations, suggests that these voters rely on information sources that require less effort. Partisan cues from social networks and personal discussants are easily accessible as information sources due to their central role in people's lives, as is drawing conclusions from one's personal economic situation. And party images still remain powerful influences among the less cognitively mobilised.

Again this has implications for holding incumbent governments to account, particularly for a society with low levels of education among the majority of the populace. Cognitive voters or 'sophisticates' are more likely to use evaluative factors when making partisan decisions while the less cognized or less informed voters are not. In other words, the politically unsophisticated voters fail to hold government accountable for the economic decisions that hit closest to home. It suggests, as Gomez maintains, 'an intriguing – and some might say perverse – implication for governmental responsiveness' in that incumbents may have little incentive to be concerned with the economic well-being of the politically unsophisticated, who are also generally the poorer and more socially disadvantaged.⁸¹

Consequently, I do not find that the need for information cues declines as cognitive mobilisation increases. Instead, the cognitively mobilised show greater reliance on information cues and shortcuts than less mobilised voters. In particular, cognitively mobilised voters treat party attributes as useful resources when making partisan calculations. This outcome corresponds with several studies, all of which challenge the conventional wisdom on political sophistication and information cues.⁸² A variety of information shortcuts are useful resources for voters, especially for those voters that are cognitively engaged in politics.

Finally, it appears that voters use numerous shortcuts, other than party image cues, to inform themselves. If voters are increasingly turning to other information cues, race may become a less useful predictor of interests for voters in time. Yet, the data supports the findings in Chapter Eight suggesting that racialised party images act as important information shortcuts

⁸¹ Gomez, 23.

⁸² Miller, Wattenberg and Malanchuk, 521; Gomez.

or cues for most voters, indirectly guiding the voter and providing an easy-to use and cost effective information tool. By thinking about who political parties stand for South African voters continue to learn much about politics from demographic cues. The fact that voters use race-based information cues offers further evidence that the underlying sociological voting patterns in South Africa may be explained as a result of rational and cognitive calculations rather than expressions of group identity or fixed, primordial voter attachments.⁸³

⁸³ See Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups*; Horowitz, *Democratic South Africa*, for group identity theory, See Posner, 91 for cognitive explanations.

Chapter 10

Towards an integrated model of South African voter behaviour

One of the primary research questions set out at the beginning of this thesis concerns the micro motivations underlying voting patterns, and whether have they changed over time. Four distinct theoretical arguments were proposed (sociological, rational choice, party images and cognitive mobilization) and thus far the voting behaviour of the South African electorate has been dissected from these theoretical perspectives. Certainly, South African voters do not make up their minds anew at each election – to a large extent partisanship guides electoral outcomes. Yet, we now know from the statistical analyses thus far that multiple factors drive party identification as new information about political and economic developments combines with assessments of party images, sociological cues and cognitive skills.

Many of the theoretical explanations for voting behaviour in South Africa appear both reasonable and possible. Arguments suggesting that sociological reasons motivate South African voters are convincing. After all, domestic politics has pivoted around racial dynamics for many years. The economic and political performances of government are also important factors: good economic performance will determine job-creation in the medium term while good governance, proper socio-economic delivery and institutional and leadership performances are key measures of any democratic regime. The racial images or appeal of political parties also remain emotive as voters decide whether parties are representative of their interests or not. People's immediate social networks exert a strong influence over perceptions of parties. And, the cognitive skills of voters mediate the way people perceive and process political information.

But the preceding chapters examined the alternative paradigms of political behaviour and partisanship in isolation from one another. While they all promise plausible reasons for voting behaviour they cannot all be of equal importance - some models must be of greater importance and others of less consequence. It may even be that one explanation undermines another. For instance, if partisanship is largely driven by long-term sociological factors, such as race or class, this may undermine the influence of short-term factors such as economic performance. The percentages of variance in partisanship (as measured by the Nagelkerke statistic) 'explained' by these competing paradigms is often impressive but these zero-order relationships can be misleading in so far as they may reflect other causal relationships and conceptual overlap.¹ So while the previous chapters are designed to provide evidence that

¹ Gunther and Hsin-chi (in Gunther et al. 2007) perform similar multiple model tests to test competing paradigms: 296-305.

would enable us to interrogate each theoretical explanation, they do not allow us to choose between the various explanations.

In order to estimate the unique, independent contribution that each paradigm makes to partisanship I provide an integrated analysis over the years ranging from 1994 to 2006. In doing so, I facilitate comparison of the relative effects of each model and their predictive capacities. This will help to confirm the robustness of previous findings, and allow for further analysis and discussion of the different theoretical explanations of voting behaviour and their relative importance vis-à-vis one another.

A limit in the continuity of question items across all the surveys prevents me from performing a single, comprehensive analysis that includes a wide range of independent variables from each model. To circumvent this constraint I perform two separate series of integrated tests. The first examines the sociological model, the performance model, party images, and cognitive mobilisation and the interaction effects thereof. I use the Idasa 1994, Opinion '99 and the CNEP 2004 surveys. The second series of tests gives greater attention to the interrelationship between the sociological, performance and cognitive mobilisation models by including a larger number of political and economic evaluations, but excludes the effects of party images. Here, I use the Afrobarometer series (2000-2006).

To assess the ability of competing theoretical models on partisanship I progressively add each set of variables to the logistic regression equation. For the first series of tests, I add party images in the first stage. In the second stage, I add performance evaluations, followed by cognitive mobilisation in the third block,² the socio-demographic variables are entered in the fourth block, while the final block contains all the interaction effects of cognitive mobilisation. For the second series of tests using the Afrobarometer surveys, I add performance evaluations first, followed by cognitive mobilisation in the second block, sociological variables in the third block, while the final block contains all the interaction effects of cognitive mobilisation. In the interests of parsimony, I omit variables that do not show statistical significance after repeated tests.³ The exception is with the demographic variables which are included as controls irrespective of their statistical significance.

² The cognitive mobilisation variable was also tested as a relative concept (rather than an absolute concept) where each respondent has an index score indicating a level of cognitive mobilisation from the following variables: level of education, media use of radio, TV and newspapers and political interest. The higher the index score the more cognitively mobilised the respondent is.² However, this measure was not as successful at predicting associations as the binary (yes-no) variable which was subsequently retained.

³ This only applies to the second series of tests that uses the Afrobarometer surveys. In order to combine the most exhaustive test with the most parsimonious results, I first tested all the performance evaluation predictors available in each Afrobarometer survey used in Chapter Seven. I then trimmed the model and eliminated variables that were not statistically significant at the $p > 0.05$ level. I present in table 10.3 only the final data that is statistically significant.

I examine several aspects of the data. First, I look at over time changes across the same or similar coefficients within models. This can tell us more about whether certain variables have increased or decreased in explanatory strength. For this purpose, I include confidence intervals underneath each relevant coefficient in the tables. Second, I examine the Block R^2 across models to see whether each theoretical group of variables has increased its predictive capacity or not. Finally, I examine the cumulative R^2 to assess how much each additional block of variables (or theory) improves the predictive capacity of the partisanship model.

10.1 Integrated Model: Idasa 1994, Opinion '99, CNEP 2004

This models tests the relative and combined effects of economic performance evaluations, party images, sociological or cleavage variables and the effects of cognitive awareness on party identification (ANC-opposition) among the entire South African electorate between 1994 and 2004. Table 10.1 displays results for this first series of tests.

When I look at over time changes across similar coefficients within models the sociotropic evaluations coefficients are statistically significant in 1994 and 2004. The coefficients also show a huge increase in strength suggesting that evaluations became increasingly important to party identification over ten years. In addition, the block R^2 suggests a modest increase in its overall predictive capacity.

Party images of inclusiveness are statistically significant in 1994 and 1999; this indicates that voters need to perceive that a political party is inclusive before they can support it. The block R^2 does not show a consistent rise or decline.

Race and ethnicity are less powerful than initially expected from the results seen in Chapter Six where the entire sociological model is examined. Race is only significant in 1999. The urban-rural divide is significant only in 2004. Class is not significant which is probably due to the fact that class shares some variance with other demographic variables such as race, so when they are already included, class does not add enough to be significant. In 1994 younger voters were more likely to support the ANC while in 1999 older voters show the greater likelihood.

