The state of the people:

Citizens, civil society and governance in South Africa, 1994-2000

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

The state of the people:

Citizens, civil society and governance in South Africa, 1994-2000

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Editors:

Bert Klandermans
Marlene Roefs
Johan Olivier

Human Sciences Research Council
Pretoria
2001

© Human Sciences Research Council, 2001

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

ISBN 0-7969-1985-2

The state of the people:
Citizens, civil society and governance in South Africa, 1994-2000
Editors: Bert Klandermans
Marlene Roefs
Johan Olivier

Design and layout: Annemarie Booyens
Cover design: Nu Dog Design

Published in South Africa by:
Human Sciences Research Council
134 Pretorius Street
Pretoria, South Africa
0001
http://www.hsrc.ac.za

Printed in South Africa by:
Shereno Printers
P.O. Box 268
Benoni, South Africa
1500
Tel.: (011) 894-4150
Fax: (011) 894-4153
http://www.shereno.co.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Contents

Page

List of Tables vi
List of Figures ix
Preface and Acknowledgements xii
About the Authors xv
About this Book xvii

Chapter 1 **South African politics and collective action, 1994-2000** 1
Tom Lodge

Chapter 2 **The distribution of wealth** 27

Chapter 3 **Grievances and relative deprivation** 47

Chapter 4 **The formation of collective identity** 91

Chapter 5 **Involvement in civil society** 111

Chapter 6 **The evaluation of government** 137
With Hennie Kotze

Chapter 7 **Political participation** 185

Chapter 8 **The state of the people** 233

References 245

Appendix—Methods 249

Index 253

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

List of Tables

Page

2.1: **Gender and unemployment (%)** ... 33
2.2: **Parameters in the distribution of wealth: Unemployment** ... 42
2.3: **Parameters in the distribution of wealth: Income** ... 43
2.4: **Parameters in the distribution of wealth: Living standard** ... 43
3.1: **Dissatisfaction and objective conditions: R-squares** ... 58
3.2: **Dissatisfaction and social comparison** ... 69
3.3: **Comparison to others (%)** ... 72
3.4: **Group identification and group comparison (%)** ... 75
3.5: **Grievances and types of comparison (%)** ... 79
3.6: **Grievances and types of comparison by race(%)** ... 80
3.7: **Trust in government and social comparison** ... 85
4.1: **National identity (%)** ... 102
4.2: **National identity and subgroup identity (%)** ... 105
4.3: **Dual identity and politics** ... 107
5.1 **Active member in grassroots organisations (%)** ... 116
5.2 **The role of civil society 1995-2000: Pearson's correlations** ... 126
5.3: **The role of civil society—old and new: Pearson's correlations** ... 129
5.4: **The transformation of discontent into collective action: Pearson's correlations of dissatisfaction with action preparedness and participation by involvement in civil society organisations (1995-2000)** ... 131
6.1: **Trust in national government (%)** ... 139

6.2: **Attitudes toward national government (%)** 142

6.3: **Dimensions of approval and trust: Standardised regression coefficients** 146

6.4: **Determinants of trust and approval in national government: Standardised beta's** 149

6.5: **Grievances, relative deprivation and trust: Standardised beta's** 153

6.6: **Evaluation of provincial and local government (%)** 166

6.7: **Determinants of trust and approval in provincial and local government: Standardised beta's** 170

7.1: **Determinants of political interest: R^2 values** 190

7.2: **Political interest and objective characteristics: Standardised beta's** 192

7.3: **Identity patterns and political interest** 195

7.4: **Closeness to a political party in 1994 (%)** 198

7.5: **Voting intention (%)** 200

7.6: **No intention to vote (%)** 204

7.7: **Correlates of party preference among Blacks in KwaZulu-Natal** 207

7.8: **Correlates of party preference among coloured South Africans** 209

7.9: **Correlates of party preference among Asian South Africans** 210

7.10: **Correlates of party preference among white South Africans** 211

7.11: **Taking part in election campaigns (%)** 214

7.12: **Correlates of campaign activities** 215

7.13: **Participation in peaceful protests (%)** 216

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

7.14: Issues people protested for in the past year 217
7.15: Correlates of protest participation 219
7.16: Issues people may protest for in the future (%) 223
7.17: Correlates of the preparedness to take part in peaceful action 224

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

List of Figures

		Page
2.1:	**Highest level of education**	28
2.2:	**Unemployment and race (%)**	29
2.3:	**Gross household income**	30
2.4:	**Living standard**	31
2.5a:	**Gross household income**	32
2.5b:	**Highest level of education**	32
2.5c:	**Living standard**	33
2.6:	**Age and unemployment**	35
2.7:	**Unemployment by age and education (1994-2000)**	36
2.8a:	**Gross household income**	37
2.8b:	**Living standard**	37
2.9a:	**Highest education**	38
2.9b:	**Gross household income**	38
2.9c:	**Living standard**	39
2.10a:	**Blacks (Income)**	40
2.10b:	**Coloured (Income)**	40
2.10c:	**Asians (Income)**	41
2.10d:	**Whites (Income)**	41
3.1a:	**Dissatisfaction with conditions in the neighbourhood**	48
3.1b:	**Dissatisfaction with safety in the neighbourhood**	49
3.1c:	**Dissatisfaction with work**	49
3.1d:	**Dissatisfaction with educational opportunities**	50
3.1e:	**Dissatisfaction with standard of living**	50

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

3.1f: **Dissatisfaction with health care** 51
3.1g: **Dissatisfaction with human rights** 51
3.2a: **Dissatisfaction with personal situation** 54
3.2b: **Dissatisfaction with group situation** 55
3.2c: **Dissatisfaction with people in South Africa** 55
3.3a: **Personal situation compared to others** 62
3.3b: **Personal situation compared to past** 62
3.3c: **Expectations for personal future** 63
3.3d: **Situation of the group compared to other groups** 63
3.3e: **Situation of the group compared to the past** 64
3.3f: **Future expectations of the group** 64
3.3g: **Situation of South Africans compared to past** 65
3.3h: **Future expectations of South Africans** 65
4.1: **Patterns of identification** 94
4.2a: **Patterns of identification, Blacks (%)** 96
4.2b: **Patterns of identification, Coloureds (%)** 97
4.2c: **Patterns of identification, Asians (%)** 97
4.2d: **Patterns of identification, Whites (%)** 98
4.3: **Strong national identity (%)** 103
4.4: **National identity and subgroup identity (%)** 106
5.1a **Participation in grassroots organisations, including church organisations** 114
5.1b. **Participation in grassroots organisations, excluding church organisations** 114
6.1: **Trust in government** 140
6.2: **Influence on government** 143

6.3: **Government's performance** 144

6.4: **Trust in government by ethno-linguistic group** 150

6.5a: **Trust in government and expectations for own future** 154

6.5b: **Trust in government and expectations for groups' future** 156

6.6: **Trust in government by party preference** 159

6.7: **Trust in government of supporters and non-supporters of the ANC by race** 160

6.8: **Trust in provincial government of supporters and non-supporters of the ANC by province** 175

7.1a: **Reads about politics in newspapers** 186

7.1b: **Watches politics on television** 186

7.1c: **Listens to politics on radio** 187

7.1d: **Discusses politics with friends** 187

7.2: **Interest in politics** 189

7.3a: **Political interest: Living standard (medium)** 193

7.3b: **Political interest: Living standard (high)** 194

7.4: **Action preparedness** 220

7.5a: **Peaceful protest** 221

7.5b: **Forceful protest** 221

7.5c: **Violent protest** 222

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Preface and Acknowledgements

The transition to democracy in South Africa that started in 1994 presented South Africans with a number of opportunities and challenges. The founding election of April 1994 signalled the end of apartheid and the beginning of an era in which all South Africans could take their place as full members of society.

The period 1994 to 1999 saw the implementation of fundamental social and political change in South Africa. Social science literature suggests that such fundamental change increases the probability of civil conflict and strife, as some sectors of the population expect significant improvements in their position following the removal of economic and political barriers that previously inhibited their upward mobility. Other sectors are concerned about a possible decrease in their living standards as a result of the erosion of their privileged position. Still others experience increased uncertainty, which in itself is associated with significant social change.

Experience has shown that social movements not only develop during periods of fundamental social change but also that social movements can significantly impact on the process of change. Furthermore, social movements adapt to changes in the environment. Insight in the factors that affect the formation and transformation of social movements is not only of fundamental significance for the study of social movements but also important for policy making.

The scale of transition in South Africa provided a unique opportunity to investigate processes of transition. With apartheid no longer in place as the system to blame for every grievance, other cleavages may have developed in the society and become grounds for mobilisation. Ethnicity, religion, language and gender may have crystallised into new collective identities of political significance. Much, it was argued, would depend on the development of a political climate in South Africa that would provide citizens with the opportunity to participate in political decision making, in other words in the development of civil society.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Given the fundamental social science issues that South Africa's transition raised, it was decided to launch a longitudinal and multi-disciplinary study to register the changes in political opinion, attitude and behaviour of South Africans during the period 1994 to 2000. The research project entitled "Social Movements in South Africa" was aimed at answering the following key questions:

- What new cleavages developed in the course of transition in South Africa and what new grievances and collective identities resulted from this?
- To what extent and influenced by which factors did those grievances initiate political protest? Providing answers to these questions *The State of the people* reports on how South Africans evaluate their own situation and the new state.

In this valuable book, the authors ask a pertinent question. Did the transition to democracy improve the state of the people? We believe so. More people are satisfied, more people trust government, and more people identify with the nation than before. And although fewer people take part in electoral politics, involvement in civil society and peaceful contentious politics have increased. This is not to say that there is nothing to worry about. On the contrary. Inequality in South Africa remains enormous. Unemployment, especially among the younger generation, continues to be a threat to the stability of society, and so does crime. The authors argue that there is a need for more equal distribution of wealth and for a sustainable programme to improve the quality of all South Africans.

One of the key objectives of the study was to provide educational opportunities for young researchers in South Africa and the Netherlands. The project was particularly successful in this. Between 1994 and 2001 more than 50 South African and Dutch students participated in the study, many of whom were able to complete advanced degrees in sociology, political science and social psychology.

The research team consisted of the following individuals: Ms Shireen Hassim (Department of Political Science, University of the Witwatersrand), Prof. Tom Lodge (Department of Political Science,

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

University of the Witwatersrand), Prof. Bert Klandermans (Department of Social Psychology and Kurt Lewin Institute, Free University, Amsterdam), Prof. Hennie Kotzé (Department of Political Science, University of Stellenbosch), Ms Monique Marks (Department of Sociology, University of Natal), Mr Sipho Maseko (Department of Political Science, University of the Western Cape), Dr Johan Olivier (formerly with the Group: Democracy and Governance, Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)), Dr Ihron Rensburg (National Department of Education), Drs Marlene Roefs (Free University and HSRC) and Prof. Ari Sitas (Department of Sociology, University of Natal).

The Free University in Amsterdam, the HSRC, the South Africa-Netherlands Programme on Alternatives in Development (SANPAD) and the Department of Political Science at the University of the Witwatersrand are gratefully acknowledged for their financial support to the project.

The HSRC would like to express its sincere appreciation to the project team, the funders and all South Africans who participated in the project. It is hoped that this publication will make a measurable contribution to creating stability in our young democracy.

Special appreciation is due to all contributors to this book for their thought-provoking and insightful chapters. Special thanks to Ina Stahmer, Martie Boesenberg, and Annemarie Booyens for their sterling editorial and technical assistance, and Adelina Capasso for her superb administrative support in finalising of this book.

Dr Meshack M. Khosa
Executive Director
Democracy and Governance
Human Sciences Research Council
July 2001

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

About the Authors

Bert Klandermans is professor in applied social psychology at the Free University, Amsterdam, the Netherlands. The emphasis in his work is on the social psychological consequences of social, economic and political change. He has published extensively on the social psychology of participation in social movements and labour unions. He is the editor of *Social movements, Protest, and contention*, a book series published by the University of Minnesota Press. His *The social psychology of protest* appeared with Blackwell in 1997.

Hennie Kotzé is a professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Stellenbosch, where he teaches research methodology, public policy making and political risk analysis. He is presently engaged in research on the process of democratic consolidation in South Africa, elite perceptions and the role of parliaments in Southern Africa. He has authored and co-authored a number of books and has published extensively on comparative politics.

Tom Lodge is professor in political studies at the University of the Witwatersrand, where he has worked since 1978. He has published four books about South African politics, the most recent being a study of the 1999 general election. At present he is working on a book about the 1960 Sharpeville massacre.

Johan Olivier was project leader and chief research specialist at the Human Sciences Research Council during the period 1994-2000. His research interests are social movements and collective action, democratisation, social stability and research methodology. He holds a Ph.D. from Cornell University in the United States. He is currently an independent researcher/management consultant, in which capacity he assists the National Treasury in South Africa with the implementation of development and transformation projects of the government.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Marlene Roefs lives and works in Pretoria. She is a Ph.D. student in social psychology at the Free University, Amsterdam, and a freelance researcher in South Africa. Her fields of research include participation in collective behaviour, political and organisational transformation and local governance. She has worked for several research institutions and organisations in the Netherlands and South Africa. Currently she assists the United Nations Development Programme in their Capacity Building for Local Government in South Africa programme.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

About this Book

We begin this book with an overview of the historical developments during the years of our study, 1994 to 2000. Changing demographics, institutions, movements and identities are therefore the topics of Chapter 1 (*South African politics and collective action: 1994-2000*). The remainder of the report is designed after the key concepts that structured our study.

Chapter 2 (*The distribution of wealth*) sets the stage with an account of the socio-economic situation of the four groups that defined the population during the apartheid era. In South Africa wealth was long distributed on the basis of a single criterion, namely race. In this chapter we explore whether six years of the "new" South Africa made a difference. Our data confirm the general statistics in Chapter 1, namely that the inequality inherited from the apartheid era was still very much in place between 1994 and 2000. However, our study simultaneously indicates that underneath the surface slow but steady and fundamental restructuring was taking place.

Chapter 3 (*Grievances and relative deprivation*) describes how in the course of time South Africans assessed their personal situation and that of the group they felt close to. In the past the racial cleavage generated strong grievances as witnessed by the liberation struggle, but did it continue to do so after the political landscape was altered so incisively?

Chapter 4 (*The formation of collective identity*) explores the transformation of collective identity in the "new" South Africa. Did race lose its overpowering impact on people's collective identity? Did people develop an overarching national identity in this country that had been so deeply divided?

Chapter 5 (*Involvement in civil society*) discusses citizen participation in civil society organisations. Did demobilisation occur in the years since the change of power, as the literature on transitions to democracy assumes? Did the role of civil society change in relation to that of the state?

Chapter 6 (*The evaluation of government*) investigates how South Africans evaluated their government. The change of regime not only

brought the liberation movement to power, it also established new governments at the provincial and local level. To what extent did South Africans approve of and trust national, provincial and local government?

Chapter 7 (*Political participation*) offers a discussion of the extent to which South Africans were interested in politics, and whether they participated in electoral and protest politics. We return to the question of demobilisation and explore whether interest in politics and political participation declined since the change of power in 1994.

Chapter 8 (*The state of the people*) is a summary of South Africans' evaluation of their state both in terms of their personal situation and that of the people they identify with and the new political arrangements of their country.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Chapter 1

South African politics and collective action, 1994-2000

Tom Lodge

Institutions, movements and identities have changed with the demise of apartheid. For a proper understanding of the survey findings described in the subsequent chapters we need a contextual frame of reference. This introduction is intended to supply such a framework by giving an overview of the historical developments during the years of our study, 1994 to 2000. It draws attention to the institutional and organisational changes in South African political life that can help to explain the changing ways in which people define their social identity, their relationship with their fellow citizens and their feelings about government. It also explores the demographic and cultural developments that influence shifts in popular propensities for collective action as well as the alterations in the repertoire of political participation that followed the achievement of representative democracy.

After reviewing developments in South African social structure, we consider the implications of the change from extra-parliamentary struggle to electoral activism. Subsequently, we examine the role of the social movements which were left behind as activists ascended to public office. These were influenced by profound changes in the institutional framework of local politics, and these changes are detailed here. Meanwhile, in central government, an initial vision of "people-driven" development was largely supplanted by less participatory and more managerial conceptions of public service. Finally, this chapter addresses the ways in which social mobility, electoral politics and new kinds of provincial authority complicated popular conceptions of political and social identity.

Demographic change and changing social structure

South Africa's population grew from 38.6 million in 1994 to 43 million in 1999, an annual rise of around 2%, reflecting a fertility rate falling from 4.6 children in 1982 to 2.9 in 1997 (Statistics South Africa, 2000; fertility figures from World Bank data cited in *The Star,* 17 November 1998).

Population growth is now the lowest on the African continent, an achievement demographers attribute to aggressive family-planning initiatives during the apartheid era and the high use of contraceptives by women since then. The 1996 census suggested that South Africa's 40.15 million people included 31.1 million Africans (77% of the total), 4.4 million Whites (11%), 3.6 million Coloureds (9%) and 1 million Indians (3%). In 1996, nearly half the African population (14.6 million) were aged 19 years or younger. Of Africans, 13.5 million (43%) were urbanised, and of Whites 4 million (91%), of Coloureds 3 million (83%) and of Indians 1 million (97%) were urbanised. Urbanisation rates especially affected Africans of whom only 35,4% were living in towns in 1991.

Social inequality amongst Africans is growing,[1] a reflection of greater absolute numbers and proportions of poor people on the one hand and enhanced social mobility on the other. In 1998, only 19% of Africans were living in households with per capita incomes of more than R370 per month (Hirschowitz, 2000). However, by 1996 the 700 000 Africans in managerial, professional and "associate professional" grades of employment represented about half the number of employees in these categories. In other words, Africans today are likely to predominate within the upper middle class. As a consequence, as will be evident from the survey findings described in Chapter 2, race has become less salient as a determinant of high income. Poverty is also distributed unevenly geographically. About 12% of the populations of Gauteng and the Western Cape are officially classified as impoverished, whereas poverty levels exceed 40% in the Eastern Cape and Free State.