The most notable feature about the sociological model is the overall decline in the predictive capacity seen in the block R^2 . In 1994, sociological variables explained 61 percent of the variance in the dependent variable. However, by 1999 this declines to 56 percent and by 2004 it stands at only 40 percent. This is the first concrete indication that cleavage based voting determinants may have become less important over time to South African voters.

Table 10.1: Integrated model 1: Opposition (0) versus ANC (1) among entire electorate

	1994	1999	2004
MODEL 1 – ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS			
Sociotropic	2.081** (1.204-3.59)	1.185 (.158-8.90)	34.382* (.913-129.77)
Block R^2	.055***	.112***	.080***
MODEL 2 – PARTY IMAGES – Inclusivity			
ANC	4.632* (1.230-17.44)	26.685* (1.51-47.73)	9.272 (.275-312.71)
Opposition	.560 (.282-1.11)	.033** (.003-.377)	.633 (.021-18.65)
Block R^2	.596***	.674***	.443***
Cumulative R^2	.596***	.685***	.464***
MODEL 3 – COGNITIVE AWARENESS			
Cognition	2.055 (.633-6.67)	1.512 (.138-16.59)	845.599* (1.30-549.)
Block R^2	.047***	.044***	.013*
Cumulative R^2	.608***	.687***	.467***
MODEL 4 – SOCIOLOGICAL FACTORS			
Ethnicity (ref: English speakers)			
Afrikaans	1.639	.930	.884
Xhosa	16.192*	1.196	5.2548
Zulu	2.388	.672	2.871
Tswana	12.826*	2.333	36.059*
Sesotho	11.066*	3.881	3.397
Others	7.078	3.086	178.414**
Race(ref: non black)			
Black	5.614 (.637-49.48)	7.081* (1.05-47.32)	2.605 (.449-15.11)
Urban-rural (ref: rural)			
Urban	.915 (.618-1.35)	.916 (.501-1.67)	2.928* (1.21-7.06)
Class (ref: middle class)			
Workers	1.213	1.534	1.263
Unemployed	1.865	.929	1.375
Other	1.425	.920	.977
Age (continuous)	.985*	1.111*	.996
Block R^2	.613***	.555***	.404***
Cumulative R^2	.761***	.746***	.619***
MODEL 5 – INTERACTION EFFECTS OF COGNITIVE AWARENESS			
Sociotropic	.732* (.527-1.01)	1.064 (.378-2.99)	.212* (.034-1.32)
ANC inclusivity	.939 (.773-3.7)	.536 (.122-2.35)	.689 (.115-4.25)
Opp. inclusivity	1.693 (.623-1.41)	3.752* (1.08-12.96)	.701 (.119-3.98)
Block R^2	.586***	.668***	.455***
Cumulative R^2	.762***	.751***	.626***
Constant			
Constant	.008***	.017	.000*
Cumulative R^2	.762***	.751***	.626***
Classification %'s	91%	91%	91%
Hosmer & Lemeshow Test	.541	.484	.043
Valid no. of cases	1953	813	537
Total no. of cases	2517	2200	1200

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ (Model Chi-Square)

DV=ANC/non-ANC (opposition identifiers only)

I believe that this first series of tests can help to explain the impact of race on South African partisanship. Throughout the thesis I argue that the effects of race on South African voting behaviour are, to a large extent, indirectly bound up in other factors, particularly party images. Several observations support this argument. First, the predictive capacity of race declines in the first integrated model which includes party images, but it does not decline in the second integrated model which excludes party images (see table 10.3). The effects of race can be expected to decline over time as it becomes incorporated into party images. This decrease can thus only be observed in a model that includes party images.

Second, if race is bound up in party images, then party images should make a greater contribution to the overall cumulative R^2 than the sociological model which includes race. To test if this is the case I purposefully enter those factors that I think will explain the role of race in voting, namely performance evaluations and party images, before race (see table 10.1). I then reverse the order of the groups of variables and place race and other sociological variables first, and then enter performance evaluations and party images in an order that better reflects a theoretical understanding of the 'funnel of causality' (see appendix 5).⁴ By comparing the two tables it is apparent that the contribution of race to the cumulative R^2 is minimised dramatically in the first instance. This suggests that the large contribution to the R^2 of race (and other sociological variables) seen in appendix 5 is misleading. In fact, by showing that much of the predictive capacity of race is incorporated in party images, I present strong evidence that race matters to partisanship indirectly through party images.

As discussed previously, the direct effects of cognitive mobilisation on partisanship make little intuitive sense. However, when cognitive awareness is introduced as an interaction variable it does appear to have a moderating effect by making voters emphasise different factors when choosing among parties. The coefficients provide strong evidence once again that sociotropic economic evaluations are more useful sources of information for cognitively mobilised voters and that they guide their partisan decisions to a greater extent than less sophisticated voters. The data supports the theory posited in Chapter Nine that cognized voters are better equipped to make assessments of the current wider economic landscape and connect their judgements to their partisan decisions. It appears that cognitive awareness also affects how voters make use of party images. The block R^2 does not show a consistent rise or decline.

⁴ The 'funnel of causality' explanation of voter behaviour argues that social structural variables are causally distant from the vote. See Campbell et al, 24-37. However, the purpose of the analysis in chapter 10 is not to replicate the 'funnel of causality' but rather to show that race as a demographic variable holds less influence over voter behaviour than expected, especially over time. From this perspective it makes sense to enter sociological variables into the tests after other sets of variables that are associated with race. This sequence of step wise regression shows and reaffirms that party images (and not race) account for most of the cumulative R^2 . Table 1, Appendix 5 shows the same test with sociological variables entered first in the step wise regression. It is worth noting the reversal does not affect the coefficients results. The only change is in the cumulative R^2 which is the sole purpose of this exercise.

Overall, the cumulative R^2 results indicate that when we consider all four models together the integrative model is significant across time, although the predictive capacity does decline over ten years. It is also clear that each additional block of variables (or models) does improve our ability to predict the probability of partisanship for the ANC or opposition. In short, the combined power of these models helps to predict a large percentage of the variance of partisan choice among voters - ranging between 76% in 1994 and 63% in 2004.

Table 10.2: Predictive capacity of integrated model 1: Cumulative Nagelkerke R^2

Years	Social cleavages	+Economic performance assessments	+Party images	+Cognitive awareness	+Cognitive awareness (interaction variables)
1994	.612***	.619***	.759***	.761***	.762***
1999	.559***	.576***	.746***	.746***	.751***
2004	.412***	.461***	.613***	.619***	.626***

On its own the sociological model predicts 61% of the variance in the dependent variable in 1994. By adding performance evaluations the overall predictive capacity rises to 62 percent. Once party image evaluations are added the R^2 rises to 76 percent. By adding a single indicator variable for cognitive awareness the overall model continues to predict 76 percent and it remains this way even after the interaction variables are included.

In 1999, the predictive increase is more marked after performance evaluations are included, moving from 56 percent to 58 percent. Party images once again push up the explained variance significantly by 17 percent to 75 percent. And again, cognitive awareness appears to make little difference.

In 2004, once performance evaluations are added to sociological factors they make a more noticeable difference – increasing the combined models power by 5 percent. Again, party images increase the explained variance significantly by 15 percent to 61 percent. And cognitive skills make a very small impression at only 1 percent.

Overall, the data tells us that the sociological model is clearly the strongest model in terms of predicting voting behaviour in South Africa. The greatest jump thereafter is evident with the additional block of party image variables. Although performance evaluations make a modest impact they become increasingly more powerful over the years. In 1994 and 1999 they only increase the model's predictive capacity by 1 percent and 2 percent respectively but by 2004 it rises by 5 percent. Voter assessments of government's performance of the national economy therefore become more important in explaining support for the ANC over the years. And the direct and indirect impact of cognitive mobilisation remains tiny, adding only a small improvement in prediction in 2004.