---

[1] Within this group the "Gini coefficient" rose from 0.70 in 1995 to 0.81 in 1998.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Unemployment is a major cause of poverty. Between 1995 and 1996, the number of jobs increased by 500 000, although all of them were in the informal sector (including domestic service). Formal sector employment declined by 1%. Official figures suggest that unemployment rose from 1 811 000 to 3 158 000 (from 15.5% to 23.3%). Meanwhile, the working-age population increased by about 500 000 per year (Baskin, 2000). The main losses were recorded in the manufacturing, construction and mining sectors. Government-owned parastatal corporations were responsible for a major contribution to job losses—100 000 workers were retrenched by parastatals between 1994 and 1999 (*The Star*, 27 September 2000). Between 1988 and 1998, manufacturing employment fell from 1.5 million to 1.1 million (*The Star*, 31 December 1998). Between 1988 and 1993, the number of plants rose but their average workforce size fell from 75 employees to 60, a reflection of the growing use of sub-contractors. Meanwhile, since 1993, 500 000 farm workers left commercial farms to seek work elsewhere, taking with them 5 million dependents. The survey data cited later in this book will show how the geographical distribution of unemployment has been increasingly skewed towards the "periphery" (small rural towns and the countryside).

What are the political implications of these statistics? Fertility decline will shortly produce an older population. Meanwhile, though, the number of young people arriving on the labour market every year expands while the workforce becomes progressively older. In other words, young people are increasingly unlikely to be employed after their schooling, a tendency which may account for their growing political disengagement. During the 1980s, inter-generational tensions were expressed through challenges to the political authority of elders, embodied, for example, in the vanguard role of organised youth movements. One decade later, crime may have replaced the activism that spearheaded the insurrectionary politics that helped to bring about transition to democracy. However, despite unemployment, trade union membership has grown—from 2 993 993 in 1992 to 3 801 388 in 1998, an increase of 31% (11% in 1997/1998)—to embrace 26% of the economically active population and 30% of economically active Africans. Nevertheless, the rise in the number of trade

unions from 194 to 463 reflects an increasingly fragmented workforce, one that is more difficult to organise. The incidence of strikes fell sharply. In 1994, 3.9 million man-days were lost in industrial disputes and in 1998, the most strike-affected year after 1994, man-days lost totalled 2.3 million. In 1998, two-thirds of the strike days was the consequence of wage disputes, mainly in the automobile and chemical industries (South African Institute of Race Relations, 1999). Farm retrenchments helped to accelerate urbanisation, with small towns in affected areas growing very quickly indeed. For example, farm worker evictions were believed to have doubled the populations of certain towns in Mpumalanga between 1994 and 1996. Rapid urbanisation led to an expansion of informal settlements (the government's housing programme notwithstanding). For example, in Johannesburg 33 000 people settled in shanties in Diepsloot between 1991 and 1994, many from the Northern Province in search of work, but others from nearby townships where they could no longer afford to pay service charges (*Sunday Independent*, 2 April 2000—Ray, M. "Johannesburg's urban renewal of apartheid").

A series of case studies by Janet Cherry (2000) suggests that the most stable and disciplined forms of political organisation are located in African communities in the older township neighbourhoods, which are characterised by government-built family housing. Social mobility may have weakened community organisation. The 700 000 strong African managerial class recorded in the 1996 census attests to recent and rapid social mobility, many of its members having moved out of townships and hence out of the ambit of working-class and community-based associational life. HIV/AIDS is another, less easily quantifiable, factor that may have begun to remove people from leadership positions during the period under review. Among teachers, for example, infection rates within certain communities are believed to be as high as 25%. The Human Development Index 2000 of the United Nations suggests that South Africa's life expectancy shrank by ten years between 1995 and 1998. Local estimates suggest that 3.8 million people may be infected with HIV/AIDS and that by 2004, the year of the next general election, 30% of the population could be HIV positive (*The Star*, 17 May 1999).

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

From struggle mobilisation to electoral politics

Notwithstanding a prolonged discussion among the ANC's strategic thinkers as to whether the organisation should attempt to retain the characteristics of a liberation movement, the most obvious ANC activism after 1994 occurred in the months preceding national and local elections, as is the pattern among conventional political parties. As an electoral party, the ANC was sometimes led by strategic imperatives of political marketing (Scammell, 1995) to invest much effort in "conversion" electioneering, directed at winning the loyalty of formerly hostile communities or perceived "swing" voters as well as increasingly defining its programme and ideology in centrist or consensual terms (Lodge, 1994).

What were the consequences of the ANC's transformation into a body primarily geared to contesting elections? Active membership declined by more than half overall between 1994 and 1999, from 1 000 000 to 400 589 (*Sunday Independent*, 9 July 2000) and in certain provinces the drop in membership was even more serious. In Gauteng, for example, by 1998, the organisation's adherents numbered 44 000, down from 120 000 in 1994.[2] In the southern ANC region of the Northern Province the number of active branches fell from 186 in 1998, before the provincial conference, to 15 in 2000 (*The Star*, 14 July 2000). For those who remained faithful, falling levels of branch activism signaled organisational atrophy. A provincial council in the Western Cape noted that "the organisation was generally weak at all levels, particularly at a branch level" (*The Star*, 28 July 2000). A list of prescribed branch activities given by the ANC secretary-general, Kgalema Mothlanthe, attempted to define the role that branches should play between election seasons: helping pensioners to obtain grants, encouraging communities to participate in school governance and housing programmes, and fostering links between parliamentarians and their "constituencies". However, Mothlanthe's list drew attention to what branches were not doing (Bernstein, 1999). By the end of 1997, the ANC's own officials were willing to concede that half the organisation's 1 000 or

2 Figures given by the provincial secretary-general at a conference and cited in *The Citizen*, 30 March 1998.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

so branches might be "dysfunctional" (Bernstein (1999) citing Cheryl Carolus, p. 115). The stagnation at the ANC's grass roots was evident in the run-up to the 2000 local government elections when plans for a recruitment drive failed to materialise in many centres. According to the assistant general secretary, Thenjiwe Mthintso, this was partly because those in control of many branches were reluctant to surrender their function as "gatekeepers". In some cases, she said, families and friends had put together candidate lists in the name of branches that had become moribund (*Business Day,* 11 December 2000; *The Star,* 21 December 2000). Mothlanthe's report to the ANC's general council meeting in Port Elizabeth in July 2000 was even more disparaging; in North West, he noted, there were reportedly battles between councillors and branch executive members. There was limited "cadre development", and many party structures showed "a very low level of political consciousness". As a consequence membership declined.

The experience of individual branches offers revealing insights into the reasons for diminished local commitment to the ANC. In Hammanskraal, outside Pretoria, for example, the outbreak of tension between branch leaders and civic activists resulted in a protest march in early 2000 to local council offices and the subsequent expulsion from the branch of five "community activists", led by Virginia Mashamaile, a civic movement veteran. After the 1995 local elections, ANC branch leaders and their civic allies ran a number of poverty alleviation projects, although tension developed between local project managers and the councillors who controlled access to public funds. Decision making about how the projects should be run increasingly became "a top-down affair" and community involvement was short-circuited. The activist march was a direct consequence of growing suspicion that councillors were misusing funds, although support for the march was also attributable to a wider sense of disillusion among the ANC's local followers. Branch meetings, apparently, had merely become forums for supplying "rubber stamps for decisions already taken by ANC councillors", and whatever local standing ANC leaders retained was a consequence not of activism but of passive

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

receipt of "benefits distributed to the poor" (*Sunday Independent*, 11 June 2000).

Meanwhile, both within and beyond the ANC's traditional following, there was evidence of declining levels of political participation, at least with respect to elections. In 1999, 3.5 million fewer voters cast their ballots in the national election than five years earlier, a fall in turn-out from an estimated 90% to 68% (calculated as a proportion of the voting-age population). A comparative analysis of party gains and losses in the two elections suggests that about 1.1 million abstainers were white and mainly urban and 1.5 million were black and concentrated in the rural Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal; the remainder was Indian or Coloured, indicating especially high rates of abstention in those communities. African abstention may well have been frequently involuntary as a consequence of the organisational limitations in the voter registration process, but survey evidence suggests that white, Indian and coloured abstainers were especially susceptible to feelings of political dis-engagement, endorsing such sentiments as "political parties did not reflect the concerns of people like me" or citing disenchantment with corrupt office holders.[3] In the local government elections of 2000, voter turn-out at 48% (8.8 million voters) was only 1% below the level attained in the local government elections of 1995, but certainly represented a significant decline in electoral commitment since the national election the year before when almost twice as many people voted. In contrast to the 1999 general election, turn-out rates among Whites were believed to be high (estimates varied between 57% and 70%), but urban Blacks were least predisposed to voting. Responses to the Independent Electoral Commission's 2000 registration campaign were disappointing; in the 18-20 year old group only 280 000 people registered, although this cohort exceeded a million people according to South African demographic statistics. Evidence from monitoring reports during the electioneering and on polling day indicated

---

[3] Findings from a survey commissioned by the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa and included in the HSRC's national omnibus survey in September - October 1999.

low interest among "youth" voters and, in many instances, their virtual absence from polling booths (Lodge, 2001).

Social movements and popular activism

Of course, electoral turn-out is only one indication of political participation. Moreover, the continuing resilience of local associational life suggests that voting abstention should not be equated with an end to popular activism. As the survey evidence in this publication suggests, public participation in township-based civic organisations maintained its vigour after 1994 and apparently became more widespread than active membership of political parties. The surveys also indicate that local youth and women's organisations remained popular. This may seem rather surprising. The national civic movement, SANCO, has been the focus of several scholarly studies and each of these suggest a pattern of decline and demoralisation. Since the 1994 and 1995 elections, civic associations were supposed to have lost their representative functions. After all, with the end of apartheid, social solidarity within communities, which had been engendered by anti-system politics, began to fragment, and the flow of external resources, upon which South African voluntary associations were so dependent, began to dwindle. The stresses attributable to these changes were evident in the high turn-over of SANCO leadership between 1992 and 1998, SANCO's financial indebtedness (R1.2 million by 1997) and the national body's increasing marginalisation in ANC "tripartite" alliance policy forums as well as in the re-organisation of local government (Lanegran, 1996; Seekings, 1997). However, top-down perspectives on national leadership structures may be misleading. As Jeremy Seekings notes, with respect to the advent of democratic local authorities, "if councillors neglect their constituency entirely then they allow SANCO space to organise a more or less loyal opposition". There is plenty of anecdotal evidence of such space opening up in certain centres as a consequence of councillors and councils performing badly in the eyes of their constituents.

In 1999, in KwaThema on the East Rand, a SANCO branch claiming "only" 1 000 "card carrying members", led a series of sometimes violent

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

protests (stoning and arson), culminating in a well-attended march against the council's treatment of electricity bill defaulters. (See reports in *Springs and Brakpan Advertiser*, 12 February 1999, 30 April 1999 and 8 October 1999.) In Tembisa, a SANCO branch president, Ali Tleane, was deposed from the mayorship of Kempton Park/Tembisa metropole for not paying his bills in protest against rate increases. Subsequently, SANCO led a programme of defiant reconnections of the electricity supply to residents who had been cut off (*The Star*, 22 August 1996). In Mdantsane, outside East London, a SANCO rally protesting on 22 March 1999 against the violent behaviour of taxi syndicates, was attended by 5 000 people supporting SANCO's call for a taxi boycott despite efforts by local ANC leaders to defer any action in favour of further negotiations (*East Cape Weekend*, 27 March 1999). In Witbank, in 1999, the SANCO branch campaigned for the removal of a corrupt councillor, vowing to "ensure that it will strengthen the alliance with the ANC so that no corrupt individuals are enlisted into leadership positions" (*Witbank News*, 16 April 1999). In Cathcart in the Eastern Cape, a SANCO/ANC rift, stemming partly from the SANCO branch's failure to consult the community about a housing scheme, prompted the withdrawal of the civic organisation from SANCO (because of SANCO's formal ANC affiliations) and its redesignation as the Cathcart Residents' Association, its name in the 1980s when it was a UDF affiliate (*Daily Despatch*, 4 March 1999 and 23 July 1999).

However, in the case of relatively effective councils, SANCO branches sometimes languished, with their community development/ mobilisation functions taken over by the ANC. For example, in Queenstown a busy ANC branch in Ezibeleni township had been engaged in the planning of housing delivery and the construction of local roads. In addition a revived chapter of the ANC Youth League was aiming to "make the youth participate in community development", linking this undertaking with a call to the council to improve the township stadium. Meanwhile, the Ezibeleni SANCO executive, at odds with the ANC branch over the previous three years, had failed to hold elections for three years and, according to its critics, functioned as a coterie of friends. (*Queenstown representative*, 13 November 1998 and 11 December 1998.) ANC

concerns about SANCO competing with its own branches for civic engagement were reflected in a proposal in its theoretical journal, *Umrabulo*, that the civic movement should be phased out through ANC branches taking up civic issues and acquiring local "hegemony". Of course such an approach might contain its own political risks. Such cases, though, may have represent the exception rather than the rule.

In certain cases, a strong local SANCO/ANC relationship allowed non-affiliated civic groups to emerge, sometimes in alliance with other political parties. In Tsakane, Brakpan, for instance, the Simunye in Christ Organisation, drawing support from public anger over the confiscation of property of service payment debtors, won 5 000 votes in the 2000 local election. On a happier note, the Community Police Forum's success in Ivory Park in Midrand in re-establishing street committees to contain vigilante action against suspected criminals, illustrates the continuing popular susceptibilities for collective action, outside the institutional framework supplied by procedural democracy (*The Star*, 17 February 1999—Mike Masipa, "Street committees returning to cut crime"). Both the police and development forums can provide an institutionalised procedure for partnerships between the state and civic society groups. For civics, though, the establishment of such bodies can lead to the dilution of their influence. In Edendale, outside Pietermaritzburg, home of a popular civic association, after the Edendale Development Forum was set up, the civic organisation found that it was just one voice among the 19 represented on the forum, and that funds from local donors that previously flowed to the civic to support development projects now went to the forum.[4]

Interviews with officials in civic organisations conducted as part of the HSRC Social Movements Project help to corroborate the impression of civic associations sustained by responsive followings and locally derived resources. Information collected in mid-2000 from officials in six SANCO civics in Gauteng townships (Kagiso, Tshepisong, Wattville,

---

4 I am grateful to Alexius Amtaika of the Politics Department of Vista University's Soweto campus for allowing me to cite these insights from his doctoral research on local government in Pietermaritzburg.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Meadowlands, Spruitview and Katorus) indicates a range of local membership numbers between 25 and "more than a thousand", with three of the associations claiming more than 500 members. With the exception of the Kagiso civic, which received a small grant from SASOL, all depended for their finances on membership fees and donations from within their respective communities. The two largest branches, Tsepisong and Wattville, employed paid officials, as did Meadowlands with its 200 members. With membership subscriptions ranging between R15 and R35, at best these officials would have been remunerated very modestly. Five claimed to hold meetings for their members more than once a month and to be quite frequently involved in the more decorous forms of "mass action" (meetings, rallies, demonstrations, petitions and, rarely, boycotts—the emphasis on forms of protest that suggest engagement with political authority itself being suggestive). Members were perceived by the officials interviewed to be largely unemployed and mainly in the 20-55 age range.[5] The testimony from these interviews does not substantiate contentions about "civil society in decline". Nor does popular support for the civic movement necessarily indicate deep-seated political alienation, notwithstanding the emphasis in press reports on protest and SANCO/ANC dissent.

Of course, civic associations do not represent the sum of the social movement activism that evolved in South Africa between 1976 and 1994. Also, other sectoral kinds of organisation may not replicate the same trends. The apparent fragmentation in the civic movement as external resources were being redirected to government and more experienced leaders moved out into public office (or private business) belies local vitality, resilient community associations and continued preoccupation with the unemployed and the very poor. Indeed, local activism since 1994 was prompted by local concerns rather than the larger loyalties of the "national democratic" offensive against apartheid.

---

[5] HSRC Social Movement Project: interviews conducted in June -July 2000 with Thabang Mokoena, Xoliswa Sobekwa, Richard Maluleka, Thabiso Mphachake, Ludwig Shange and Alfred Phaweni.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Whether this picture holds for other movements such as the classroom and students' organisations or township women's groups has yet to be researched thoroughly. With respect to students and school children, a receding tide of classroom disruptions and low turn-outs in college SRC elections may reflect a demobilised constituency. The few instances of teenage activism since 1994 suggest at best an ambiguous social commitment. In March 2001, a rare demonstration led by COSAS, supposedly to protest against the government's continued willingness to fund private schools, managed to attract several thousand uniformed children into Johannesburg's central business district. However, the occasion quickly degenerated into a riot when badly disciplined participants began looting the pavement stalls lining the streets elected for the march. In general, though, politically motivated violent collective action was unusual in cities.