10.2 Integrated model: Afrobarometer 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006

This second model gives greater attention to the interrelationship between the sociological, performance and cognitive mobilisation models by including a larger number of political and economic evaluations. It tests the combined effects of economic and political performance evaluations, sociological variables, and the effects of cognitive awareness on party identification (ANC-opposition) among the entire South African electorate between 2000 and 2006. However, excludes the effects of party images due to the lack of availability of these items. Table 10.3 displays results for this second series of tests.⁵

Table 10.3: Integrated model 2: Opposition (0) versus ANC (1) among entire electorate

	2000	2002	2004	2006
MODEL 1 – ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS				
Sociotropic evaluations	.168* (.028-1.006)	-	5.199* (1.315-20.558)	-
Egocentric evaluations	-	.445* (.201-.986)	-	-
Trust in president	1.980** (1.290-3.040)	-	-	6.770** (1.882-24.361)
Presidential performance	-	-	-	2.220*** (1.616-3.049)
Social Services Policy	-	1.487*** (1.220-1.812)	-	-
Economic policy	-	10.041*** (3.804-26.499)	-	-
Block R^2	.231***	.110***	.153***	.161***
MODEL 2 – COGNITIVE AWARENESS				
Cognition	.187 (.005-6.407)	.429 (.070-2.618)	67.673 (.658-6962.66)	4.020 (.340-47.554)
Block R^2	.000	.004*	.014**	.001
Cumulative R^2	.231***	.119***	.161***	.171***
MODEL 3 – SOCIOLOGICAL FACTORS				
Ethnicity (ref: English speakers)				
Afrikaans	4.694*	.953	1.136	1.332
Xhosa	.443	2.203	3.891	3.208
Zulu	.120***	.721	5.037	1.675
Tswana	.387	4.678*	18.471*	8.235**
Sesotho	.745	2.605	10.770*	5.293*
Others	-	3.481*	17.785*	3.347*
Race(ref: non black)				
Black	111.19*** (21.02-588.12)	4.630*** (2.018-10.623)	2.681 (.339-21.194)	6.209*** (2.165-17.80)
Urban-rural (ref: rural)				
Urban	1.492 (.867-2.56)	.962 (.661-1.400)	.724 (.387-1.355)	.708 (.398-1.260)
Class (ref: middle class)				
Workers	1.128	.879	1.636	1.563
Unemployed	1.034	1.024	1.594	1.240
Other	.809	1.178	1.146	1.600
Age (continuous)	.998 (.979-1.017)	1.013 (.999-1.026)	.985 (.969-1.002)	1.004 (.987-1.021)

⁵ Note that the empty cells the table for the performance evaluations and their interaction effects are either variables that were initially tested in the model but were insignificant and therefore excluded from the final model, or that they were unavailable items in that particular survey.

Block R^2	.302***	.268***	.294***	.315***
Cumulative R^2	.407***	.320***	.383***	.398***
MODEL 4 – INTERACTION EFFECTS OF COGNITIVE AWARENESS				
Sociotropic evaluations	2.734* (1.082-6.909)	-	.357** (.167-.761)	-
Egocentric evaluations	-	1.583* (1.030-2.435)	-	-
Retrospective evaluations	1.301** (1.084-1.560)	1.131* (1.002-1.277)	-	-
Trust in the President	-	1.225*** (1.087-1.382)	1.228* (.997-1.514)	.310*** (.153-.628)
Trust in Parliament	-	-	-	1.233* (1.026-1.482)
Presidential performance	-	-	1.496*** (1.259-1.777)	-
Satisfaction with democracy	-	-	-	2.241* (1.059-4.741)
Block R^2	.236***	.120***	.321***	.098***
Cumulative R^2	.433***	.380***	.530***	.426***
Constant	.296	.338	.000**	.001**
Cumulative R^2	.433***	.380***	.530***	.426***
Classification %'s	87%	82	92	92
Hosmer & Lemeshow Test	.123	.191	.755	.021
Valid no. of cases	649	977	895	1009
Total no. of cases	2200	2400	2400	2400

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$ (Model Chi-Square)
DV=ANC/ Opposition

Considering economic and political evaluations of government's performance, it appears that an array of evaluative variables is relevant to voter considerations in different years.⁶ Sociotropic economic evaluations and trust in the President appear in two of the four years. Other statistically meaningful evaluations include egocentric economic evaluations, Presidential performance, economic and social services policy performance. The block R^2 fluctuates between 23 percent and 11 percent over the four years. Evaluations of government's performance play a substantial role to partisanship.

Within the sociological model only race and ethnicity are statistically significant over time. When I look at over time changes across the coefficients for race, there does not appear to be any meaningful increase or decrease after 2000. When I examine the Block R^2 across the sociological model the model is relatively static over time, predicting roughly 30 percent of the variance. Yet, it never contributed more than 10 percent of the cumulative R^2 in any given year.

In line with previous findings the direct contribution of cognitive mobilisation on partisanship is negligible as is seen in the block and cumulative R^2 's. However, when we look at the interaction effects of being cognitively aware about politics the effects are apparent. Among those with higher levels of cognitive mobilisation trust in the President, and sociotropic and retrospective economic evaluations repeatedly influence the way people view politics. Other

⁶ Only statistically significant evaluative variables were retained in the final model.

important mediated evaluations include egocentric economic evaluations, trust in Parliament, Presidential performance, and satisfaction with democracy. The important contribution to the overall predictive capacity of this integrated model by the interaction variables can be seen in the increase in both the block and cumulative R^2 compared to the model that contains only the first two sets of theoretical variables, namely the sociological and performance evaluations.

Overall, the cumulative R^2 results indicate that when we consider these models (sociological, performance, and the interaction effects of cognitive awareness) together the integrative model is statistically significant across time, and the predictive capacity is relatively static between 2000 and 2006. Apart from the direct effects of cognitive awareness, each additional block of variables (or models) does improve our ability to predict the probability of partisanship for the ANC or opposition. In short, the combined power of these models helps to predict a large percentage of the variance of partisan choice among voters – ranging between 38% and 53%.

Table 10.4: Predictive capacity of integrated model 2: Cumulative Nagelkerke R^2

Years	Economic & political performance assessments	+Cognitive awareness	+Social cleavages	+Cognitive awareness (interaction variables)
2000	.231***	.231***	.407***	.433***
2002	.119***	.119***	.320***	.380***
2004	.161***	.161***	.383***	.530***
2006	.171***	.171***	.398***	.426***

Table 10.4 illustrates the steady predictive performance of the sociological model over time. Once evaluative variables are entered the overall predictive capacity rises. The interaction effects of cognitive awareness on evaluations, and in turn, on partisanship, can be seen clearly in this second interactive model, as shown in the final column with clear increases in the cumulative R^2 .

10.3 Summary and conclusions

This chapter addresses several fundamental questions of the study. First, what are the key motivations for voter behaviour in South Africa? In other words, can we identify which models are of greater or lesser importance? Second, can we identify changes over time in the strength of each model (or key individual variables)? And finally, how does race contribute to voter behaviour?

There is no doubt from the results in this study that race and ethnicity remain key motivations for voter behaviour in South Africa. Other sociological variables are of little consequence compared to these powerful predictors. The first model (between 1994 and 2004) indicates that race as a key sociological determinant may be becoming less important over time. However, this decline is less pronounced in the second model (between 2000 and 2006).

The significant gain in the strength of sociotropic economic evaluations over time (between 1994 and 2004) certainly indicates the growing contribution of the rational choice model to South African voter behaviour. Voters are increasingly consider incumbent performance on a wide range of issues when deciding which party to support.

Thirdly, cognitive awareness also helps us understand voter behaviour. Interest in politics and education tend to mediate how voters process and use information about politics and political parties. Depending on levels of cognitive awareness, it appears to affect voter choice by emphasizing different types of information.

Overall, the integrative models outlined here show powerful levels of prediction. Although the theoretical models are not of equal importance they all contribute to our knowledge of partisanship in South Africa. And, despite a relatively short time span ranging over twelve years, the models already illustrate meaningful changes to the strength of certain theoretical explanations, such as performance evaluations.