As suggested above, the favoured forms of civic protest (demonstrations, rallies and petitions) imply recognition of authority's legitimacy. Since 1994, political violence has been concentrated mainly among Islamic militants in Cape Town, who were responsible for 400 bombings. Here the anti-crime movement, People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD) initially represented a powerful expression of the vigilante tradition, which in South African townships was fostered by the police's disinclination under apartheid to undertake criminal investigation as well as their occasional role as patrons to local gangsters. PAGAD's leaders, though, are strongly influenced by their experiences during the 1980s in an Islamic guerilla organisation, Qibla, and they appear to have become involved in terrorist attacks directed at both gangsters and facilities emblematic of the American consumption culture. Another vein of insurgent militancy is evident on White-owned farms, where attacks on proprietors and their households are believed by some analysts to have been fueled by the social antipathy of evicted farm workers. During 2000 the first land occupations in the commercial farming sector suggested that agrarian social tension may be growing.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Municipal reform

The resilience of civic activism is easier to explain when one considers the performance of local government since 1994. Municipal reform preceded the 1994 general election. In 1993, after lengthy negotiations, amalgamated local councils were created from black townships and the historically segregated white, Indian and coloured neighbourhoods, with different parties nominating representatives to sit on the new non-racial councils. In 1995 and 1996 elections were held for these bodies. The ANC won a majority of seats (6 032 out of 11 368), enough to win control over each of the main cities (metros) though not over all of their "sub-structures". The ANC also predominated in smaller centres, except in KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape. Despite a relatively low turn-out among black voters, survey evidence suggests that the new authorities started their work with substantial public support. An HSRC survey conducted before the poll indicated considerable trust among newly enfranchised citizens (HSRC, 1995). Of the black respondents, 40% agreed that "popular participation is not necessary if decision making is left in the hands of a few competent leaders" (with 38% disagreeing and 21% uncertain). More than half of the black respondents agreed that as a democratic system of local government existed, "we no longer have a need for organisations like civics and street committees".

Such sanguine expectations were soon to be disappointed, though, especially in smaller towns in which locally generated revenues from White-owned businesses now needed to be expended over a much more extensive and even needier set of areas than previously. The incorporation of badly indebted townships into former "white" councils and the decline in central government funding for support services in the townships soon resulted in a fiscal crisis. In the smaller rural centres the financial crisis was especially serious. The bankruptcy of Ogies in Mpumalanga, for example, resulted in the entire town being denied electricity by ESKOM in November 1998 and on several occasions subsequently, as a consequence of the council's failing to pay for the supply it had resold to residents (*Witbank News*, 8 July 1999). In the Eastern Cape, 26 municipalities were perceived to require "intervention" by the provincial government by mid-

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

1999 (*Eastern Province Herald*, 17 June 1999). In one of them, Sterkstroom, the local ANC branch rebelled against its own council representatives for "non-delivery", while in nearby Dordrecht two people were shot dead in anti-council riots (*The Representative*, 22 January 1999 and 18 June 1999). Comparable difficulties typified the experience of small towns in Mpumalanga. In Machadodorp, SANCO succeeded in persuading a divided and insecure group of ANC councillors against taking action against tax boycotters (who included poor township dwellers as well as conservative white rate payers opposed to cross-subsidisation). Visiting researchers noted the absence of any civic culture in the township and a mood of "passive expectation". ANC leadership weakness was compounded by the personal conflict that followed the removal of the first ANC mayor, a "struggle" veteran who could neither read nor write (Frankel, Louw & Stacey, 1997).

Even with respect to the larger towns the first five years as democratically constituted authorities was very challenging for municipal managers and their political leaders. The case of Johannesburg is illustrative. Like most of the newly integrated local authorities, Johannesburg was in dire financial straits in 1995. The metro was owed R900 million in unpaid bills and taxes at the beginning of 1996, while it was borrowing money from banks to finance its recurrent expenditure. Meanwhile there were huge inequities in service provision between the different racially segregated neighbourhoods. For example, before 1995 the Johannesburg City Council spent R3 000 per year on each resident in the Northern Suburbs—whereas municipal expenditure per capita in Soweto was R500. With the introduction of a common voter's roll for municipalities—and with the ANC ascendant—there were now powerful political compulsions to reduce these inequities. In addition the infrastructure desperately needed a cash injection—housing, roads, water supplies, drainage, sewerage, electrical supplies and transport had deteriorated in black settlements as a consequence of very rapid urbanisation during the 1980s and 1990s. The new shack settlements put existing services under tremendous strain.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Johannesburg's new managers attempted to address these challenges in several ways, none of them very popular. The first approach was to try and increase revenues to enable investment in better services to deprived areas. This required increasing taxation levels and introducing cross-subsidisation from wealthier areas to poorer areas. People living in the poorest neighbourhoods were required to pay a "flat rate" basic tax in return for very simple services (public taps and common-container refuse removal); people elsewhere were expected to pay taxes or rates linked to the reassessed land value of their residential property. Meanwhile, a central government programme, Masakhane, was instituted to encourage boycotters to resume payment of their rates and service charges and electricity and water bills. Masakhane was conceived of as a programme of public education—its approach to defaulting township residents was meant to be exhortative and persuasive—but by late 1996 the Johannesburg council, like many other councils, was resorting to more forceful methods of encouraging payment (cutting off household electricity supplies, for instance).

In general, the efforts to increase local revenues by municipal administrations engendered considerable resistance. In Sandton, in protest against very high rate increases, local (white) residents' associations began a boycott—paying rates at the old level into a trust account. The boycott movement received a boost when it was endorsed by Liberty Life, the insurance company with its corporate headquarters in Sandton and the Eastern Sub Structure's biggest tax payer. The boycott dragged on for two years (eventually a court case found in favour of the metro), but by then the city had lost about R200 million in unpaid and unrecovered revenues. However, wealthy suburbanites were not the only people to protest against local tax increases. In Western Johannesburg, inhabitants of coloured townships, led by a new civic organisation, SOWEJOCA, rioted during January 1997 because they were angered that the poorer coloured neighbourhoods were not included in those areas that were allowed to pay the lowest "flat rate". (Three people were killed in the course of these disturbances.) People were also enraged by electricity cut-offs for bad debts and the expulsion of illegal occupants from a new council-built

housing project. In black townships, SANCO branches were a prime force in the organisation of resistance against rate increases and service cut-offs. In July 1996, 45 SANCO branches in Soweto led protests against rate hikes, which averaged 50%.

In general, though, resistance to the rates increases tailed off in the course of 1997, particularly when the exhortatory Masakhane approach was replaced with a tougher set of sanctions against defaulters. Johannesburg's cut-off policy was reported by March 1997 to have achieved impressive rises in payment levels, despite criticism from civic associations. However, even if everybody had paid what they owed, no council could have financed the kinds of improvements to infrastructure that were needed in the townships. In many of the poorer areas services continued to deteriorate as councils saved money. To be sure, with respect to its financial management, Johannesburg represented a success story, with its council reducing an accumulated deficit of R338 million to zero in three years from 1997, and achieving high levels of payment for service. However, the savings resulted in a sharp reduction of money spent on maintaining infrastructure, which in turn resulted in power cuts in suburban neighbourhoods, leaking water pipes, crumbling pavements, potholed roads, non-functioning traffic and street lights, library closures and, just before the 2000 election campaign, the virtual collapse of emergency services (ambulances and fire engines), despite the services being largely staffed by volunteers. Johannesburg's capital expenditure was cut from R1.7 billion in 1995 to R500 million in 1999. Not all cities were as willing to engender the popular antipathy that a tough approach to tax and service payment defaulters would arouse, and low rates of payment remained very widespread. However, they were not necessarily the consequence of activism or the expression of political defiance, as a study by University of the Free State researchers found that simple poverty was the most commonly cited reason for the failure to pay rates (*The Star*, 22 March 2001).

Predictably, rate hikes were unpopular, especially in former white neighbourhoods in which there was widespread opposition to cross-subsidisation (confirmed by opinion polls) and where rate increases

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

sometimes coincided with deterioration in the quality of services (an inevitable consequence of sharing revenues and the efforts by councils to save money). The unpopularity of increases was accentuated by well-publicised instances of councillors not paying their rates and service charges, as well as the announcement of very substantial pay and allowance increases for the newly elected representatives (in many of the former white municipalities councillors before 1994 had been paid only token attendance fees). In fact, most councils, through the amalgamations that had brought about their formation, succeeded in shedding jobs and reducing money spent on salaries. Shedding labour could also have added to council unpopularity, though, particularly if it resulted in reduced services. Moreover, most councils lost people whose skills have been hard to replace.

Balancing the books (and many of the smaller councils remained hopelessly bankrupt and almost dysfunctional) did not usually bring about better services. Instead, city managers invested their hopes in the "mobilisation of private sector capital resources". In the past, of course, municipalities financed major projects through loans from banks, but in many cases their recent history of bankruptcy made it difficult to secure such loans after 1995. Rather, South African municipalities attempted to attract private capital investment through privatisation. Johannesburg's Igoli 2002 is one of the most sophisticated of these. Planning Igoli 2002 began at the end of 1998. Basically the strategy involves the division of the council's responsibilities into three categories. First, there will be "core functions" that include health, environmental care (cleaning, litter, etc.), museums, libraries and community facilities (including elderly care). These will continue to be performed by council staff. Second, a range of functions will be "corporatised", namely electricity and water provision, road maintenance, parks, cemeteries, the civic theatre, the zoo and the bus service. These corporatised functions will each be run by separate "utilities"—publicly owned entities that will nevertheless operate according to business principles, selling to the council and to citizens an increasing range of their services at market rates, attracting private sector lending through carefully regulated financial management systems and

having separate corporate legal status to facilitate debt recovery. In some cases the new corporations might involve private-public partnerships. Finally, a range of council undertakings will be sold off to private enterprise. Though implementation of these plans only began to affect council operations in 2000, they attracted vehement opposition from trade unions and SANCO as soon as they were announced, as did similar ventures elsewhere. For example, trade union hostility delayed the contracting out of water reticulation in Nelspruit for three years after the council had decided in its favour.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Government policy shifts

These developments in local government reflected general trends in government policy at national level. In 1994, the Government of National Unity (a coalition administration in which the ANC shared cabinet positions with the National Party and the Inkatha Freedom Party, the two minority partners) was committed to the implementation of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). The RDP was initially prepared by COSATU, and its adoption by the ANC as an election manifesto was an expression of the "accord" between the ANC and its trade union ally in which COSATU support during an election would be conditional on the ANC accepting worker-friendly policy commitments. The RDP progressed through five drafts before its final version in which some of the more radical economic prescriptions were toned down. Its language became increasingly ambiguous during the drafting procedure, but even so in its official adopted version the clauses on economic reconstruction allowed COSATU analysts to interpret the programme as a prescription for an increasingly regulated economy in which the public sector would play a key role in alleviating inequality and promoting "structural transformation". With respect to developmental concerns, the RDP's vision favoured a participatory approach, in which "development (should not be) just about the delivery of goods to a passive citizenry". Instead it should be "people driven", it should be an all-embracing effort in which "development forums" will bring together "all major stakeholders" in formulating and implementing RDP development

projects. Indeed, RDP initiatives should not be a state prerogative; organisations in civil society "must be encouraged to develop their own RDP programmes of action and campaigns within their own sectors".

Though a government White Paper on the RDP published in November 1994 displeased the trade unions with its commitment to restraining public sector growth as well as its coded references to privatisation, it endorsed the RDP's vision of a "stakeholder-driven" development process and called upon provincial and local governments to establish development forums to solicit project proposals from civil society and work with government in formulating public initiatives. The former COSATU secretary-general, Jay Naidoo, was appointed as minister with special responsibility for the RDP, and a number of provinces created the comparable position of RDP commissioner, to play an interdepartmental co-ordinating role, and to sanction development proposals.

During its first two years, the GNU was quite seriously committed to its goal of eliciting public participation in development projects. For example, in the extension of water reticulation, considered to be one of the more successful government undertakings, community management of pumping systems after their installation was recognised as vital to the programme's success. RDP forums were established in many townships and played a significant role in initiating projects or attracting public participation in the planning and implementation of publicly funded initiatives. One of the "Presidential Lead Projects", the school feeding programme, was administered through locally chosen committees. A programme of rural clinic building reflected the RDP's emphasis on redirecting public expenditure to address "basic needs", in this case favouring rural primary health care as opposed to the predominantly urban located hospital system; again, clinic construction could supply opportunities for local community participation. However, the measurable achievements of the government within the "delivery" domain were quite modest; the 250 000 houses completed by the beginning of 1997 suggested that the administration would fall well short of its target of one million in 1999. A programme of land redistribution had succeeded in the

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

resettlement of 50 000 households on 150 000 hectares by 1998—quite impressive until the original five-year target of a shift in ownership of 30% of cultivable land is recalled. The most successful "delivery" programme with respect to public perceptions was probably health. Opinion polls suggested that poor people felt they had better access to health facilities.[6] This perception was well founded. In Gauteng, for example, the usage of free health care facilities doubled in 1996 and 1997, and 3.5 million children had been vaccinated nationally against Polio and Hepatitis B by the end of 1996. The extension in public health care was not especially "people driven", though; in fact, the ministry acquired a certain notoriety for its cavalier approach to consultation and the way in which it sidelined specialist NGO groups in, for example, the field of AIDS education.

Official impatience with the notion of people-driven project implementation arising from the costs and delays attendant upon consensual decision making and civil society partnerships may have been a factor in the decision to close down the national and provincial RDP offices in March 1996. The shift in emphasis in government developmental rhetoric from popular participation to the "rolling out" of mass programmes since 1997, often conceived of on a very large scale, and the adoption of quantitative "output" criteria for evaluating success were other factors in the closing down of these RDP offices. Whatever its motivation, the closure of the RDP offices was widely perceived as linked to the government's announcement in June 1996 of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) Programme, a statement about economic objectives, which the government's left-wing critics charged to be a switch from the "growth through redistribution" orientation of the RDP to a more conservative "trickle-down" approach to poverty alleviation. Certainly, through viewing job creation in the private sector rather than Keynesian public expenditure as the "primary source of income distribution", GEAR appeared to favour growth concerns instead of the

---

6 Both the EISA/IDASA/SABC/Markinor *Opinion 99#2* poll and the Independent Newspapers' *Reality Check* (*The Star*, 28 April 1999) found that rural African voters were especially likely to believe that access to health care improved since 1994.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

equity preoccupation of the RDP's drafters. GEAR's authors forecast a 6% growth rate by 2000, to be achieved through deficit reduction, trade liberalisation, government "right-sizing", privatisation and wage restraint, with increases following rises in productivity and with the public sector setting the pace. GEAR's adoption by government (after a very secretive formulation process, in sharp contrast to the publicity surrounding the RDP's production[7]) was followed by a tougher adherence to market principles. This was evident in the harsher treatment of debtors by municipal administrations, in the "contracting out" of government business to private firms—with, in cases such as pension pay-outs, a deterioration in the quality of service—and in a shift in land reform policies so that entrepreneurial would-be farmers rather than the most impoverished rural dispossessed became the principal beneficiaries. The growing hostility from trade unions to GEAR and associated neo-liberal measures helps to explain the decline in popular confidence in the Mandela administration in 1997 and 1998, and the more accentuated decline in popular confidence in the subsequent Mbeki administration.

Coincidentally, the impetus towards more fiscally conservative policies gathered force after the departure from the GNU of the National Party (NP) in 1997. This departure was prompted by two considerations: the NP's failure to exert any profound influence over the 1995-1996 constitutional debate and the evidence accumulating from opinion polls of falling white support. Ironically, since then, more vigorous parliamentary opposition from the historically white parties, in part a consequence of the NP's defection as well as an effort by the traditionally liberal/centrist Democratic Party to attract the support of Afrikaner conservatives, may have prompted the rise in white political morale and public confidence reflected in the survey findings reported in Chapter 4.

The conclusion of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's main proceedings in October 1998 may also have contributed to subsequent improvement in white morale. Public opinion polls suggest that Whites

---

[7] For the contrasting policy procedures that produced the RDP and GEAR, see Lodge (1999); for a critical analysis of the impact of GEAR on social policy, see Bond (2000).

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

were least predisposed to welcome the TRC's activities, notwithstanding its role in granting legal amnesty for human rights violations under apartheid. Survey evidence indicates that white citizens were least susceptible to recognising personal responsibility for contributing to national reconciliation.[8] On the other hand, the even-handedness of the TRC's final report may well have strengthened perceptions of the government's impartiality among white citizens, especially in the light of the ANC's objections to the findings and Nelson Mandela's contrasting endorsement of the report.

Changing political identity

Our data indicate that over the five years of the study people became less likely to refer to race when considering issues of personal identity. Moreover, the surveys indicate that the political party loyalties generated during decades of nationalist conflict were slowly weakening in favour of affiliations to neighbourhood, class awareness, generational consciousness (especially among younger people), religion, ethnicity (with respect to Afrikaans-speaking Whites and Africans in general) and, most significantly, individualised or personalised conceptions of identity. Some of the political and social developments that might help to explain these changes have been referred to earlier in this chapter. Growing social inequality amongst Africans and the enlargement of the black middle class might have helped to erode a sense of racially defined communality among Blacks. Very rapid social mobility for substantial numbers within this group would have contributed to the tendency towards more personalised self-definition, expressed in a particularly colourful way by the ANC chief whip, Tony Yengeni, in his justification for his acquisition of an expensive leisure vehicle: "I'm a Mercedes-Benz man. I bought a 4 by 4 not because I want to drive around in the bundus, but because it's the in thing and I'm part of the trend" (*The Star*, 27 March 2001). Political

8 For details of a survey undertaken among 2 000 South Africans in July 2000, see *Reparation and Memorialisation;* press insert published by the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation, October 2000.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

party demobilisation as well as public dissatisfaction over the performance of political representatives in office (especially in local government) may help to explain why pre-1994 political identities were losing their appeal.[9] This does not mean that there are to be dramatic realignments of political party support in the near future. Turn-out statistics in 1999 and 2000 show that the most common reaction of disenchanted ANC voters is to stay at home on election day, not to support other parties. It does mean historic nationalist movements—on all sides—cannot depend upon their emotive communal appeal to remain "parties of belonging". Instead, activist politics—measured through civic-style participation—has become more parochial in orientation, with the grand narratives of national liberation being displaced by localised feelings of injustice over the harsh treatment by municipal officials and provincial bureaucrats of indigent rent defaulters, evicted shack dwellers, and elderly claimants seeking their entitlements.