Central to any explanation of voter behaviour in South Africa is an increased understanding of race. An additional task for the integrated analysis is thus to further assess how race contributes to voter decision-making. After testing a number of theories it is clear that race remains a powerful determinant of partisanship in South Africa. Rational choice theories that focus on performance evaluations appear to incorporate a sociological element. In other words, race appears to affect the way in which people evaluate government performance. In addition, race-based notions of exclusion play a role in partisan choice by affecting the way people view political parties. The racialised nature of party images remain crucial yardsticks for South African voters who use these information shortcuts quite rationally as they go about deciding whether a party is representative of their interests or not. Voters also appear to rely on partisan cues from their racially homogenous social contexts. Finally, there is a predominant use of sociologically-based information cues among a vast section of the electorate who are less cognitively mobilised. In short, it appears that race has multiple roles when it comes to partisanship.

But where does race play the greatest role? Observing the variation in the race coefficient in the integrated model as additional models are entered can help to qualify the role of race. If race primarily acts as a useful shortcut for voters through party images then the effects of race should disappear once party images are entered into a model alongside race. On the other hand, if race contributes its greatest influence through the mediating effects of cognitive mobilisation (by acting as a useful information shortcut for less informed voters) its effects should be clearest when I test the mediating effects of party images. In South Africa, race may instead act as an indicator of one's own interest. If race is bound up in a voter's interests

and evaluations of government performance the impact of race should disappear, or be greatly reduced, after performance evaluations are entered into an integrated model. Indeed, if race is driven by identity politics or acts merely as an expression of group identities and loyalties then the role of race should not disappear, but remain quite static, even after all the above models are entered into an integrated model. This would suggest that race has a direct effect on partisanship as an affective influence, reflecting group loyalties or identities, or both.

Several developments are noticeable. There is a consistent pattern of decline in the race variable across the three years. Race declines in terms of its strength and statistical significance as additional independent variables are added to the integrated model. Table 10.5 shows the race coefficients at each stage of the integrated model. As performance evaluations are added to the sociological variables the race coefficients declines slightly, but remain significant. Once party images are added however, there is a sharp decrease in the strength of race and it ceases to be statistically significant (though the interaction effects of cognitive mobilisation slightly increase the strength of race). Therefore, according to this model, race is primarily bound up in party images and to a lesser extent government performance evaluations. This strongly suggests that the effects of race on voting behaviour are complex – by residing in multiple locations and affecting voter perceptions in multifarious ways. Racially-based information cues are most helpful to voters via party images and government performance evaluations.

Table 10.5: The race coefficient (odds ratio) from integrated model 1

	1994	1999	2004
Sociological	9.954*	10.744***	5.489*
Performance evaluations	8.775*	9.974***	5.661*
Party images	5.382	6.245	2.736
Cognitive Mobilisation	5.045	6.351	2.832
Interaction effects	5.614	7.081*	2.605

Table 10.6: The race coefficient (odds ratio) from integrated model 2

	2000	2002	2004	2006
Sociological	167.53***	4.40***	6.60*	5.21***
Performance	106.90***	4.08***	4.51	5.79***
Cognitive Mobilisation	108.92***	4.05***	4.31	5.86***
Interaction effects	111.19**	4.63***	2.68	6.20***

However, in the Afrobarometer based models, we have no party image variables, and while race does decline, it generally remains significant. Despite the data limitations, a cursory glance at the race coefficient shows in table 10.6 that it generally conforms to the same pattern. It declines in strength as performance evaluations are added to the equation.

Cognitive mobilisation makes little impact on race. However, it remains statistically significant, probably due to the absence of party images.

To conclude, the evidence presented here suggests that multiple factors drive partisanship in South Africa. Nevertheless, we observe that some models are of greater importance than others. Race and party images continue to dominate voter choice while performance evaluations and cognitive skills play a lesser role. When we observe trends in models over time two important changes are identifiable, which may alter the relative importance of these variables over time. First, performance evaluations become increasingly important and second, the influence of sociological factors shows a decline. Finally, the indirect influence of race is complex and feeds into voter decision-making via multiple channels, namely through party images and evaluations of government performance.

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Chapter 11

Conclusions: Voter behaviour and prospects for multi-party democracy

At the beginning of the study I argue that different findings about the motivations of voters hold very divergent implications for democracy in South Africa. If voters are found to respond to short term factors such as government's economic and political performance partisanship and voting outcomes should become increasingly volatile and less predictable. Where voter assessments are bound by current developments like party platforms and government performance, electoral outcomes are less likely to be based on permanently divisive majoritarianism (defined primarily by race).¹ On the other hand, if results endorse popular sociological and cultural explanations of voting behaviour it follows that the dangers posed by majority rule in a divided society context are enhanced. However, results may also demonstrate a more complex scenario where competing theoretical explanations of voting behaviour exist concurrently in South Africa. South African voters become electorally volatile or mobile as they begin to respond to a multitude of factors, but remain largely constrained by long-standing cleavages. Under these conditions the implications for multi-party democracy are more ambiguous.

The findings of this thesis lend support to the third scenario. During the first decade of democracy the various theoretical models all contribute to our knowledge of partisanship in South Africa. However, they are not of equal importance. While multiple factors drive partisanship, race, ethnicity and party images dominate voter choice and remain key motivations for voter behaviour in South Africa. Other sociological variables are of little consequence once compared against these powerful predictors. In addition, voter perceptions about party attributes influence partisan support. Citizens use their evaluations of the trustworthiness and racial inclusiveness of political parties to inform their partisan choices. Positive evaluations appear to attract voters to parties while negative evaluations and uncertainty about inclusiveness repel voters away from parties. By thinking about who political parties stand for South African voters learn much about politics from racial cues. In addition, exposure to highly congruent, or homogenous, partisan signals from one's immediate social context also influences partisanship and the way people view parties. Yet, there are less influential but potentially seismic shifts in the motivations of voters, which appear to be gaining ground. Performance evaluations play a smaller but increasingly more important role over time. The data suggests that voters base their evaluations and, in turn, their partisan support, on their perceptions of their own pocketbooks, performance of the broader conditions

¹ Dahl, *Democracy and its critics*, 145; Miller, "Majority rule and minority interests", 218.

in the country and a host of political goods, namely presidential trust and approval of policy. Evaluations of incumbent performance therefore clearly do matter to partisan identification. And cognitive mobilisation has an important moderating effect on partisanship by making voters emphasise different factors when choosing among parties. Voters with higher levels of cognitive engagement and skills show greater reliance on performance evaluations when deciding which party to support while less cognised voters showing greater reliance on low-cost information sources like social networks (based on my analysis of the 2004 CNEP). However, cognitive awareness still plays a minimal role in voter behaviour.

The Democratic Horizon: Looking towards the future of electoral politics

What does this all mean for the future of electoral politics and democracy in South Africa? In Chapter One I suggest that some degree of electoral stability, where the electoral strength of the major parties has stabilized and the vote is structured, is essential to the process of conflict management and democratic institutionalization. On the other hand, there is a need for some degree of electoral competitiveness within the system to allow for the creation of potentially winning alternatives. Although the stability the ANC majority provides continues to be a crucial factor for democratic consolidation most would agree that dominant party systems lack a level of electoral uncertainty that helps to ensure responsive and accountable government.

There are several reasons to be optimistic that electoral fluidity might increase among the South African electorate. The first reason is that the impact of the sociological model (including race) on partisanship declined during the first decade of democracy. Fixed social cleavages therefore hold less sway than ever before. Furthermore, South African voters do not appear to base their partisan stances on the basis of primordial racial or ethnic loyalties regardless of political performance. Instead, I find that race functions as a complex information cue that indirectly feeds into voter decision-making via multiple channels, namely through party images, one's social contexts and evaluations of government performance. The relatively even pattern of dealignment across diverse social groups also suggests that the static cleavage structures created by apartheid do not directly determine voting behaviour. Different social groups react equally to political issues and events. Short term factors appear to impact evenly on the electorate despite their race, age or class. Although it is impossible to assert that race plays no role in South African politics, one can persuasively argue that its role is not restricted to the explanations outlined in the literature on racial census voting.

Voters also look at short term issues such as their retrospective evaluations of government's economic performance and future prospects, and party and candidate characteristics such as trustworthiness. Certainly, the increase in the influence of government performance evaluations on partisanship over time (demonstrated in Chapter Ten) indicates that partisan choices are increasingly motivated by short-term issues. Finally, the general dealignment

trend in the early years in South Africa suggests that voters are not unwilling to distance themselves from their political party, even if they return to it in later years. If party ties are not inflexible, it suggests that more voters are free to move their partisan support to new parties at elections. Together, these factors are capable of producing partisan change or fluidity within the electorate. This should improve the quality of democracy in the long term as voter behaviour becomes less predictable and incumbents are forced to consider popular opinion.

Thus there is strong evidence to suggest South African voters are not as idiosyncratic as often thought. South African voters, much like voters elsewhere, respond to a multitude of short and long term factors.

However, several findings in the study hold negative implications for electoral politics. The first concerns party images. Perceptions among voters about the racialised nature of party images remain quite rigid even after twelve years of democratic elections. Voters are unlikely to change their partisan allegiances because they believe 'other' parties to be exclusive of their interests. In addition, the social environments of many voters disseminate homogenous partisan signals, which tend to reinforce existing partisan proclivities and perceptions about the racial exclusivity of political parties. In addition, opposition parties have failed to broaden their appeal among the electorate. On the whole, they remain weak and ineffectual. Under these conditions significant realignment within the electorate is unlikely in the medium term.

When these conditions persist a dealignment process (even if limited to opposition supporters in the later years) can spell disaster for electoral politics. Weakening party bonds, or electoral stagnation, can have negative consequences for the political process as an increasing amount of people decline to cast their ballots for any party whatsoever. Far from freeing more voters to shift their party support, dealignment ensures that participation at elections simply declines. If partisans are motivated by intense feelings of exclusion the inter-party mobility is minimised. This decreases the chances for electoral competition and consolidates the support given to existing parties. This state of affairs is further compounded by the rise in non-mobilised voters, or 'apoliticals'. These citizens are non-partisan, detached from politics, and least likely to engage the political process. As Dalton states, 'if the growth of independents merely expanded the number of these (apolitical) non-partisans, it would be a negative development for the contemporary electoral process.'²

In addition, asymmetrical dealignment will ensure that a pre-dominant party system continues into the future as declining support for the opposition means the ANC enjoys increasingly greater relative advantage. Moreover, the ANC's electoral margins will continue to be based on decreasing percentages of the overall voter population. An election mandate from a smaller percentage of voters indicates a low quality of democracy since fewer citizens are

² Ibid., 213.

willing to grant legitimacy to the regime. The inevitable result is that the political party representing the majority racial segment of society will continue to have a secure hold on political power for the foreseeable future even if it is based on the actual votes of smaller and smaller sections of the electorate. But the legitimacy of the governing party is likely to be reduced as its pool of support shrinks.

Of even greater concern for the quality and stability of democracy is incumbent responsiveness and accountability. If elections are to act as a meaningful vehicle for popular control of government, people must be willing to base their vote on whether they are satisfied with what government is delivering between elections. They must also be prepared to change their vote. Where the outcome of an election is not in doubt, incumbents have less incentive to be responsive and accountable to the citizenry. Yet, some South African voters appear unwilling to, or cognitively incapable of, changing their partisan allegiances. Of those voters who are close to parties and are likely to vote, most are ritual partisans. These voters are typically mobilized by habitual cues, and lack the cognitive skills or political information that would enable them to shift their party support on the basis of party performance or policy positions. These partisans are less likely to punish incumbents and hold government to account at elections. This does not bode well for responsive and accountable governance.

The ANC faced little electoral threat during the three national and provincial elections. And therein lay the danger. As Norris explains, "At regular intervals, as long as representatives and parties in office are not insulated from defeat, dissatisfied citizens can use elections as the safety-valve in the system to 'throw the rascals out'".³ However, where elections fail to serve as a safety-valve in party systems with predominant parties without an outlet, public dissatisfaction may strengthen and accumulate.⁴ As a particular party stays in government for prolonged periods of time, citizens may become dissatisfied with the political system, and democracy itself, if they feel there is little chance of exercising accountability over elected leaders. The consequences for the political system may be even more serious if, indeed, citizens do reject democratization as the only game in town, or the 'best form of government'. Concern has already been raised about the effects of widespread cynicism in newer and more fragile democracies such as South Africa, Russia and Taiwan.⁵ Where the quality of democracy is already quite low, widespread cynicism about democratic government may exacerbate this situation. Adherence to a democratic political culture has long been thought of as a necessary condition for the consolidation of newer democratic governments.

Without the emergence of a viable opposition party elections are unlikely to produce significant changes to the percentages of support for the governing party. And, if one-party

³ Ibid., 25.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Norris, *Critical citizens*, 8.

dominance continues into the second decade of democracy, the greatest challenge for incumbents will be maintaining high levels of responsiveness towards citizens.

Finally, the results also tell us about the ANC's ability to maintain its broad coalition. Changes to the ANC's support base hold significant electoral implications for the party. In spite of all the socioeconomic changes that were discussed in the introduction, there is remarkably little change in the ANC's electoral coalition. Instead, rural, unemployed or poor, working class Africans continue to support the party in the face of rising inequality. Perhaps the reason why class is ineffectual lies with political parties themselves. The near absence of class effects on voter behaviour is testimony to the ANC's ability to transcend class, successfully holding together a cross-class coalition, and thereby depoliticizing class divides even as intra racial inequality increases among the black African populace. Of course, this is in part due to the legacy of being a liberation movement.

Political parties make collective action possible. If parties do not claim to represent particular class interests, it is unlikely that class-related issues will act as a magnet for voters. In South Africa, there are currently few, if any, political parties that have politicised class divides sufficiently to mobilize class-based interests. Thus there is little threat to the ANC's cross-class appeal. Such a party would need to make explicit claim to particular class interests whilst strongly pointing out to a segment of voters that the ANC has failed to represent their class interests sufficiently. Such a party would also need to have an inclusive party image that could attract class-based support across racial groups. The rise of the left within the tripartite alliance in recent years may begin to politicize class divides as calls for greater social redress challenge middle class and business interests. Already, there are subtle signs of change to the ANC's partisan support among particular social groups. Black African voters are consistently more likely to be party identifiers than other race groups but the high numbers of independents among black Africans suggests that this expanding group should become significant to future electoral realignments. There is increased ANC support from the middle classes and early signs of partisan decline among workers and unemployed people. Finally, as the electorate becomes younger over time voters appear to become less politically aligned. As partisan change among these social groups takes hold the ANC's support base may become less broad-based, as the party becomes increasingly reliant on specific segments of the public for its core electoral support. It is too early to reflect on the impact of these changes among social groups. However, it is possible that new core constituencies may give rise to contradictory policy demands. This could further test the party leadership's ability to hold together its seemingly fragile coalition.

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Appendix 1

National Public Opinion Surveys

Idasa post-election study (1994)

This survey focused on the 1994 general election and specifically on voting intention, attitudes towards democracy, economic evaluations and various other political issues. Questionnaires translated into seven languages. Fieldwork was conducted between 26 August and 16 September 1994 and 2517 eligible voters were personally interviewed. The type of instrument used was a semi-structured survey personal interview recorded on questionnaires. The final results were weighted to reflect an electorate estimated at 24 million voters.

Idasa local government election study (1995)

The Idasa local election study provides the first systematic evidence about individual attitudes toward the legitimacy of the new local government system. This study consisted of a sample that is nationally representative. The sample was drawn using a multi-stage, clustered random probability sample disproportionately stratified by province, population group and community size (metro, city, large town, small town, village and rural). Fieldwork was conducted countrywide between September and November 1995 and 2674 people were interviewed. The type of instrument used was a Semi-Structured Survey Personal Interviews recorded on questionnaires. The final results were weighted to reflect an electorate estimated at 24.3 million voters.

Political culture study (1997)

Idasa Political Culture Study focused on people's attitudes toward identity, diversity, citizenship, democracy, and democratic institutions. Questionnaires translated into seven languages. The study consisted of a sample, which was nationally representative. The sample was drawn using a multi-stage, clustered random probability sample disproportionately stratified by province, population group and community size. Fieldwork was conducted between June 1997 and July 1997 and structured personal interviews were conducted with 3 500 respondents. The final results were weighted to reflect an electorate estimated at over 24 million voters.