The installation, in 1994, of nine provincial governments has made its own impact upon popular political identity. The formal authority of these administrations is circumscribed by a constitution that allows the provinces very little autonomy. However, the nine provincial dispensations spend more than two-thirds of the national budget and employ most of the country's civil servants; as centres of patronage and resource allocation they have become very powerful indeed. Since 1994, the geographical distribution of protest action of one kind or another has broadened, becoming less concentrated around the major metropolitan centres and increasingly directed at office holders in the provincial capitals in implicit acknowledgement of the rearrangement of power and resources. Provincial politics has also introduced new sources of political division. Civil servants in Umtata in the Transkei resent the loss of their city's capital status and the new privileges conferred on the historically rival administration in Bisho; their disaffection helps to explain the success of

[9] This is widely attested to in opinion polls. See, for example, the decline in identification with the ANC from 58% to 35% in IDASA polls conducted between 1994 and 1998 (Lodge, 1999).

the United Democratic Movement in building a support base in what in 1994 looked like impregnable ANC territory. The loss of authority, status or livelihood by certain old homeland elites as well as new patterns of political preferment have sometimes re-invigorated old homeland groupings such as Lucas Mangope's United Christian Democratic Movement. Within Gazankulu's old capital, Giyane, the Ximoko Party managed to treble their 1994 vote tally in the 1999 election (though this gain only represented a modest 7% of the local vote tally). Ethnic Shangaan resentment in the Malamulele area at being incorporated into the old Venda capital, Thohoyandou, resulted in an almost total abstention from the 2000 local elections in 50 stations. Meanwhile, Ngoako Ramatlhodi's Northern Province administration in Pietersburg has attracted charges of ethnic favouritism, as a consequence of Ramatlhodi's first cabinet selections being so heavily weighted in favour of Northern Sotho politicians recruited from Ramatholdi's own *alma mater*, the University of the North. The ANC's own belief that its rural support base is most effectively defended by incorporating into its leadership old homeland politicians (increasingly conspicuous in Mpumalanga, for example) and aristocratic notables (such as Stella Sigcau) reflects a recognition of the continuing salience of patrimonial kinds of political authority, which draw upon sub-national communal loyalties.

Ethnic sentiment does not always translate into irredentist politics, though. Afrikaners may feel more intensely their cultural identity—expressed, for example, in the rising circulation of Afrikaans newspapers and an impressive literary renaissance. However, Afrikaner nationalism has rapidly dwindled since 1994. Significantly, both the Freedom Front and the Conservative Party declined to contest the 2000 local government elections, opting instead to lend organisational support and encouragement to candidates in white suburban residents' associations. And though coloured and Indian politicians in the New National Party and the Democratic Party may play on communal anxieties prompted by African social mobility, only occasionally do they attempt to positively affirm a separate sense of cultural affiliation among coloured or Indian voters. All the evidence suggests that material preoccupations rather than racial or

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

cultural affinity supply the most important motives in party choice in working-class neighbourhoods among the racial minorities (Habib & Naidu, 1999: 189-199). Among middle-class Coloureds and Whites, the anxieties aroused by political and social reform since 1994 have helped to fuel the rise of conservative religious parties, both Christian and Islamic, drawing support for the advocacy of minimalist government, "family values", patriarchy and social discipline.

Conclusion

Since 1994, widening social inequality, the consequence of accelerating social mobility among black South Africans as well as increasing rates of school-leaver unemployment, has disrupted the patterns of political mobilisation that evolved in the previous 20 years around the liberation struggle and shaped the strategic orientation of social movements. After the 1994 founding election, the political routines of procedural democracy have represented an important shift in the political opportunity structure. The opening up of new points of access to policy making and public resources has reduced the incentives for nationally based political parties to mobilise their followers in protest action. Paradoxically, though, more popularly accountable state institutions have helped to increase public expectations that grievances can be redressed through protest. Meanwhile the shortcomings of public officials and elected representatives (especially in local government) have ensured that grievances remain widespread. "Bringing government closer to the people", the declared intention of local government reform and the practical effect of making regional administrations the main centres of resource allocation, has provided a new cognitive system influencing collective action, a new "framing process", to cite a currently influential term in social movement theory. The mobilising structures through which activist politics are expressed continue to be located in localised associational life—the civic movements and women's groups—which in the 1980s supplied the organisational underpinning of nationalist assertion. Today, though, the political identities, which help to prompt collective mobilisation and determine its activist repertoires, have changed to become increasingly sub-national in

orientation, with new notions of citizenship shaped by a multiplicity of senses of belonging or of feelings about community.[10]

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

[10] The theoretical terminology and conceptual cues that are explic itly cited in this conclusion and have been generally important in influencing the writing of this introductory chapter can be explored in McAdam, McCarthy and Zald (1996).

Chapter 2

The distribution of wealth

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

In South Africa wealth has long been distributed on the basis of race. Has six years of the "new" South Africa (1994-2000) made a difference? We begin our discussion of the results with some basic socio-economic facts. The figures we present not only give a general impression of the social and economic transition in the country, but also of the wide gaps that still prevail. No one expected the country to change overnight, but many a South African may feel that the pace of change is too slow. The "new" South Africa had to take cognisance of the heritage of apartheid, such as the stunning neglect of the country's social and human capital and the completely skewed distribution of wealth. Obviously, wealth will always be distributed differentially, but the question is *how*. Ideally differences in wealth should relate to achieved rather than to ascribed positions in society. To what extent is wealth in South Africa currently based on achieved rather than ascribed criteria?

Level of education and unemployment

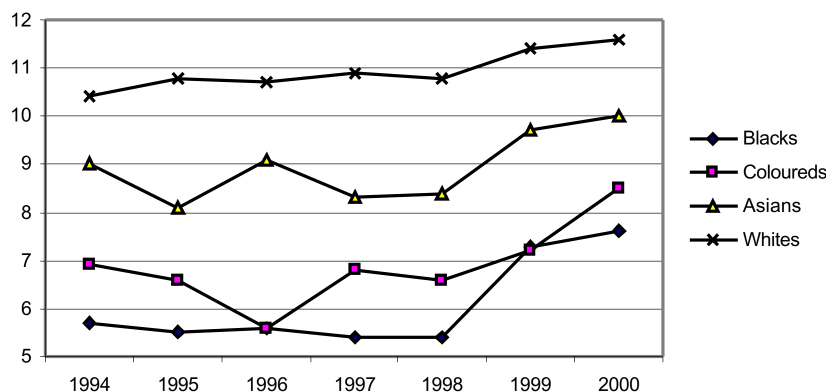
Unequal distribution of education and unemployment in a society implies that the human resources of that society are not used effectively, that is, they are not invested in development. Figure 2.1 displays the level of education in South Africa since 1994 for the four racial categories, on a scale from "no education" (1) to "doctoral degree" (19).

It is obvious that the level of education of all four racial categories increased in the period 1994 to 2000. Moreover, the increase among the Coloureds and the Blacks was almost twice as large as that among the Whites and the Asians, indicating that the former groups were getting closer to the latter groups. This seems to have occurred in the last two years especially. Yet the gap remained considerable. This was confirmed by another figure—the percentage of our respondents who had at least

achieved Standard 10. In 1994, 9% of the Blacks were in that category; in 2000 this figure was up to 28%. During the same period, the Coloureds went from 12.5% to 16%. Compare these figures to those for Asians (40.5% and 46%) and Whites (59% and 82%) and it is clear that a significant gap continued to exist between Blacks and Coloureds on the one hand and Asians and Whites on the other. Nevertheless, the developments especially during the last two years were positive.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Figure 2.1: Highest level of education



Note: On a scale from 1 (no education) to 19 (doctoral degree).

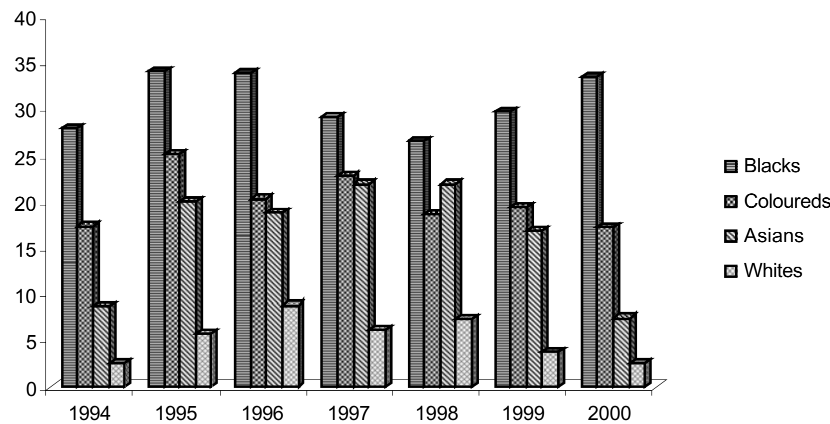
Less positive were the data on unemployment (Figure 2.2). Indeed, very little seems to have changed with regard to unemployment.

Nationally, the level of unemployment hovered around 25% during the seven-year period from 1994 to 2000, the proportion of the economically inactive population being around 30%, and that of the working population 45%. Over this period the unemployment figure fluctuated, but did not change significantly. In addition, unemployment was distributed very unevenly among the four racial categories, and very little seems to have changed there too. In the year 2000, unemployment among the black population came to 34%. This was close to the highs in the years 1995 and 1996. The decline in 1997 and 1998 appears to have been only temporary. From 1999 onwards, there was a steady increase—

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

from the 26.6% in 1998 to 33.5% in 2000. Although at a lower level than in the black population, unemployment also fluctuated in the coloured population—moving from 17% in 1994 to a high of 25% in 1995 and back to 17% in 2000. The Asian population seems to have recovered from the economic downturn. After five years of unemployment figures similar to those of the Coloureds the Asians were in 2000 back to a level of unemployment that was even somewhat lower than that in 1994. The least affected by the economic downturn seems to have been the white population. To be sure, unemployment in this group tripled in 1996 to 9%, but went down in 2000 to the same low level as in 1994, namely 2.5%. Obviously, such figures are a threat to South Africa's stability, not in the least because the trends over the last few years do not answer to the expectations of many a politician or South African citizen. In the light of the observed increase in level of education, especially among the groups that are most affected by unemployment, this is all the more dramatic.

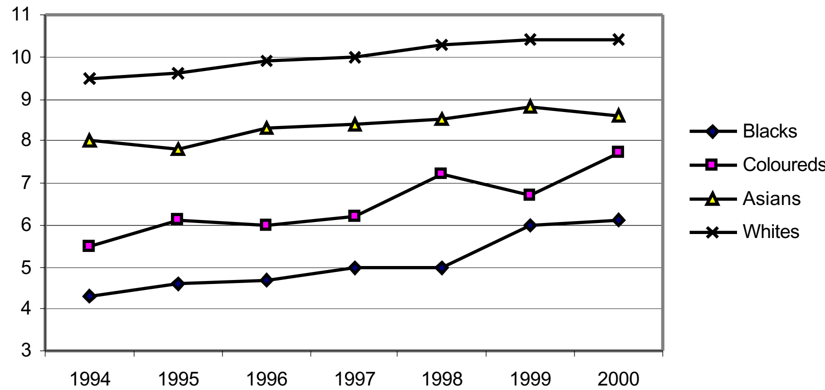
Figure 2.2: Unemployment and race (%)



Income and living standard

In 1994 close to 50% of income differences could be explained by racial category. Figure 2.3 provides an overview of the development of gross household income among the four racial categories since 1994.

Figure 2.3: Gross household income



Note: On a scale from 1 (low living standard) to 8 (high living standard).

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

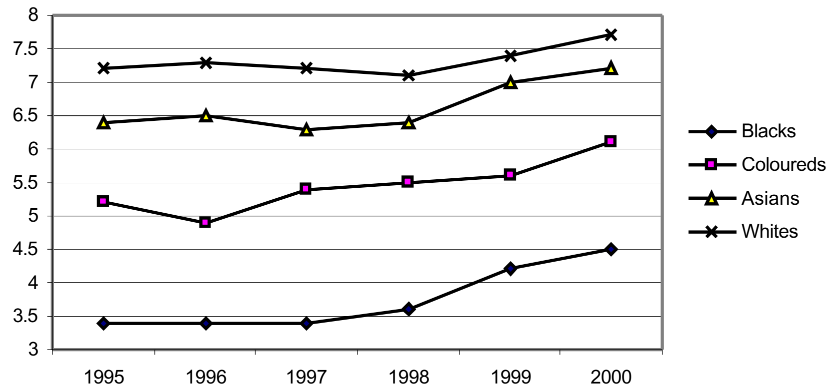
Incomes are plotted on a scale from "no income" (1) to "more than R7 500 per month" (12). The figure shows that incomes increased for all four categories over the seven-year period. Taking inflation into account this is what one would expect. A closer look at the figure reveals that the increases among the Coloureds and the Blacks were larger than those among the Asians and the Whites, especially in the last few years. The incomes of the Whites and the Asians showed an almost straight line, but those of the Coloureds and the Blacks bent upwards. This was also demonstrated by yet another fact: in 1994, 3% of the Blacks earned an income of over R4 000, as compared to 13.5% of the Coloureds, 42% of the Asians, and no less than 78% of the Whites. In the year 2000 these figures changed substantially to 20.5% of the Blacks, 39% of the Coloureds, 62% of the Asians and 85% of the Whites. Thus, although the differences have not disappeared, they have definitely become smaller.

In addition to income, living standard is another indicator from which someone's wealth can be estimated. It will come as no surprise that living standard is strongly associated with income level (on average the correlation is .67). However, as a rule improvement in living standard lags behind improvement in income. Living standard as we have defined it, is based on the presence in a household of facilities ranging from tap water and elec-

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

tricity to a personal computer and a microwave oven. Typically, an income increase only shows in living standard after some time, as many acquisitions to a household only become affordable after a prolonged period of higher income. Therefore, more than anything else the living standard measure shows the legacy of apartheid (Figure 2.4 as the living standard measure in 1994 is not comparable to that in the subsequent years we start with the data of 1995). To be sure, over the years the gap narrowed (in 1995 the difference between Black and White was close to 4 points on our scale; in 2000 it was somewhat over 3). However, the basic pattern remained very much the same. In 2000, 13% of the Blacks belonged to the two highest living standard categories, the so-called "affluents", as compared to 30.5% of the Coloureds, 72% of the Asians and 98% of the Whites.

Figure 2.4: Living standard



We analysed income and living standard per ethno-linguistic group (8 groups) instead of racial group (4 groups). The eight groups were: white Afrikaans, white others, Asians, Coloureds, Sothos, Xhosas, Zulus and black others. Figures 2.5a-2.5c provide the results for income, education and living standard. The breakdowns for unemployment are not presented, but they tell the same story. Basically, these figures show that the four racial categories in South Africa are still fundamentally distinct. At the top we find the two white groups, and at the bottom the four black groups

sticking closely together. The only black group that seems to have deviated somewhat from the general pattern was the Zulus. In terms of education and income this group seems to have improved more rapidly than the others. As far as living standard was concerned, though, they were still in the same league as the other black ethno-linguistic groups, which confirms our assumption that development in living standard lags behind development in income.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Figure 2.5a: Gross household income

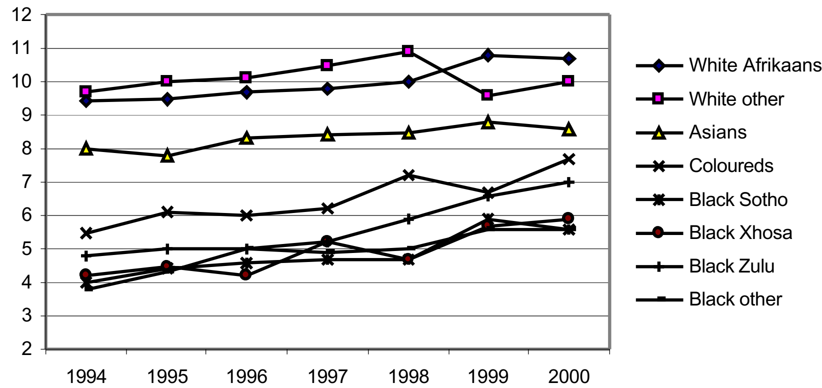
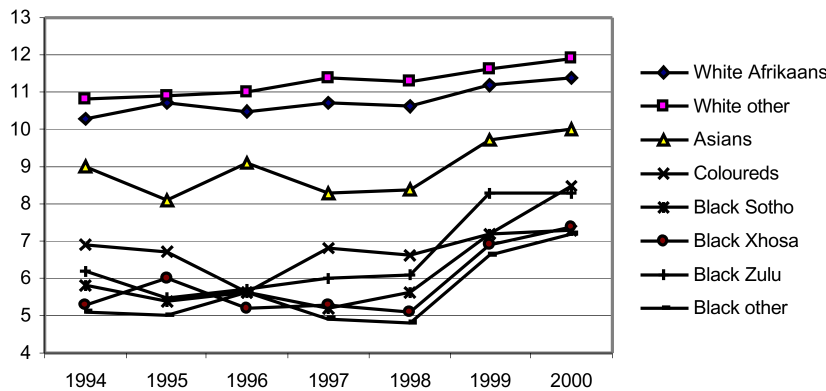
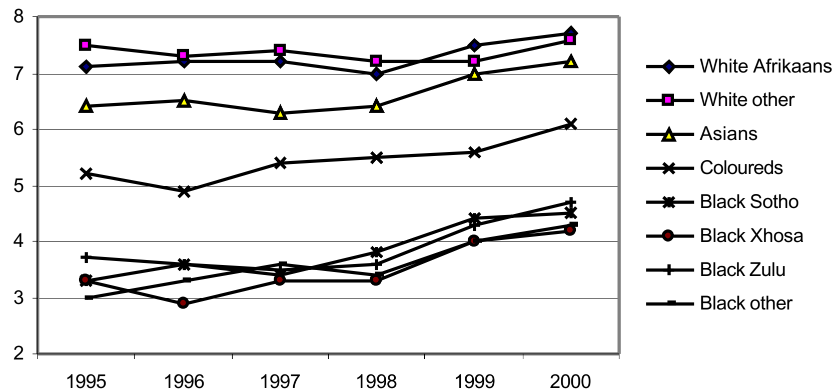


Figure 2.5b: Highest level of education



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Figure 2.5c: Living standard



In the remainder of this chapter we look into the question of whether education, unemployment, income and living standard levels differed for respondents from different gender or age groups, or from different provinces.

Gender and age

There are obvious reasons why education, unemployment, income and living standard levels may differ for males and females and for the different age groups. Universally gender has always been a source of differential treatment, and so has age. As far as gender is concerned we did not find differences in level of education between males and females. As a group both men and women experienced the same increase in level of education during the last two years of our study. We did, however, find significant differences in unemployment (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Gender and unemployment (%)

Gender	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Male	20.2	20.9	21.5	20.0	16.3	18.4	21.4
Female	24.1	34.7	34.0	28.8	28.5	30.0	31.9

Ever since 1994 unemployment among men hovered around 20% with a high of 22% in 1996 and a low of 16% in 1998, while unemployment among women hovered around 30% with a high of 35% in 1995 and a low of 24% in 1994. In the year 2000, at the closure of our study, unemployment among women was more than 10% higher than that among men.

We did not find any gender gap in our income and living standard measures. This may come as a surprise, but remember that we measured both income and living standard at the household level. We did so because we felt that in terms of the distribution of wealth the household was more relevant than the individual. Someone may personally have little or no income, but by being part of a wealthy household, he/she may have access to a better income. A more valid picture is gleaned from males and females who are not married. We found that unmarried men earned on average more than unmarried women, but in terms of living standard there was no difference between them. On the whole the living standard of unmarried people was lower than that of married people.

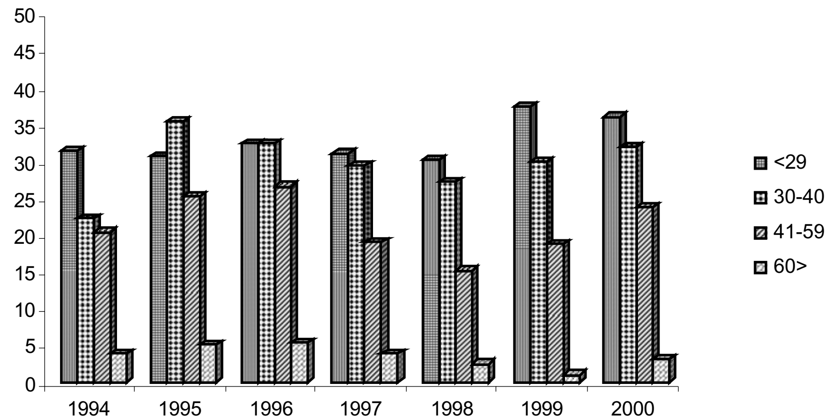
As far as age is concerned the only matter of concern was unemployment. As for education, income and living standard we found the obvious results. The younger generations were better educated, earned less and had a somewhat lower living standard than the older generations. This is what one would expect and few people would worry about such findings. The unemployment figures were, however, different (Figure 2.6).

Figure 2.6 shows considerable differences in unemployment between the various age categories: younger people were more likely to be unemployed. Unemployment among the people of 60 years and older was very low. This is not so much because most of the people of this age group were employed, but because the vast majority (close to 90%) were no longer economically active. Figure 2.6 reveals that the conjunctural fluctuations in South Africa's economy affected the remaining three age groups in a different way. While unemployment among the senior group (41-59 years old) apparently rose and fell with the economic cycle, the younger generations seem to have benefited much less from economic improvement. In the year 1998 when unemployment among the senior group was down to 15%, it was still 30% among the youngest generation

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Figure 2.6: Age and unemployment

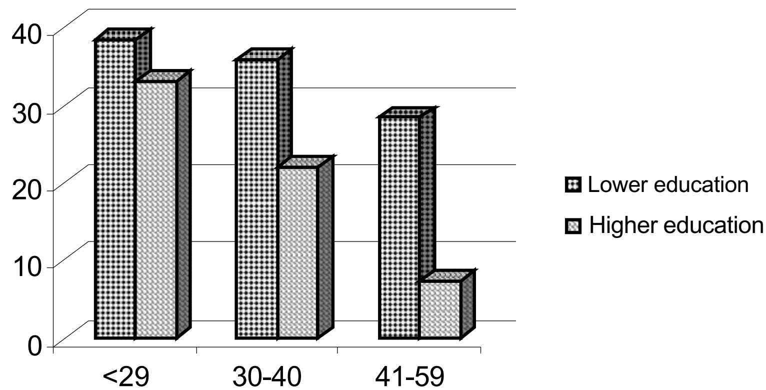


and 27% among those between 30 and 40 years. In other words, when unemployment dropped the younger generation benefited the least. We can only speculate why this is the case. It may be the result of some seniority principle, which forces those who are the last in to be the first out in difficult times. Moreover, it is probably more difficult to find a job than to keep a job in difficult economic times. Whatever the explanation, further analyses show that especially youth with higher levels of education are suffering. To be sure, higher levels of education improve someone's chances in the labour market. On average we found among lower educated people an unemployment rate of 34% against 24% among higher educated people. But this was the overall pattern. Among the younger generation the difference was much smaller than among the older generations, as can be seen in Figure 2.7 the younger one is, the less education makes a difference in terms of unemployment.

Similar patterns were found among all four racial categories. To be sure, the levels of unemployment among the racial groups differed, but the relations between age, education and unemployment were the same for all four categories. Over time this pattern changed slightly to the disadvantage of the higher educated younger generation. Whereas in 1994 37% of the lower educated youth were unemployed, as compared to 24% of the higher

educated, these percentages were 44% and 34% respectively in 2000. This is obviously an unfortunate situation, both in terms of wasted human resources and of frustrated ambitions.

Figure 2.7: Unemployment by age and education (1994-2000)



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Provinces

Our final question in this chapter is whether there were provincial differences in the distribution of wealth. The nine provinces did indeed differ in terms of education, unemployment, income and living standard, but a closer look at the results reveals a pattern that reflects a centre-periphery distinction. In Figures 2.8a and 2.8b income level and living standard are broken down by province.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Figure 2.8a: Gross household income

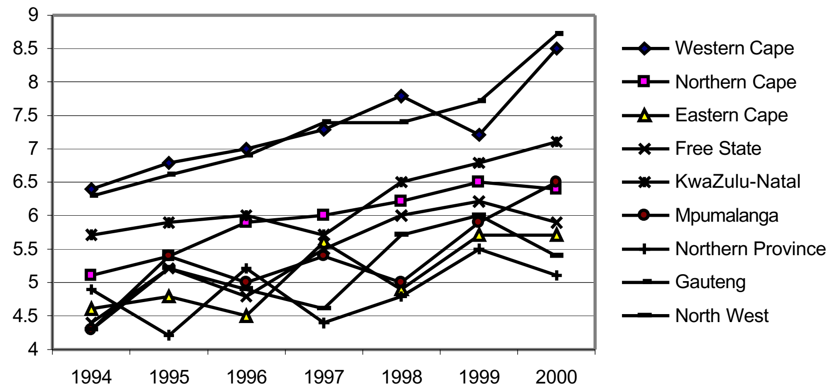
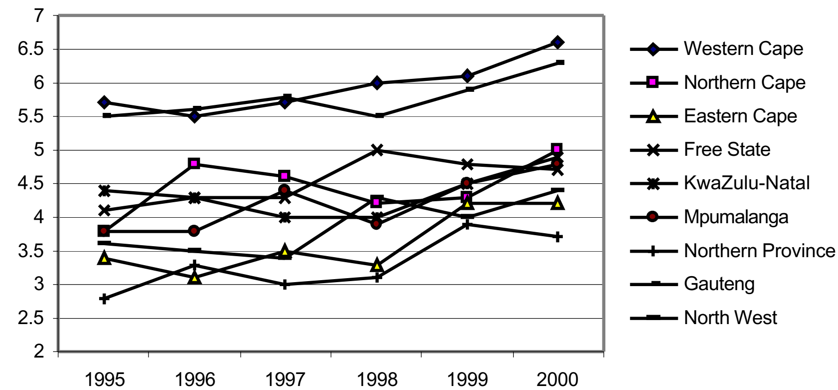


Figure 2.8b: Living standard



Note: As the living standard measure of 1994 is different than that of the remaining years, we start with the year 1995.

The figure reveals that Gauteng and the Western Cape had significantly higher income levels and higher living standards than the remaining seven provinces. Therefore we collapsed Gauteng and the Western Cape into what we defined as the "economic centre" of the country and the remaining provinces into a single category that we defined as the "periphery".

Over the seven-year period of our study the gap between the centre and the periphery seems to have widened. As for unemployment, until 1999 on average 22% of the population living in the centre were unemployed. In 2000 this figure declined to 18.6%. In that same period unemployment was on average 26% in the periphery, but increased to 31.5% in 2000. In other words, in one year's time the gap grew three times wider: 12.9% instead of 4%.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Figure 2.9a: Highest education

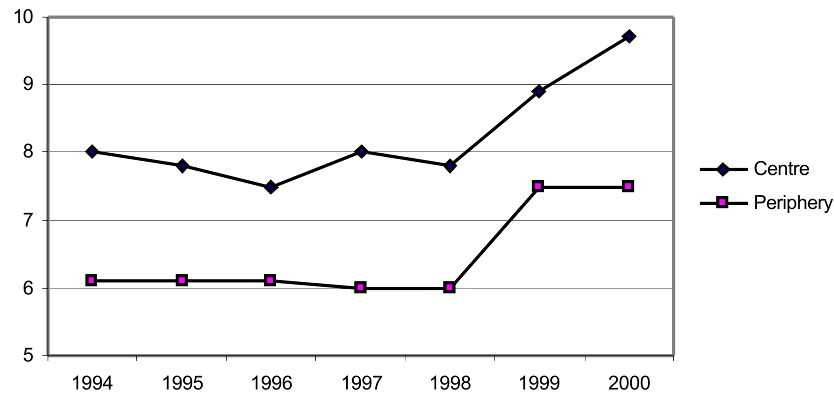


Figure 2.9b: Gross household income

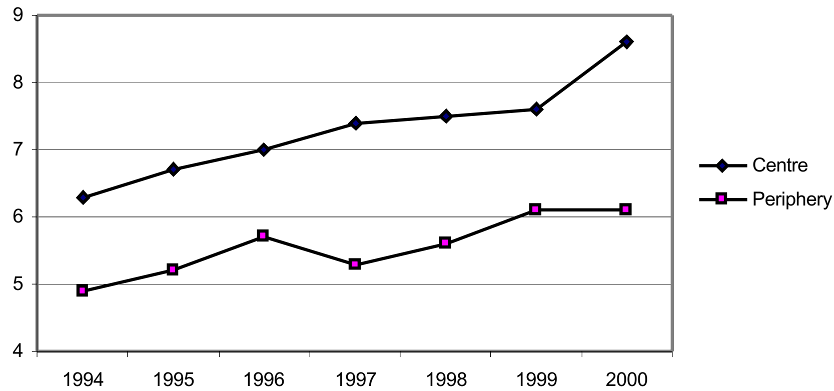
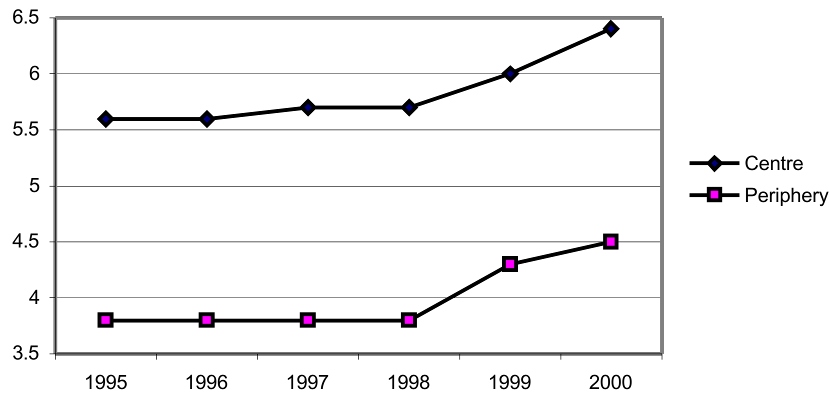


Figure 2.9c: Living standard



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

On the whole the gap between the centre and the periphery seems to have widened. This also becomes clear in the graphs in Figures 2.9a-2.9c. These graphs present the results with regard to education, income and living standard. Each of the three graphs shows clear gaps between the centre and the periphery, but also suggests that these gaps were widening, especially during the last few years.

In a further step in our analysis we compared the centre-periphery gaps for the four population groups in South Africa. Unemployment levels in the centre were lower than those in the periphery irrespective of the racial category someone belonged to. Of course, unemployment levels among the four racial categories varied—as discussed—but this held for both the centre and the periphery. For the remaining three indicators we did find diverging patterns for the four population groups. Figures 2.10a-2.10d give the results for income according to race. We will discuss these results first, and subsequently indicate to what extent the results with regard to the other two indicators, living standard and education, are the same or different.

Figure 2.10a: Blacks (Income)

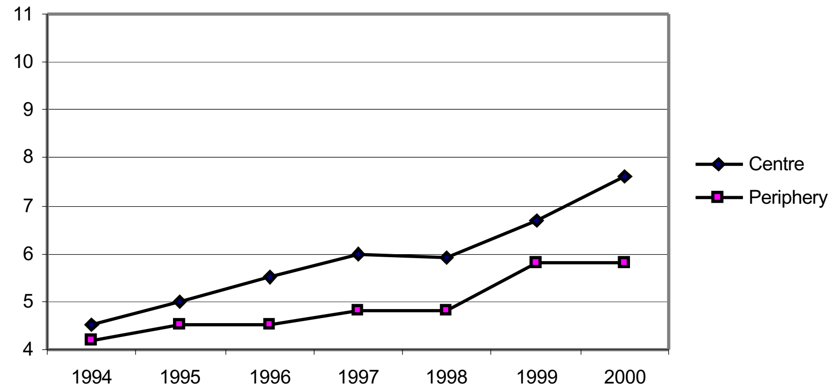
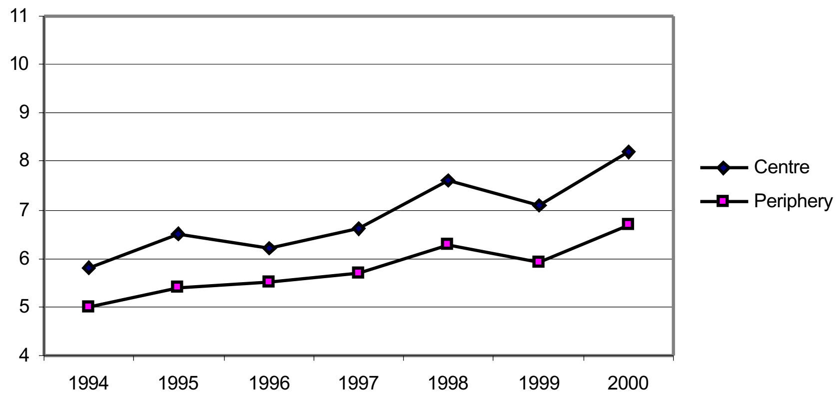
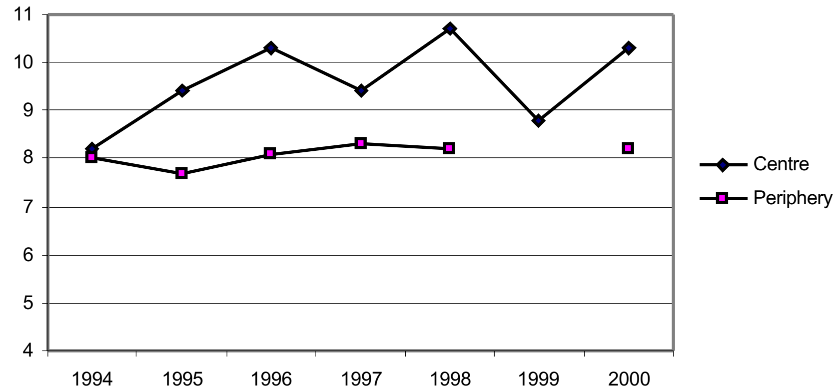


Figure 2.10b: Coloureds (Income)



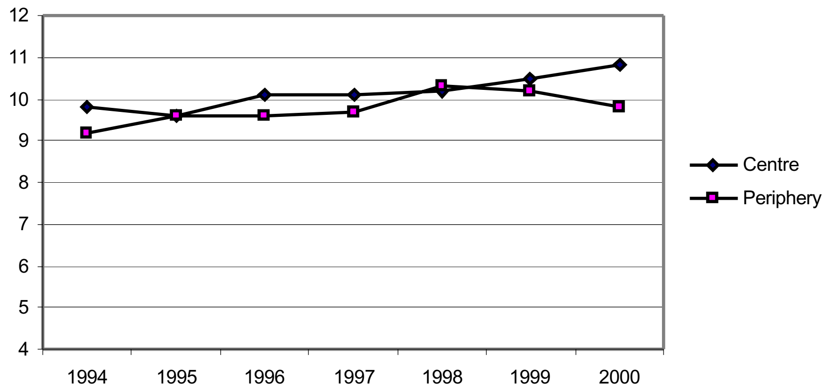
Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Figure 2.10c: Asians (Income)



Note: In 1999 there were too few Asians living in the periphery included in the sample to allow for reliable conclusions.