Opinion '99 (1999)

Opinion '99 was a series of opinion polls conducted prior to the 1999 election by Idasa, Markinor and the SABC, and the Electoral Institute of South Africa. They provide information about South Africans' views of the political, social and economic developments in the country since 1994. The polls covered key issues related to the conduct of free and fair elections,

voter participation, and other economic, political and partisan trends. I use Opinion 99 (1) where 2200 interviews were conducted. Fieldwork was conducted from 1-30 September 1998. The samples for Opinion '99 were drawn using a multi-stage, area stratified probability sampling methodology, and stratified by province, population group and community size and all three samples were representative of the universe from which they were selected. The type of instrument used was a semi-structured survey personal interview recorded on questionnaires.

Afrobarometer Rounds 1; 2; 2.5, 3 (2000, 2002, 2004, 2006)

The Afrobarometer Survey Series of South Africa is designed to assess attitudes about democracy, markets, and civil society in African nations, and to track the evolution of such attitudes in those nations over time.¹ The samples are drawn using multi-stage, stratified, area cluster probability sample. The sample is designed as a **representative cross-section** of all citizens of voting age in a given country.² Each survey carries out at least 2 200 personal interviews.

Comparative National Elections Project [CNEP] (2004)

The CNEP is a multi-national project that studies political communication and social structure within the context of election campaigns using compatible research designs and a common core of survey questions.³ The CNEP III round was designed to incorporate question items suited to the study of partisan politics in newly established democracies.⁴ It also includes batteries of questions dealing with socio-political values that may be of great relevance to electoral politics in non-Western regions, as well as with the integrity of electoral administration and the quality of democracy. The CNEP survey was carried out nationally across South Africa in 2004 and covers aspects of the third democratic election that took place during that year. The sample was drawn using multi-stage, stratified, area cluster probability sample. During the survey at least 1 200 personal interviews were carried out.

¹ See more at www.afrobarometer.org

² For a full description of sampling techniques see <http://www.afrobarometer.org/sampling.html>

³ Gunther, Montero and Puhle, 15.

⁴ Gunther, Montero and Puhle, 16. Also see www.cnep.ics.ul.pt

Appendix 2

The South African Population (Census 2001)

This appendix outlines certain structural features of South African population according to the South African Census 2001. The 2006 data, sourced from Statistics South Africa's mid-year population estimates, provide updated figures for race and age only.⁵ The aim is to show the actual distributions from Census data of the structural variables within the society.

Table 6.1: Race groups

	2001		2006	
	Number	%s	Number	%s
Black African	35,416,167	79%	37,662,900	80%
Coloured	3,994,502	9%	4,198,800	9%
White	4,293,639	10%	4,365,300	9%
Indian/Asian	1,115,472	2%	1,163,900	2%
Total	44,819,780	100%	47,390,900	100%

Table 6.2: Age groups

Age group	2001		Age Group	2006	
	Number	%s		Number	%s
0-17	17,382,863	39%	0-19 ⁶	20,204,400	43%
18-29	10,193,562	23%	20-29	8,924,900	19%
30-44	9,032,134	20%	30-44	9,111,800	19%
45-59	4,930,664	11%	45-59	5,490,900	11%
60 plus	3,280,558	7%	60 plus	3,658,800	8%
Total	44,819,780	100%	Total	47,390,900	100%

The 2006 estimates show very little change from 2001. Africans are in the majority (approximately 37, 7 million) and constitute about 80 percent of the total South African population. The white population is estimated at 4,4 million, the coloured population 4,2 million and the Indian/Asian population 1,2 million. Fifty-one per cent (approximately 24, 1 million) of the population is female.

⁵ Census 2001 Community Profiles database, Pretoria: Statistics South Africa, 2003. All figures can be found at <http://www.statssa.gov.za/Publications/PopulationStats.asp> I have rounded off the percentages.

⁶ The mid-year 2006 data does not allow one to create a category cut-off at 17 years as in 2001.

Table 6.3: Urban-rural location 2001

Urban/rural	Number	%s
Urban	25,410,164	57%
Rural	19,409,615	43%
Total	44,819,779	100%

Table 6.4: Ethnic-language groups 2001

Ethnic/ language group	Number	%s
Afrikaans	5,983,424	13%
English	3,673,202	8%
IsiXhosa	7,907,152	18%
IsiZulu	10,677,303	24%
Setswana	3,677,017	8%
Sesotho	3,555,185	8%
Other*	9,346,496	21%
Total	44,819,780	100%

* IsiNdebele, Sepedi, SiSwati, Tshivenda, Xitsonga

Table 6.5: Employment and occupational groups* 2001

	Number	%s
Middle class	2,103,623	8%
Workers	6,842,544	24%
Other employed**	637,592	2%
Unemployed***	10,228,595	36%
Other jobless****	8,614,775	30%
Total	28,427,129	100%

* Compiled using employment status and occupation variables from the labour force section of the 2001 Census dataset (includes Age 15-65 only)

** Census data does not specify occupation types

*** Includes those who are unemployed, including unemployed seasonal workers.

**** Includes students, housewives, disabled, pensioners

Appendix 3

Additional Data for Chapter 5

Levels and Direction of Party Identification

Race

Table 1: Levels of partisanship by race group over time %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
Indian	81	16	36	18	6	43	22	55	35
Coloured	88	51	55	30	39	47	44	54	51
White	85	43	38	17	30	41	24	47	41
Black African	89	65	64	53	51	73	67	75	67

Table2: Direction of partisanship among black Africans %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	78	52	53	46	42	60	62	69	58
Opposition	11	12	10	7	7	13	5	5	9
Independents	11	36	37	47	51	27	33	26	34

Table3: Direction of partisanship among Whites %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	1	1	0	0	0	3	1	13	2
Opposition	83	41	37	16	27	38	21	31	37
Independents	16	58	63	84	73	59	78	56	61

Table 4: Direction of partisanship among Coloureds %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	29	15	25	8	20	25	27	35	23
Opposition	59	34	30	22	18	22	15	18	27
Independents	12	51	45	70	62	53	58	47	50

Table 5: Direction of partisanship among Indians %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	24	7	10	5	0	18	9	37	14
Opposition	56	9	27	13	4	25	8	12	19
Independents	20	84	63	82	96	57	83	51	67

Age

Table 6: Levels of partisanship by age group over time %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
18-29	87	60	61	45	46	60	60	68	61
30-44	88	58	59	48	46	67	59	72	62
45-59	88	58	56	43	47	67	59	73	61
60 and over	91	56	51	38	41	62	59	68	58

Table 7: Direction of partisanship by age group 18-29 years old over time %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	64	43	47	36	36	47	54	58	48
Opposition	22	16	13	9	8	13	5	8	12
Independents	14	41	40	55	56	40	41	34	40

Table 8: Direction of partisanship by age group 30-44 years old over time %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	60	38	43	39	33	45	52	62	47
Opposition	28	19	15	9	11	22	7	8	15
Independents	12	43	42	52	56	33	41	30	39

Table 9: Direction of partisanship by age group 45-59 years old over time %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	50	33	36	30	35	50	49	61	43
Opposition	38	24	19	12	11	16	9	11	18
Independents	12	43	45	58	54	33	42	28	39

Table 10: Direction of partisanship by age group 60 plus year olds over time %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	53	26	31	30	25	41	45	57	39
Opposition	37	29	19	8	14	21	12	10	19
Independents	10	45	50	62	61	38	43	33	43

Urban-rural location

Table 11: Levels of partisanship by urban-rural groups over time %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
Urban	87	55	55	43	44	60	56	69	59
Rural	89	61	64	45	48	71	66	73	65

Table 12: Direction of partisanship among urban residents over time %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	52	31	38	31	31	40	46	55	41
Opposition	35	23	17	12	11	19	9	12	17
Independents	13	46	45	57	58	41	45	33	42

Table 13: Direction of partisanship among rural residents over time %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	71	44	51	37	38	55	61	66	53
Opposition	18	16	13	8	9	16	5	5	11
Independents	11	40	36	55	53	29	34	29	36

Table 14: Levels of ANC partisanship by urban-rural groups over time %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
Rural	71	44	51	37	38	55	61	66	53
Urban	52	31	38	31	31	40	46	55	41

Class

Table 15: Levels of partisanship by class groups over time %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
Owner/ Employer	85	66	43	27	38	55	51	76	55
Professional/ Super	90	43	53	33	51	62	48	69	56
Worker	88	58	58	50	48	68	61	71	63
Unemployed	89	60	65	49	45	65	60	72	63

Table 16: Direction of partisanship among Owner/Employer category over time %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	53	40	15	12	17	24	42	54	32
Opposition	31	25	28	15	20	31	5	21	22
Independents	16	35	57	73	63	45	53	25	46

Table 19: Direction of partisanship among Unemployed category over time %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	74	45	54	38	38	51	56	61	52
Opposition	15	14	11	11	5	14	3	9	10
Independents	11	41	35	51	57	35	41	30	38

Table 18: Direction of partisanship among Workers category over time %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	60	38	43	42	36	50	52	61	48
Opposition	28	19	15	8	11	18	8	8	14
Independents	12	43	42	50	53	32	40	31	38

Table 19: Direction of partisanship among Unemployed category over time %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	74	45	54	38	38	51	56	61	52
Opposition	15	14	11	11	5	14	3	9	10
Independents	11	41	35	51	57	35	41	30	38

Table 20: Level of ANC partisanship across all class categories over time %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
Owner/ employer	53	40	15	12	17	24	42	54	32
Professional/ Super	21	16	33	22	35	40	29	51	31
Worker	60	38	43	42	36	50	52	61	48
Unemployed	74	45	54	38	38	51	56	61	52

Table 21: Levels of partisanship among black Africans by class groups over time %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
Owner/ Employer	86	73	65	54	49	83	67	90	71
Professional/ Super	100	62	63	45	57	79	81	85	72
Worker	90	65	62	66	54	76	70	76	70
Unemployed	89	62	69	51	46	68	63	74	65

Strength of Party Identification – African National Congress

Table 22: Strength of partisanship for ANC over time %

Year		1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	Very Strong	36	16	24	19	15	21	38	33	25
	Somewhat strong	19	17	15	13	15	15	12	21	16
	Not very strong	5	5	3	3	4	10	2	6	5
Independents		12	43	42	55	56	36	41	31	40
Opposition		28	19	16	10	10	18	7	9	15
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

*'Not strong at all' category collapsed and included into this category.

Race

Table 23: Strength of partisanship for ANC over time among black Africans%

Year		1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	Very strong	47	22	31	24	18	27	45	38	32
	Somewhat strong	24	23	18	18	19	20	15	24	20
	Not very strong	7	7	4	4	5	13	2	7	6
Independents		11	36	37	47	51	27	33	26	34
Opposition		11	12	10	7	7	13	5	5	9
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Table 24: Strength of partisanship for ANC over time among Coloureds%

Year		1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	Very strong	15	9	12	5	11	11	17	15	12
	Somewhat strong	9	4	10	2	7	10	9	17	9
	Not very strong	5	2	3	1	2	4	1	3	3
Independents		12	51	45	70	62	53	58	47	50
Opposition		59	34	30	22	18	22	15	18	27
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Table 25: Strong ANC partisans among black Africans and Coloureds over time%

Year		1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
Black Africans		47	22	31	24	18	27	45	38	32
Coloureds		15	9	12	5	11	11	17	15	12

Urban-rural location

Table 26: Strength of partisanship for ANC %: Urban residents

Year		1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	Very strong	32	13	21	20	14	20	35	31	21
	Somewhat strong	17	14	14	10	14	11	10	20	12
	Not very strong	3	4	3	1	3	9	1	4	3
Independents		13	46	45	57	58	41	45	33	38
Opposition		35	23	17	12	11	19	9	12	15
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Table 27: Strength of partisanship for ANC %: Rural residents

Year		1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	Very strong	43	19	30	17	17	22	42	35	28
	Somewhat strong	20	18	18	16	15	21	16	24	19
	Not very strong	8	6	3	4	6	12	3	7	6
Independents		11	40	36	55	53	29	34	29	36
Opposition		18	16	13	8	9	16	5	5	11
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Table 28: Strong ANC partisans among urban and rural residents%

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
Urban	32	13	21	20	14	20	35	31	23
Rural	43	19	30	17	17	22	42	35	28
% Diff	11	6	9	-3	3	2	7	4	5

Class

Table 29: Strength of partisanship for ANC %: Owner/employer

Year		1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	Very strong	37	20	10	6	10	12	34	33	20
	Somewhat strong	14	16	3	6	7	7	8	11	9
	Not very strong	2	4	2	-	-	5	-	10	3
Independents		16	35	57	73	63	45	53	25	46
Opposition		31	25	28	15	20	31	5	21	22
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Table 30: Strength of partisanship for ANC %: Professional/supervisory

Year		1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	Very strong	14	8	17	12	14	20	24	29	17
	Somewhat strong	7	5	14	10	15	10	5	17	10
	Not very strong	-	3	2	-	6	10	-	5	3
Independents		10	59	48	67	51	38	53	32	45
Opposition		69	25	19	11	14	22	18	17	24
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Table 31: Strength of partisanship for ANC %: Worker

Year		1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	Very strong	36	15	25	22	17	23	37	36	26
	Somewhat strong	18	17	15	17	15	16	13	21	17
	Not very strong	6	6	3	3	4	11	2	4	5
Independents		12	43	42	50	53	32	40	31	38
Opposition		28	19	15	8	11	18	8	8	14
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Table 32: Strength of partisanship for ANC %: Unemployed

Year		1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	Very strong	48	22	29	19	17	22	40	27	28
	Somewhat strong	20	18	21	15	15	16	13	25	18
	Not very strong	6	5	4	4	6	13	3	9	6
Independents		11	41	35	51	57	35	41	30	38
Opposition		15	14	11	11	5	14	3	9	10
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Table 33: Strong ANC partisans across class groups %

Year		1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
Owner/employer		37	20	10	6	10	12	34	33	20
Professional/supervisory		14	8	17	12	14	20	24	29	17
Workers		36	15	25	22	17	23	37	36	26
Unemployed		48	22	29	19	17	22	40	27	28

Age

Table 34: Strength of partisanship for the ANC%: Age: 18-29

Year		1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	Very strong	38	16	26	20	17	21	39	30	26
	Somewhat strong	20	21	17	14	15	16	12	22	17
	Not very strong	6	6	4	2	4	10	3	6	5
Independents		14	41	40	55	56	40	41	34	40
Independents		14	41	40	55	56	40	41	34	40
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Table 35: Strength of partisanship for the ANC%: Age: 30-44

Year		1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	Very strong	38	18	25	20	12	19	39	32	25
	Somewhat strong	17	15	16	16	17	13	11	24	16
	Not very strong	5	5	2	3	4	13	2	6	5
Independents		12	43	42	52	56	33	41	30	39
Opposition		28	19	15	9	11	22	7	8	15
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Table 36: Strength of partisanship for the ANC%: Age: 45-59

Year		1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	Very strong	33	15	21	15	16	24	34	35	24
	Somewhat strong	15	13	13	11	13	18	13	20	15
	Not very strong	2	5	2	4	6	8	2	6	4
Independents		12	43	45	58	54	33	42	28	39
Opposition		38	24	19	12	11	16	9	11	18
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Table 37: Strength of partisanship for the ANC%: Age: 60- plus

Year		1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
ANC	Very strong	24	6	18	19	15	20	30	40	22
	Somewhat strong	21	12	10	9	9	13	14	15	13
	Not very strong	8	8	3	2	1	8	1	2	4
Independents		10	45	50	62	61	38	43	33	43
Opposition		37	29	19	8	14	21	12	10	19
Total		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Table 38: Strong ANC partisans across all age groups%