Figure 2.10d: Whites (Income)



For the Whites, living in the centre or the periphery did not seem to matter much as far as their income was concerned, although a small decline in the income of those who lived in the periphery emerged over the last two years. For all other groups, living in the centre not only implied on average a higher income but the gap between them and those living in the

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

periphery seems to have increased. As far as living standard is concerned, we found similar patterns except for the Asians. The Asians did not differ in terms of living standard, whether or not they were located in the centre. As for education, we found again no differences between Whites who lived in the centre and those who lived in the periphery. The other three racial categories differed, although the differences among the Blacks were larger than those among the Coloureds and the Asians.

Changes in the distribution of wealth

Let us now return to the question about the distribution of wealth in South Africa. Does wealth distribution continue to be based on race, the dominant criterion during the era of apartheid, or have other criteria taken over? In other words, has the distribution of wealth become based on achievement rather than ascription?

This question brings us to the final step in our analyses for this chapter. We will estimate the relative impact of five distribution criteria (race, gender, education, age and living at the centre or periphery) of the three indicators (unemployment, income and living standard) for each year of our study, taking the correlation between the five distribution criteria into account. The results are displayed in three separate tables (Tables 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4).

Table 2.2: Parameters in the distribution of wealth: Unemployment

Parameters	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
R-square	.10	.11	.08	.08	.09	.13	.12
Beta:							
Race	-.19	-.14	-.16	-.19	-.12	-.18	-.19
Gender (female=2)	.14	.14	.14	.12	.13	.14	.12
Education	-.10	-.14	-.04	.01	-.05	-.00	-.04
Age	-.22	-.19	-.14	-.18	-.22	-.25	-.22
Centre-periphery (periphery=2)	-.07	.00	-.02	-.00	.01	-.04	.06

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Table 2.3: Parameters in the distribution of wealth: Income

Parameters	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
R-square	.55	.52	.52	.49	.52	.35	.39
Beta:							
Race	.48	.43	.41	.38	.45	.34	.27
Gender (female=2)	-.02	-.01	-.01	-.02	-.06	-.05	-.07
Education	.38	.39	.38	.38	.34	.35	.38
Age	.12	.09	.10	.12	.11	.10	.12
Centre-periphery (periphery=2)	.00	-.05	-.09	-.12	-.12	-.09	-.18

Table 2.4: Parameters in the distribution of wealth: Living standard

Parameters	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
R-square	.61	.61	.63	.59	.53	.54
Beta:						
Race	.46	.46	.44	.44	.41	36
Gender (female=2)	.01	.02	.01	.04	.04	-.05
Education	.34	.34	.36	.32	.33	.39
Age	.12	.12	.11	.08	.11	.16
Centre-periphery (periphery=2)	-.20	-.22	-.21	-.25	-.25	-.25

We conducted hierarchical regression analyses (OLS) with the five distribution criteria as the independent variables and the indicator of wealth as the dependent variable.

Tables 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 show to what extent the five indicators together (R^2) and separately (β's) affect unemployment, income and living standard. We will discuss each table separately.

Three out of the five criteria, namely race, gender and age, had a significant and steady influence on unemployment. The figures confirm the previous univariate analyses. The unemployment rates were highest among Blacks, followed by Coloureds, Asians and Whites. Females were more often unemployed than males, and the younger you were, the greater

the likelihood that you would be unemployed. Each of these determinants held independently of the others and their influence was fairly stable over the years. Controlled for these three factors, education and centre-periphery distinctions were not very important, but note that our finding that in the year 2000 the gap between the centre and the periphery widened was confirmed (β turned from -.04 in 1999 to .06 in 2000) (Table 2.2). Thus as far as unemployment was concerned race, gender and age had a stable impact on unemployment. If you were young, female and Black your chances to be unemployed were more than twenty times higher than if you were older, male and White. That was true in 1994 and was still true in 2000.

Turning to Table 2.3, we change to income. The pattern that the table reveals is extremely interesting. First of all, the five factors together explain a considerable proportion of the variance in income. On the whole the figures confirm our previous analyses. Controlled for their mutual relationships each factor continued to have a unique impact on income (except for gender in the first four years and the centre-periphery distinction in the first year). Your income was higher if you lived in the centre, if you were older, if you were better educated, if you were male and if you were White rather than Asian, Coloured or Black. However, the most interesting part of the table is the change in the relative weight of race and the other factors. Whereas in 1994 the ß for race was .48 it changed to .27 in 2000 after a steady decline over the years. During that period education and age had a significant and stable influence, while gender and the centre-periphery distinction became more important. In fact, in 2000 the impact of education was significantly higher than that of race. Indeed, in 2000 race alone explained not more than 23% of the variance in income while the other factors explained as much as 33%. In 1994 these figures were the reverse: race alone explained 46% of the variance in income and the other factors 40%.

The figures on living standard in Table 2.4 confirm those for income but, as indicated above, living standard lagged behind income. Yet in 2000 44% of the variance in living standard was explained by factors other than race, while race explained only 35%, whereas in 1994 these figures were

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

47% and 50% respectively. The net effect of these trends as they are reflected in Tables 2.3 and 2.4 is that during the seven-year period of our study the distribution of wealth in South Africa became less dependent on race. To be sure, race was still an important parameter in the distribution of wealth, but its significance declined over the past years. The net effect of the declining importance of race was that education became the strongest criterion for the distribution of wealth in our analysis. A new matter of concern for the future might be, however, the growing gap between the centre and the periphery. Over the seven-year period of our study the centre-periphery distinction developed into the third strongest parameter in terms of its impact on the distribution of wealth in the country.

Conclusion

In general, the results discussed above suggest that the basic socio-economic living conditions in South Africa are still very much unequal. The fundamental inequality in the South African society inherited from the apartheid era is still very much in place. As for the skyrocketing unemployment, the younger generation seems to carry most of the burden.

At the same time the results indicate that, underneath the surface, the country is being restructured slowly, but steadily. Nobody would, of course, have expected a radical restructuring of the economy and redistribution of wealth in such a short period. However, the signals indicate that regularity in health has become less strongly related to one's ascribed racial group, but more strongly to one's age, gender and geographical location.

It is against the objective background described in this chapter that the feelings and evaluations, the hopes and despair, the political apathy and participation that occupy us in the remainder of this anthology should and will be interpreted.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Chapter 3

Grievances and relative deprivation

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Structural transformation does not necessarily change feelings, nor do feelings necessarily remain stable in the absence of structural change. The previous chapter illustrated that the distribution of wealth in South Africa has not changed much in broad terms since the institution of democracy in 1994, but at the same time that significant changes are taking place underneath the surface. Such an ambiguous situation is difficult for people to assess. On the one hand, substantial inequality continues to exist; on the other hand, education and centre or periphery location seem to have taken precedence over race as the primary distribution criteria. Of vital importance for the country is whether the enduring inequality will continue to generate grievances. Equally important is the question of how such grievances will be framed in terms of race, class, gender, generation or some other newly developed cleavage in the South African society.

It is a well-documented social phenomenon that differential treatment does not necessarily elicit grievances. In the past, the racial cleavage obviously *did* generate grievances as evidenced by the long-lasting struggle against apartheid, but will it continue to do so now that the political landscape has been altered so dramatically? The questions about the formation and framing of grievances are not trivial. On the contrary, in a country that is socio-culturally as heterogeneous as South Africa any grievance defined along socio-cultural lines poses a potential political threat. As long as grievances are randomly distributed in a society they are politically neutral. If, however, members of a group feel that their *group* is treated unjustly, group-based grievances develop and such grievances *become* politically relevant because aggrieved groups may—and often do—mobilise and demand change.

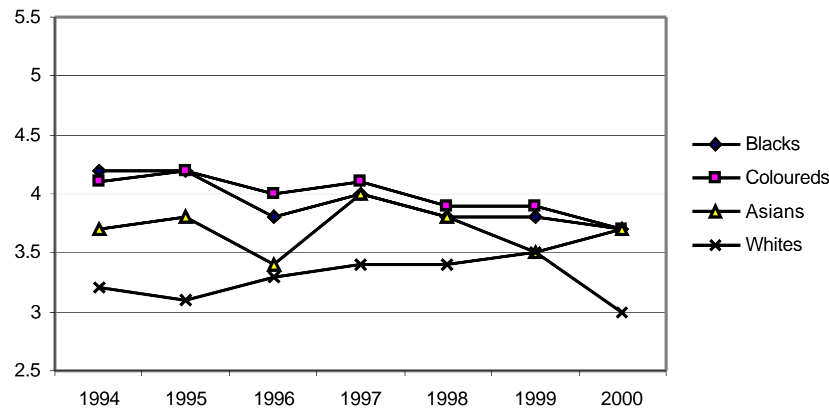
In this chapter we define grievances as feelings of dissatisfaction with important aspects of life such as housing, living standard, income, employment, health care, human rights, safety and education. We will

show that such feelings are linked to objective outcomes in a complex way.

Being aggrieved

We asked our respondents how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with various aspects of their life. They could answer these questions on a seven-point scale ranging from "extremely satisfied" (1) to "extremely dissatisfied" (7). Figures 3.1a-3.1g display how satisfaction and dissatisfaction with respect to these aspects developed among the four population groups over the seven-year period of our study.

Figure 3.1a: Dissatisfaction with conditions in the neighbourhood



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Figure 3.1b: Dissatisfaction with safety in the neighbourhood

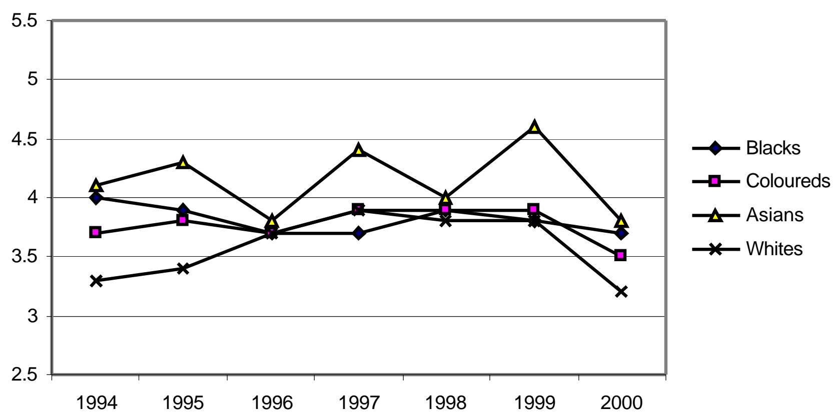
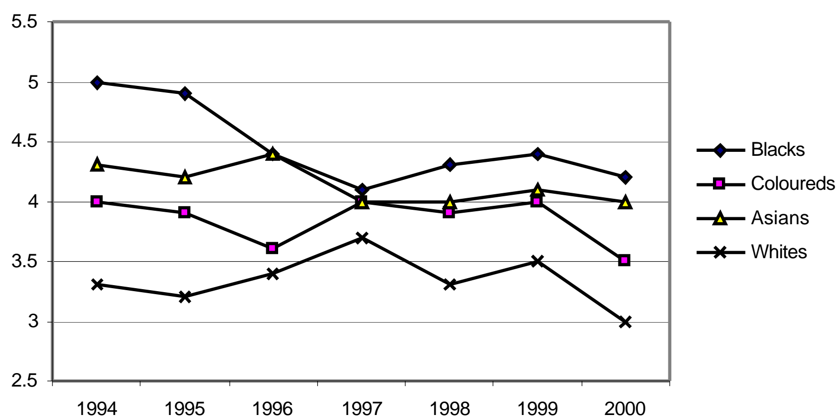


Figure 3.1c: Dissatisfaction with work



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Figure 3.1d: Dissatisfaction with educational opportunities

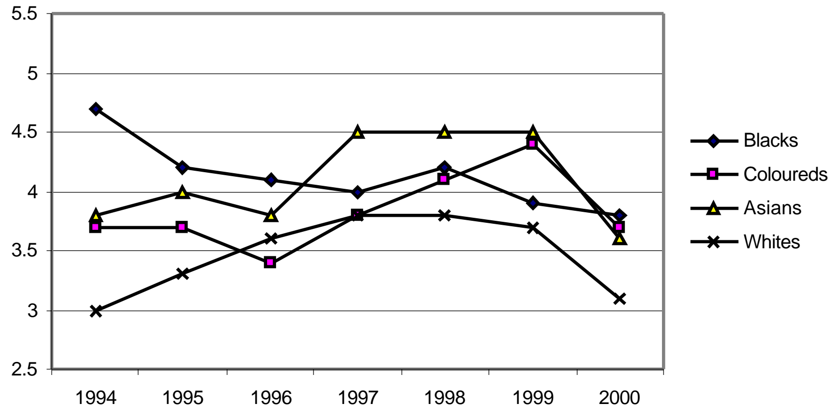


Figure 3.1e: Dissatisfaction with standard of living

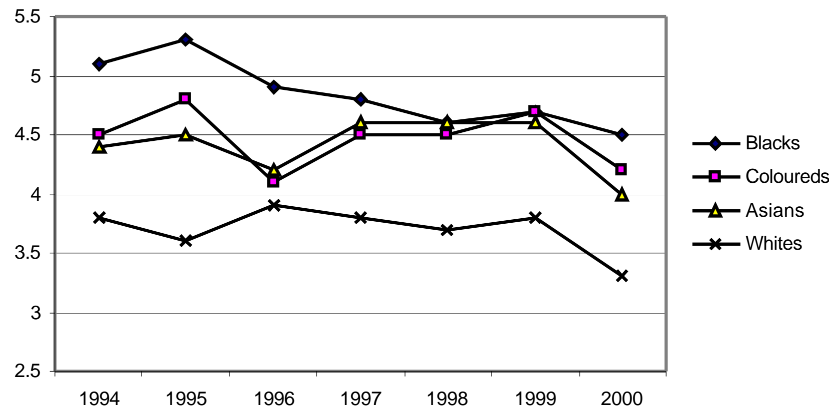


Figure 3.1f: Dissatisfaction with health care

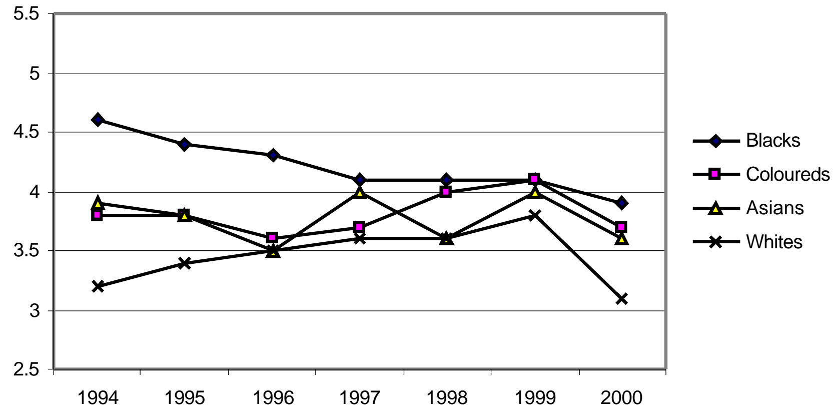
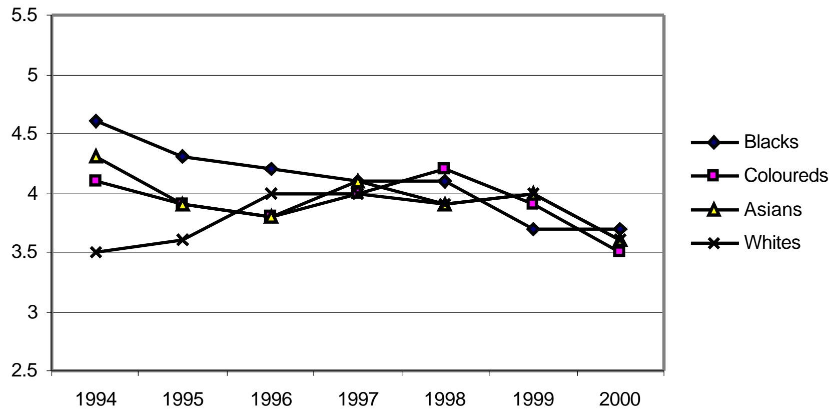


Figure 3.1g: Dissatisfaction with human rights



On the whole, the answers reveal a similar pattern for the various aspects we investigated. Among black South Africans dissatisfaction declined, and among Coloureds, Asians and Whites dissatisfaction at first increased or fluctuated and then declined. As a result of these trends the differences in satisfaction and dissatisfaction between the four racial groups were

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

reduced while the South African population as a whole was apparently more satisfied in 2000 than seven years before in respect of each of the seven aspects we included in our research. The latter observation holds for all four population categories separately, with two exceptions. First, white South Africans were in 2000 more dissatisfied with education and human rights than in 1994. Second, although work and living standard were the two aspects of life people were the least satisfied with throughout the whole period, Whites were least satisfied with living standard and human rights. Note, however, that in comparison with the other population groups they were the least aggrieved on all but one dimension. Only in the case of human rights were they at the same level as the other groups. However, altogether Whites were always at the positive end of the scale. Despite the overall similarity of patterns that emerged among the four population groups, it is worthwhile to discuss the separate aspects of our grievance measure.

Dissatisfaction with the conditions in the neighbourhood declined moderately among the black and the coloured population. Among the Asians the level of dissatisfaction fluctuated but ended in 2000 at the same level as in 1994. The white population initially revealed an increasing level of dissatisfaction, but ended in 2000 somewhat more satisfied than in 1994. Neighbourhood safety was another questionnaire item. We asked respondents how safe they felt in the area where they lived. Not surprisingly, we picked up some of the same dynamics here than with the conditions in the neighbourhood, that is, some decline in dissatisfaction among the Blacks and the Coloureds, fluctuating levels of dissatisfaction among the Asians, and an increase in dissatisfaction first and then a decrease among the Whites. The most important finding with regard to the levels of dissatisfaction with neighbourhood conditions and safety is, however, that they changed so little over time. Whereas satisfaction with all other aspects of life improved between 1994 and 2000 at least .5 on our scale, satisfaction with these two dimensions only improved by .2 and .3. To be sure, both were at the midpoint of the scale, which means that on average people were “neither dissatisfied, nor satisfied” but, on the other hand, one would assume that most people would have preferred to live in a

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

neighbourhood they were satisfied with. On average, respondents felt that safety and other conditions in their neighbourhood had hardly improved, unlike what they felt about most other aspects of their life.