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
18-29	38	16	26	20	17	21	39	30	26
30-44	38	18	25	20	12	19	39	32	25
45-59	33	15	21	15	16	24	34	35	24
60 plus	24	6	18	19	15	20	30	40	22
Average	33	14	23	19	15	21	36	34	

Table 39: Strong ANC partisans across age groups over time among black African urban residents %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
18-29	62	48	55	57	47	48	74	53	56
30-44	63	41	58	61	36	49	74	55	55
45-59	71	43	61	63	47	54	70	55	58
60 plus	50	18	68	78	57	66	69	67	59
Average	62	38	61	65	47	54	72	58	

Table 40: Strong ANC partisans across age groups over time among black African rural residents %

Year	1994	1995	1997	1999	2000	2002	2004	2006	Average
18-29	56	32	64	53	45	39	66	48	50
30-44	62	47	56	40	42	36	75	50	51
45-59	60	43	63	45	34	38	69	53	51
60 plus	50	31	46	50	59	37	63	70	51
Average	57	38	57	47	45	38	68	55	

Appendix 4

Additional Data for Chapter 8

Table 1: Party identification by perceptions of own party inclusivity vs. exclusivity % - 1994

1994: Own party identifiers	Inclusive	Unsure	Exclusive
ANC	98	1.6	.4
NP	88	4	8
IFP	86	5	9
FF	47	6	47
PAC	56	3	41
DP	91	6	3

Table 2: Party identification by perceptions of own party inclusivity vs. exclusivity % - 1999

1999: Own party identifiers	Inclusive	Unsure	Exclusive
ANC	98	0	2
NP	95	3	2
IFP	92	0	8
FF	17	0	83
PAC	72	1	27
DP	97	2	1
UDM	100	0	0

Table 3: Party identification by perceptions of own party inclusivity vs. exclusivity % - 2004

2004: Own party identifiers	Inclusive	Unsure	Exclusive
ANC	89	8	3
NNP (NP)	86	14	0
IFP	79	10	11
DA (DP)	94	0	6
UDM	88	6	6
ID	83	17	0
ACDP	80	0	20

Entire electorate

1994:

Table 4: ANC Exclusive or Inclusive?

DV	Exclusive (-1)	Don't know (0)	Inclusive (+1)
ANC (0)	98%	21%	85%
Opposition (1)	2%	79%	15%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Kendall's Tau C: -.547***

Table 5: Opposition Parties Exclusive or Inclusive?

DV	Exclusive (-1)	Don't know (0)	Inclusive (+1)
ANC (0)	74	74	52
Opposition (1)	26	26	48
Total	100% (1183)	100% (479)	100% (656)

Kendall's Tau C: .175***

1999:

Table 6: ANC Exclusive or Inclusive?

DV	Exclusive (-1)	Don't know (0)	Inclusive (+1)
ANC (0)	6%	11	89
Opposition (1)	94%	89	11
Total	100%	100%	100%

Kendall's Tau C: -.617***

Table 7: Opposition Parties Exclusive or Inclusive?

DV	Exclusive (-1)	Don't know (0)	Inclusive (+1)
ANC (0)	80	69	47
Opposition (1)	20	31	53
Total	100%	100%	100%

Kendall's Tau C: .227***

2004:

Table 8: ANC Exclusive or Inclusive?

DV	Exclusive (-1)	Don't know (0)	Inclusive (+1)
ANC (0)	22	77	91
Opposition (1)	78	23	9
Total	100%	100	100

Kendall's Tau C: -.313***

Table 9: Opposition Parties Exclusive or Inclusive?

DV	Exclusive (-1)	Don't know (0)	Inclusive (+1)
ANC (0)	79	97	64
Opposition (1)	21	3	36
Total	100%	100%	100%

Kendall's Tau C: .212***

Black South African electorate

1994:

Table 10: ANC Exclusive or Inclusive?

DV	Exclusive (-1)	Don't know (0)	Inclusive (+1)
ANC (0)	6	38	93
Opposition (1)	94	62	7
Total	100%	100%	100%

Kendall's Tau C: -.212***

Table 11: Opposition Parties Exclusive or Inclusive?

DV	Exclusive (-1)	Don't know (0)	Inclusive (+1)
ANC (0)	93	89	76
Opposition (1)	7	11	24
Total	100% (1183)	100% (479)	100% (656)

Kendall's Tau C: .130***

1999:

Table 12: ANC Exclusive or Inclusive?

DV	Exclusive (-1)	Don't know (0)	Inclusive (+1)
ANC (0)	23	17	92
Opposition (1)	77	83	8
Total	100%	100%	100%

Kendall's Tau C: -.192***

Table 13: Opposition Parties Exclusive or Inclusive?

DV	Exclusive (-1)	Don't know (0)	Inclusive (+1)
ANC (0)	93	91	70
Opposition (1)	7	9	30
Total	100%	100%	100%

Kendall's Tau C: .158***

2004:

Table 14: ANC Exclusive or Inclusive?

DV	Exclusive (-1)	Don't know (0)	Inclusive (+1)
ANC (0)	38	84	95
Opposition (1)	62	16	5
Total	100%	100	100

Kendall's Tau C: -.155***

Table 15: Opposition Parties Exclusive or Inclusive?

DV	Exclusive (-1)	Don't know (0)	Inclusive (+1)
ANC (0)	91	98	80
Opposition (1)	9	2	20
Total	100%	100%	100%

Kendall's Tau C: .126***

Appendix 5

Additional Data for Chapter 10

Table 1: Integrated model 1: Opposition (0) versus ANC (1) among entire electorate

	1994	1999	2004
MODEL 1 – SOCIOLOGICAL FACTORS			
Ethnicity (ref: English speakers)			
Afrikaans	1.639	.930	.884
Xhosa	16.192*	1.196	5.2548
Zulu	2.388	.672	2.871
Tswana	12.826*	2.333	36.059*
Sesotho	11.066*	3.881	3.397
Others	7.078	3.086	178.414**
Race(ref: non black)			
Black	5.614 (.637-49.48)	7.081* (1.05-47.32)	2.605 (.449-15.11)
Urban-rural (ref: rural)			
Urban	.915 (.618-1.35)	.916 (.501-1.67)	2.928* (1.21-7.06)
Class (ref: middle class)			
Workers	1.213	1.534	1.263
Unemployed	1.865	.929	1.375
Other	1.425	.920	.977
Age (continuous)	.985*	1.111*	.996
Block R²	.613***	.555***	.404***
MODEL 2 – ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS			
Sociotropic	2.081** (1.204-3.59)	1.185 (.158-8.90)	34.382* (.913-129.77)
Block R²	.055***	.111***	.074***
Cumulative R²	.619***	.576***	.461***
MODEL 3 – PARTY IMAGES – Inclusivity			
ANC	4.632* (1.230-17.44)	26.685* (1.51-47.73)	9.272 (.275-312.71)
Opposition	.560 (.282-1.11)	.033** (.003-.377)	.633 (.021-18.65)
Block R²	.596***	.674***	.443***
Cumulative R²	.759***	.746***	.613***
MODEL 4 – COGNITIVE AWARENESS			
Cognition	2.055 (.633-6.67)	1.512 (.138-16.59)	845.599* (1.30-549.)
Block R²	.047***	.044***	.013*
	.761***	.746***	.619***
MODEL 5 – INTERACTION EFFECTS OF COGNITIVE AWARENESS			
Sociotropic	.732* (.527-1.01)	1.064 (.378-2.99)	.212* (.034-1.32)
ANC inclusivity	.939 (.773-3.7)	.536 (.122-2.35)	.689 (.115-4.25)
Opp. inclusivity	1.693 (.623-1.41)	3.752* (1.08-12.96)	.701 (.119-3.98)
Block R²	.586***	.668***	.455***
Cumulative R²	.762***	.751***	.626***
Constant	.008***	.017	.000*
Cumulative R²	.762***	.751***	.626***
Classification %'s	91%	91%	91%
Hosmer & Lemeshow Test	.541	.484	.043
Valid no. of cases	1953	813	537
Total no. of cases	2517	2200	1200

* p=< 0.05; ** p=< 0.01; *** p=< 0.001 (Model Chi-Square); DV=ANC/non-ANC (opposition)