Dissatisfaction with one's job or with chances to get a job declined sharply among the Blacks between 1994 and 1997, after which there was a slight increase. Obviously, this finding was related to the working of affirmative action programmes. The finding apparently reflects hope that the programmes were going to make a difference, followed by disappointment that their impact had not been stronger. The finding for the Whites seems to confirm this interpretation as they express fear at first and relief later. Educational opportunities in the community appeared to have been a matter of much concern for coloured, Asian and white South Africans. Especially between 1996 and 1999 dissatisfaction grew dramatically among the Coloureds and the Asians. A similar growth in dissatisfaction had already taken place between 1994 and 1997 among the Whites. However, between 1999 and 2000 much of this concern seems to have dwindled. As a result levels of satisfaction were almost the same among the Blacks, Coloureds and Asians, although much lower among the Whites. Dissatisfaction about living standard revealed increasingly smaller differences between the non-white population groups, whereas the gap between those three groups on the one side and the white population on the other side remained fairly stable. Interestingly, between 1994 and 1995 dissatisfaction among the non-white population increased, whereas it decreased among the Whites. In view of the actual changes in living standard as described in Chapter 2, we interpret this predominantly as a psychological phenomenon. Apparently, the transition to democracy made all population groups more aware of their position in the South African society, which made the Whites more and the others less satisfied. Then, from 1995 onwards, black South Africans perceived an improvement in their situation. Initially, the Coloureds and the Asians both felt more satisfied than the Blacks but between 1996 and 1999 dissatisfaction with their living standard increased again. During those years we observed the opposite tendency among the white population. Between 1999 and 2000 all four groups experienced an improvement. As far as the health care available to

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

people was concerned the three non-white population groups seemed to have converged to a common assessment. Among the Whites a decrease in satisfaction between 1994 and 1999 was eventually followed by an increase between 1999 and 2000, resulting in a slightly higher level of satisfaction in 2000 than in 1994. Finally, human rights were in 2000 no longer a feature distinguishing between the four population groups. On average South Africans seem to have been satisfied with the recognition of their human rights.

In addition to these specific questions we included a more general question in our survey, namely "How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your general personal situation?" We took the answer to this question as a summary statement on satisfaction and dissatisfaction by the respondents. At two other points in the questionnaire we asked the same question with regard to the situation of the group people identify with (see Chapter 4) and the overall South African situation. Figures 3.2a-3.2c presents the results with regard to the questions on these situations.

Figure 3.2a: Dissatisfaction with personal situation

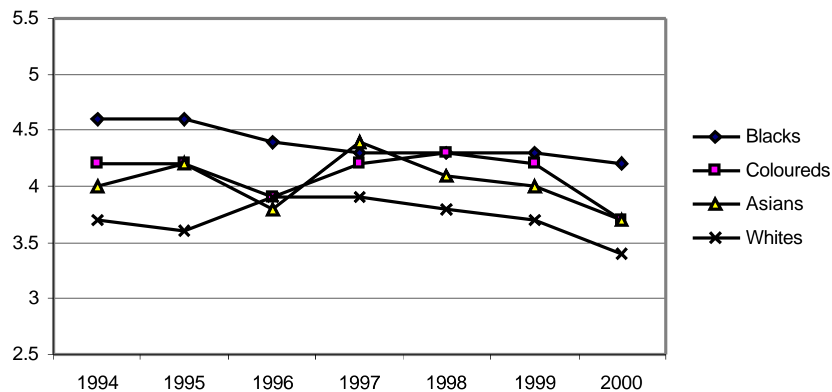


Figure 3.2b: Dissatisfaction with group situation

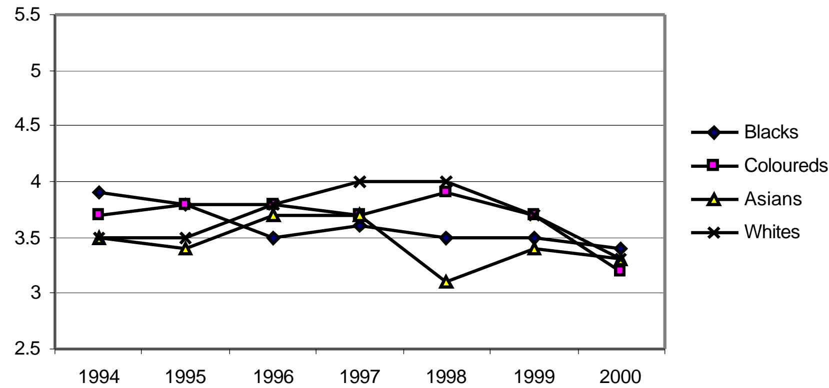
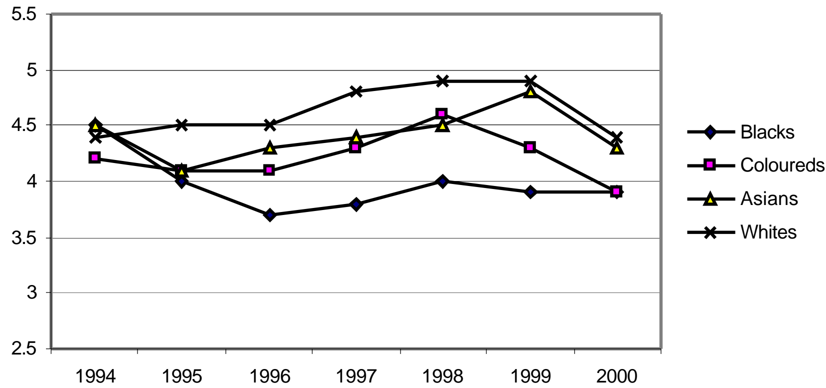


Figure 3.2c: Dissatisfaction with people in South Africa



The graphs reveal important differences between the three situations. Among the black population dissatisfaction declined for all three situations. Interestingly, though, among the Blacks dissatisfaction with the personal situation was significantly higher than dissatisfaction with the group or national situation, and over the years the differences grew. Thus, as far as their personal situation was concerned the black population was dissatisfied and remained dissatisfied. As for their group and South Africans in

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

general, however, they felt that the situation had improved. The situation of their group was already rated more favourably in 1994 to begin with, although dissatisfaction with their group's situation declined more rapidly than dissatisfaction with their personal situation. As for the national level, Blacks were significantly more satisfied with the situation of South Africans in general within two years' time. From 1996 onwards, dissatisfaction increased again though it ended substantially below the level of 1994. The Whites initially reflected the reverse pattern, that is, relatively low levels of dissatisfaction with their personal situation and relatively high levels of dissatisfaction with the situation of their group and South Africans in general. Indeed, their dissatisfaction with the group's situation and that of South Africans in general reached significantly higher levels than those of any of the other population groups. "Personally I am doing fine" they seem to have reasoned, "but my larger community is in trouble". Black South Africans seem to have reasoned just the other way around, that is, "Personally I am still in trouble but my larger community is doing fine." The rating of the situation of South Africans in general makes one wonder which South Africans each group was talking about. We will return to this issue in the discussion. The Coloureds and the Asians occupied an intermittent position most of the time. Initially they displayed a similar decline in dissatisfaction as the Blacks, but after one or two years they began to show an increase in dissatisfaction for all three situations. As a consequence, they revealed higher levels of dissatisfaction than the Blacks at several points. At the personal level they were more akin to the black population, whereas they were more akin to the white population at the group and national level. The net result of these changes was that at some points in time they revealed high levels of dissatisfaction for each of the three situations. Between 1999 and 2000 dissatisfaction declined considerably among all three non-white groups.

We combined the responses with regard to personal situation into a grievance scale. On this scale a score of 1 meant "extremely satisfied" and a score of 7 "extremely dissatisfied". Over the years the scores on the grievance scale developed in a way very much similar to that of the feelings of dissatisfaction with personal situation in general. The differences

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

between the four racial groups became smaller, especially between the Blacks, Coloureds and Asians, but also between these three groups and the Whites. In the following section we will use the grievance scale in the analyses of satisfaction and dissatisfaction at the personal level, and the two single questions in the analyses of satisfaction and dissatisfaction at the group or national level.

Why did people feel aggrieved?

Attempts to answer the question of why people feel aggrieved usually begin by relating grievances to objective circumstances. In fact, the comparisons we made between the four racial groups were examples of such relations. Indeed, as these comparisons show, race—the main criterion for the allocation of wealth during the apartheid era—was related to differences in satisfaction. However, as was evidenced in the previous chapter, ascribed position such as race was no longer the only criterion for wealth; achieved position became a significant criterion. What does this mean for the formation of grievances? This is the question we will try to answer first in this section. Basically, this will be a test of the hypothesis that objective conditions determine grievance formation.

In order to test this hypothesis we ran a series of analyses to investigate to what extent objective characteristics other than race were linked to feelings of dissatisfaction.[1] Table 3.1 summarises the results with regard to dissatisfaction with the three situations (personal, group and national) for the successive years.

---

[1] We conducted stepwise hierarchical regression analyses (OLS) with the three measures of dissatisfaction (personal situation, group situation and situation of South Africans in general) as the dependent variables, and with race in the first step and the remaining objective characteristics in the second step as the independent variables. The tables summarise the various analyses.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Table 3.1: Dissatisfaction and objective conditions: R-squares

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Dissatisfaction with personal situation							
Model 1	.17	.15	.05	.02	.03	.01	.06
2	.18	.17	.07	.07	.07	.03	.12
Dissatisfaction of situation of group people identify with							
Model 1	.01	.01	.01	.01	.02	.00	.00
2	.03	.03	.02	.04	.04	.01	.04
Dissatisfaction of situation of South Africans in general							
Model 1	.00	.03	.07	.10	.07	.07	.01
2	.04	.04	.07	.11	.09	.08	.03

Note: Model 1: race; Model 2: race, living standard, age, education, gender, centre-periphery, unemployed

The figures in the table indicate how much of an impact a group of factors had on each of the three measures of dissatisfaction. A score of zero meant no effect; a score of one meant that dissatisfaction was completely determined by the group of variables included in the analyses. Model 1 dealt with race alone, indicating to what extent dissatisfaction could be explained by the racial group someone belonged to. Model 2 added the following characteristics to the analysis: living standard, age, gender, level of education, living in the centre or the periphery, and being employed or unemployed. The differences between the results for Model 1 and Model 2 indicate to what extent these characteristics added to the explanation of dissatisfaction.

The results for race alone (Model 1) for the three measures of dissatisfaction reveal that for dissatisfaction with the personal situation the impact of race alone declined over the years. However, in the year 2000 it gained some significance again. For dissatisfaction with the group situation race was irrelevant. Only in 1998 did it reach some significance as determinant of dissatisfaction. For dissatisfaction with the situation of South Africans in general race was more relevant. Only in the very first and the very last year did race not matter, but in the years in between a

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

significant proportion of the variance was explained by race. This is, of course, what the analyses in the previous section told us. Indeed, Model 1 in Table 3.1 summarises the trends that are depicted in Figures 3.2a-3.2c.

To what extent did the objective characteristics included in Model 2 add to the explanation of dissatisfaction? The short answer to this question is: substantially in the case of dissatisfaction with the personal and group situation, but only marginally in the case of dissatisfaction with the national situation. This makes, of course, sense. One may expect individual characteristics to impact most on dissatisfaction at the personal level and least on dissatisfaction with the position of South Africans in general. In the case of dissatisfaction with the personal situation characteristics other than race gradually became more important. In 1994 they added only 1% to the variance explained. In 1995 they added 2%. Then the impact of race declined dramatically, but that of the other characteristics continued to grow and was at least as large as or larger than the impact of race. This was predominantly due to one single characteristic, namely living standard. The lower people's living standard the more dissatisfied they were with their personal situation. In fact, living standard became more important over the years.[2] Thus from 1994 onwards, the *direct* effect of race on people's sense of grievance decreased and the *indirect* effect via living standard became more significant. In other words, race seems to have been replaced by class. To be sure, class was closely linked to race, but when it came to satisfaction or dissatisfaction with outcome distribution, class seems to have become more important than racial categorisation. Grievances came to be determined by what people had and no longer by who they were.

Class, that is to say differences in living standard, played a similar role with regard to dissatisfaction with the situation of the group people identified with. People with a lower living standard were also more dissatisfied with the situation of the group they identified with than people with a high living standard. But in addition to class, living in the centre or

---

2 This is clearly demonstrated in the sequences of beta-coefficients over the years: -.00, -.09, -.16, -.19, -.22, -.19, -.26.

the periphery had a systematic impact as well, be it at a more modest level.[3] People who lived in the periphery were less satisfied with the situation of the group they identified with than people who lived in the centre. As the characteristics included in the analysis added only marginally to the variance explained in dissatisfaction with the national situation, it must not come as a surprise that there was little systematic influence by the individual factors. Living standard was the only factor that had a moderate impact. As far as objective conditions are concerned, dissatisfaction with the situation of South Africans in general was determined by race rather than by other objective characteristics of the individual.

In sum, objective conditions explained some variance in dissatisfaction. As far as dissatisfaction with the personal situation is concerned this influence gradually shifted from race to class. As for dissatisfaction with the group situation, race did not matter much from the very beginning. Living in the centre or the periphery and, increasingly, living standard were more important. Finally, dissatisfaction with the national situation was predominantly dependent on race, and only marginally on living standard. Yet, the proportion of the variance explained by these objective factors was not very impressive. If objective conditions were only of moderate influence, what else explained differences in dissatisfaction?

The role of comparison

Grievances are the result of a process of evaluation. Relative deprivation theory emphasises the importance of comparisons in the evaluation of one's situation (for overviews, see Hegtvedt & Markovsky, 1995; Tyler et al., 1997; Tyler & Smith, 1998). Stouffer et al. (1949) were the first to point out that people compare their situation with those of others and that the outcome of this comparison determines their evaluation. Other classic varieties of relative deprivation theory are those proposed by Davies (1962) and Gurr (1970), who concentrate on people's comparisons of

3 The beta-coefficients for living standard over the years are: -.01, -.06, -.15, -.20, -.21, -.10, -.23; and for centre-periphery location: -.15, -.10, -.02, -.05, -.07, -.04, -.08.

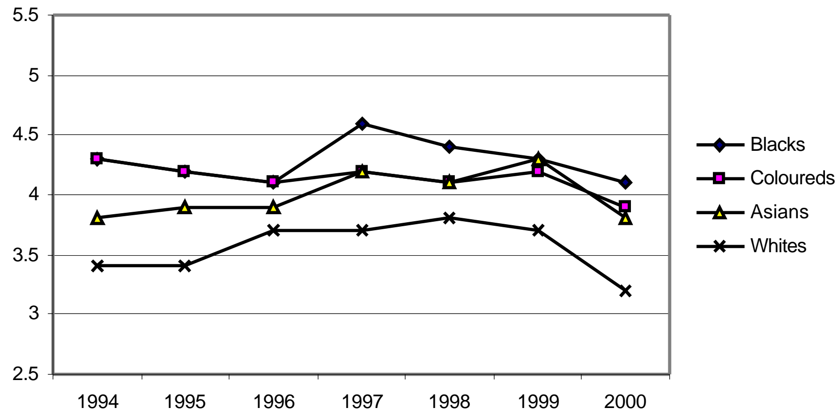
Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

themselves at different points in time. People compare their current situation with either their past situation or their expected future situation. Objectively, a group may be in a disadvantaged situation, but compared to the past its members may feel that the situation has improved. As a consequence, they may be satisfied. This will be the more so if they expect that the situation will continue to improve in the future. Indeed, both Davies and Gurr explain political protest by people's growing concern that the experienced improvements will *not* continue. Davies's famous J-curve hypothesis and the various types of relative deprivation Gurr distinguishes all relate to the concern that future outcomes will no longer meet expectations. If, then, grievances are the result of comparison, they are very much dependent on the choice of a standard of comparison. After all, the outcome of a comparison depends on the kind of comparison made.

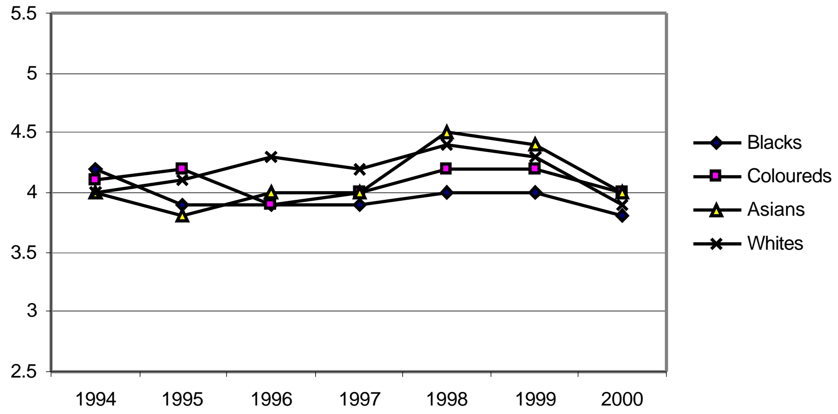
Thus, the next step in our analysis concerns the influence of comparison. Three types of comparison were included in our research: comparison with others, with the past and with the expected future situation. We asked our respondents how their current personal situation compared to that of other people in South Africa. We also asked them how they would rate their personal situation in comparison with about five years ago and what they thought their personal situation would be like in about five years' time, compared with what it was at the time. All questions were to be answered on a seven-point scale ranging from "very much better" (1) to "very much worse" (7). The same questions were also asked with regard to the situation of the group people identified with and with regard to people in South Africa in general. As we felt that there was no obvious group to compare with in the case of people in South Africa we asked for comparisons with the past and the future only. Figures 3.3a-3.3h displays the results for the various comparisons.

Figure 3.3a: Personal situation compared to others (1=better; 7=worse)



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Figure 3.3b: Personal situation compared to past (1=better; 7=worse)



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Figure 3.3c: Expectations for personal future (1=better; 7=worse)

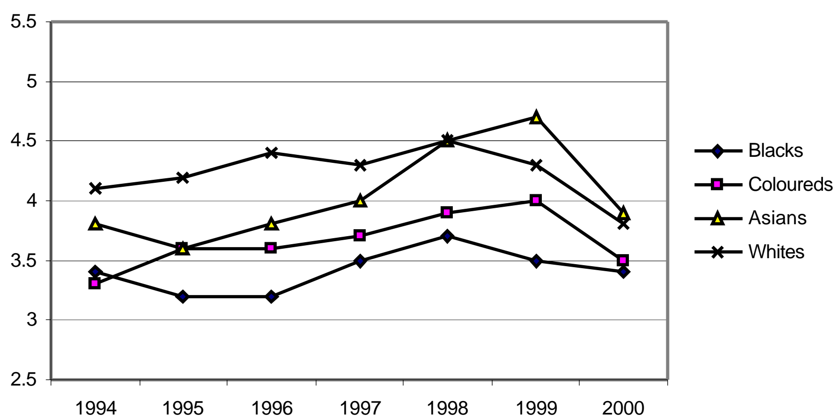


Figure 3.3d: Situation of the group compared to other groups (1=better; 7=worse)

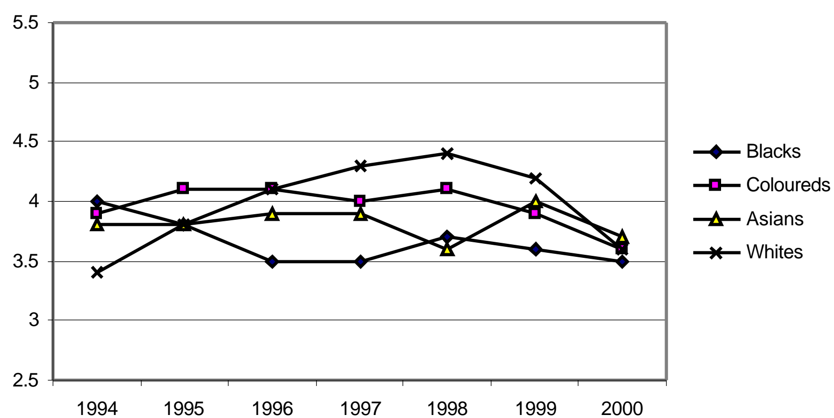
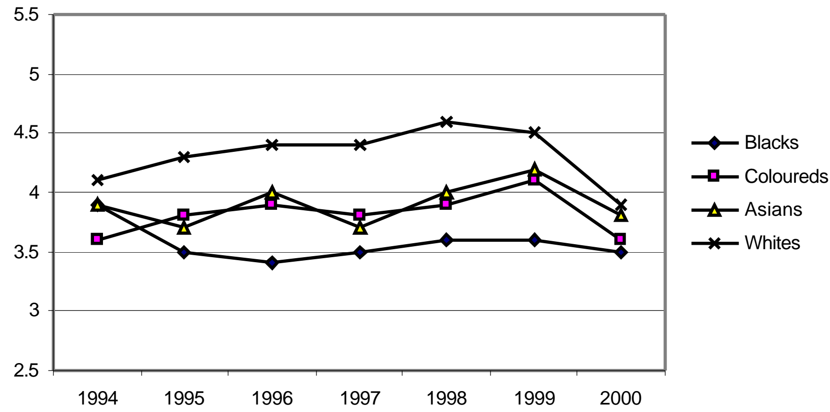
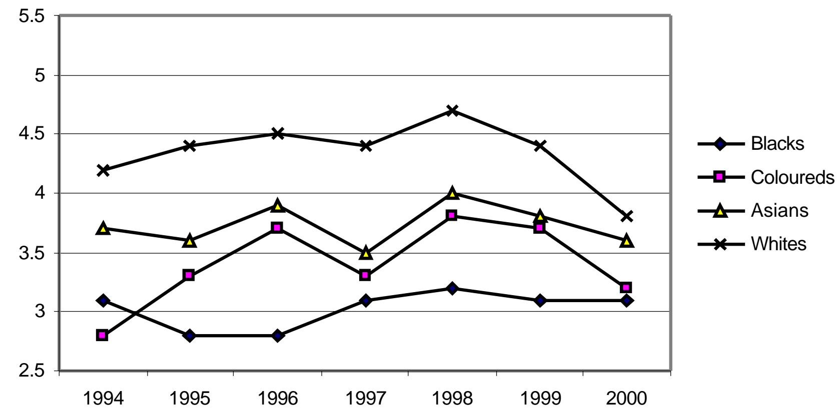


Figure 3.3e: Situation of the group compared to the past (1=better; 7=worse)



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Figure 3.3f: Future expectations of the group (1=better; 7=worse)



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Figure 3.3g: Situation of South Africans compared to past (1=better; 7=worse)

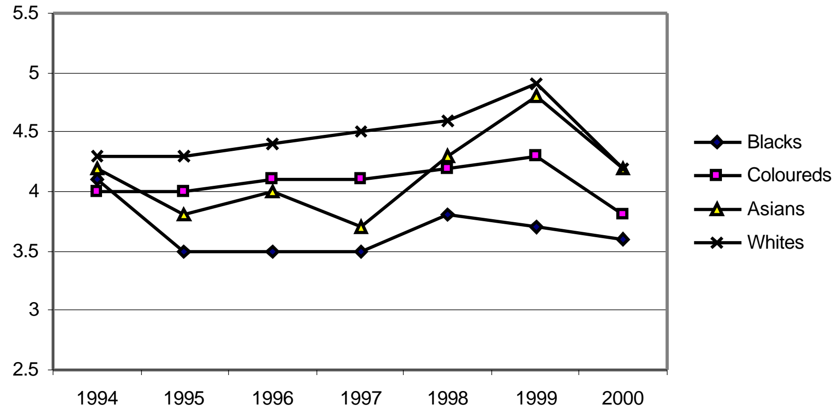
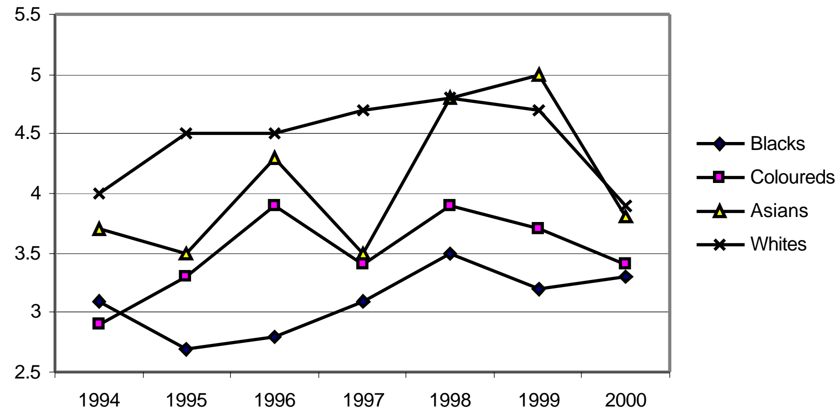


Figure 3.3h: Future expectations of South Africans (1=better; 7=worse)



When asked to compare their personal situation with that of others, Blacks, Coloureds and Asians on average felt that their situation was equal or slightly worse than that of others. Throughout the seven years their

responses clustered around or slightly above the midpoint of the scale. On the other hand, white South Africans on average felt that their situation was better than that of others. In 2000 they were even more of that opinion than in the years before. Against this background it should not come as a surprise that, when asked to compare their current situation with that of five years ago, the four groups believed that little had changed. For all seven years their responses stuck together around a mean of 4, indicating that their current situation was equal to that of five years ago. However, when asked about their expectations of the future a completely different picture emerged: optimism among the Blacks and the Coloureds and initially also among the Asians, and pessimism among the Whites. Note, however, that until 1998 all four groups became more pessimistic about the future, 1998 apparently being a turning point. From then on people either became more optimistic (the Blacks and the Whites) or their tendency towards pessimism leveled off (the Asians and the Coloureds). Between 1999 and 2000 all four groups became more optimistic.

At the group level we found a significantly different pattern. Between 1994 and 1996 black South Africans expressed the opinion that the situation of the group they felt close to was better than that of other groups in South Africa; in the years beyond 1996 they retained that view. White South Africans, on the other hand, arrived at exactly the opposite conclusion. Between 1994 and 1996 they developed the opinion that the group they felt close to was worse off than other groups in the country. This was in line with our earlier finding about grievances at the individual and the group level. Once again the Blacks seem to have reasoned that "Personally I am worse off than other people in South Africa, but the group I feel close to is better off than other groups in the country." The Whites seem to have espoused the opposite view, namely that "Personally I am better off than others, but my group is worse off." The Coloureds and the Asians, on their part, were hovering around the midpoint of the scale. In the last year of our study all three minority groups concluded that the situation of the group they felt close to was currently better than that of other groups. As a result the four population groups stuck closely together at the positive end of the scale. In a way, this was a paradoxical finding as all four groups felt that

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

their situation was better than that of other groups. This raises, of course, the question as to which group people were identifying with and which group they were comparing with. We will examine this issue later in this chapter. The two group comparisons over time confirmed the pattern at the personal level, but in a more pronounced way. Comparing the situation of their group with that of five years ago the Blacks came to feel that it had improved considerably and they continued to feel that way until 2000. The white population, on the contrary, felt that it had gotten worse over time. Only in 1998 did this trend begin to turn and in the year 2000 it ended slightly below the midpoint of the scale. The Coloureds and the Asians followed an almost identical trajectory. With the exception of the year 1999 they remained at the positive end of the scale, reflecting on average that the situation of the group they felt close to had improved since five years ago. In the last year, as was the case with the white population, they experienced a considerable improvement. Expectations of the future situation of the group people felt close to reveal even larger discrepancies between the four racial groups. Throughout the whole period black South Africans were very optimistic about the future of their group. Coloureds and Asians were optimistic as well, but to a lesser extent. White South Africans were the only ones who showed pessimism about the future situation of the group they identified with. The year 1998 again appeared to be a turning point. The Whites' concerns about the future began to melt away and in 2000 they showed a slightly optimistic outlook.

Finally, at the national level, comparisons with the past and the future generated pictures that were similar to those at the group level, though again more pronounced. The evaluations of the situation of South Africans by the four population groups differed widely, both when they compared South Africans' situation with that of five years ago and when they compared it with that of five years from then. Only in the last year the assessments were nearing each other, although significant differences between black and coloured South Africans, on the one hand, and white and Asian South Africans, on the other hand, continued to exist. The large gaps between the assessments of the four groups of the situation of South

Africans in general once again raise the question as to which South Africans they were having in mind.

We finished our previous section with the conclusion that objective conditions could only explain a modest proportion of the variance in grievances and we proposed that grievances resulted from a comparison of those conditions with that of others or with the past or future. We also proposed that optimism about the future would prevent people from feeling aggrieved about their current situation. *Indeed*, comparison with others, with the past and with the future generated considerable differences in assessment of personal situation, group situation and the situation of South Africans overall. We found significant differences between the four racial groups and significant changes over time. The results with regard to the comparisons discussed so far already suggest that social comparison is a complex process and that its outcomes cannot be predicted from objective differences solely. If the outcomes of those comparisons were to be determined completely by objective conditions such as race and class we would not expect the comparisons to add to the variation in grievances. However, we may safely assume that people who belonged to the same racial or class category made different comparisons and therefore arrived at different conclusions about their situation. The question we turn to now is to what extent insight in comparison processes promotes understanding of the formation of grievances.

Social comparison and the formation of grievances

A first and obvious question is whether comparison with others, the past and the future adds to the explanation of grievances. In order to answer this question we expanded the analyses reported in Table 3.1. In addition to the objective conditions reported on in that table, we included the outcomes of the comparisons with others, the past and the future. We did so for the three situations separately. Thus, for dissatisfaction with the personal situation we included the individual comparisons; for dissatisfaction with the group's situation we included the group comparison; and for dissatisfaction with the situation of South Africans we included the national comparison. Table 3.2 presents the results.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Table 3.2: Dissatisfaction and social comparison

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Dissatisfaction with personal situation							
Model 2: *R-squares*	.18	.17	.07	.07	.07	.03	.12
3: *R-squares*	.44	.40	.31	.42	.35	.29	33
- beta's: others	*.42*	*.34*	*.34*	*.47*	*.28*	*.32*	*.40*
past	*.18*	*.15*	*.14*	*.12*	*.22*	*.18*	*.09*
future	*.01*	*.13*	*.13*	*.18*	*.21*	*.21*	*.14*
Dissatisfaction of situation of group people identify with							
Model 2: *R-squares*	.03	.03	.02	.04	.04	.01	.04
3: *R-squares*	.28	.27	.34	.27	.36	.33	.37
- beta's: others	*.44*	*.40*	*.40*	*.45*	*.44*	*.47*	*.52*
past	*.11*	*.10*	*.18*	*.04*	*.11*	*.06*	*.05*
future	*.01*	*.11*	*.11*	*.07*	*.15*	*.15*	*.10*
Dissatisfaction of situation of South Africans in general							
Model 2: *R-squares*	.04	.04	.07	.11	.09	.08	.03
3: *R-squares*	.22	.18	.34	.39	.48	.44	.39
- beta's: past	*.44*	*.27*	*.38*	*.33*	*.34*	*.44*	*.31*
future	*.03*	*.19*	*.21*	*.31*	*.39*	*.28*	*.38*

Note: Model 2: race, living standard, age, education, gender, centre -periphery, unemployed. Model 3: all the previous variables plus comparisons with others, the past and the future.

Two findings catch the eye immediately: for each of the three forms of dissatisfaction social comparison added considerably to the variance explained, and for both personal and group situation it was predominantly the comparisons with others that influenced the level of dissatisfaction. In the analyses regarding personal and group situation the outcomes of comparisons added between 21% and 35% to the variance explained. In the case of the national situation these percentages were 14% and 39%. In the case of the personal situation objective conditions continued to have an independent influence. Irrespective of subjective evaluations people felt personally aggrieved if they were objectively worse off (for instance, when a member of a historically disadvantaged group had a low living standard). These grievances, however, intensified or eased depending on

the outcome of comparison. They intensified when, in addition to being disadvantaged, people felt that they were worse off than others and when they felt that they were worse off compared to the past and/or expected a bleak future. They eased when people felt that their situation was better than that of others, or had improved over the previous five years, or if they expected a better future. In the case of the group and national situations comparisons had a greater impact than objective conditions. Irrespective of their own objective circumstances, when people felt that their group or South Africans overall were doing worse or if they feared for the future, they were aggrieved. If, on the other hand, they felt that both the group and South Africans were doing better and they expected a bright future, they were not aggrieved. If the group and national situations were indeed dependent on subjective evaluations rather than objective personal conditions this would have important political implications. We will return to this issue in the discussion.

Comparison with others played an important role in grievances about the personal and group situation. Grievances about the group situation in particular were heavily influenced by interpersonal comparison. This confirms social comparison literature, which argues that interpersonal comparison, that is, comparison with relevant others—if such comparison is possible—has more impact on people's assessment of their situation than intrapersonal comparison, that is, comparison with the past or the future (Hegtvedt & Markovsky, 1995). The latter two comparisons appeared to be about equally important in all three forms of dissatisfaction dealt with in our study. In the absence of a form of interpersonal comparison for the people of South Africa as a whole the observed betas for the two other comparisons were, of course, larger than those for grievances about the personal and group situation, but the contribution of comparisons to past and future were equally strong there as well. Note the almost non-existent influence of future expectations in 1994 for each form of dissatisfaction. We conducted our interviews in 1994 in the month before the first democratic election in South Africa. This period was burdened with so much uncertainty about the future (Roefs, Klandermans & Olivier, 1998) that no correlation was found between expectations for the future and grievances.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Once the transition to the new dispensation had taken place and the political situation had consolidated more solid expectations for the future were formed and began to influence people's assessment of their situation.

In sum, grievance formation was more dependent on subjective evaluation than on objective conditions. Feeling disadvantaged was more important than being disadvantaged. To be sure, race and class did influence the extent to which people felt aggrieved, but far more important was the extent to which they felt better or worse off than others or than in the past and/or to what extent they expected to do better or worse in the future. This held for the personal situation, the group situation and the national situation. This raises two questions: (1) With whom did respondents compare their personal situation and the situation of the group they identified with? (2) What determined respondents' expectations of the future?

With whom did people compare?

From 1997 onwards we began to ask our respondents with reference to the questions regarding comparison with others and with other groups to describe "those others" in a few words. Initial coding reduced their answers to some one hundred categories. As these were still far too many to work with we further reduced them to the seven categories as presented in Table 3.3.

The figures in the table reflect the proportions of the respondents who at a given point in time made comparisons in terms of ethnicity, gender, age, class, religion, neighbours and friends, or socio-political values people adhere to. There was also a small group of respondents who said that they did not make comparisons with others. Table 3.3 provides the answers given for both the individual and the group comparisons.

Apparently, individual comparisons were predominantly made in terms of class, ethnicity, or neighbors and friends—in that order. Religion and gender were irrelevant at the individual level; age, on the other hand, gained importance over the years. A small proportion of the respondents made comparisons in terms of socio-political values. The most interesting finding, however, is the declining significance of ethnicity over the years and the increasing significance of class. Whereas in 1997 more than one-

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

third of South Africans applied comparison along ethnic lines to assess their personal situation, this proportion was down to less than one-tenth in 2000. In the same period the proportion of South Africans who employed class for comparisons increased from two-fifths to three-fifths. The third most prevalent standard of comparison was neighbours and friends, predominantly used at the individual level and much less to assess the situation of the group. This makes sense, given that neighbours and friends are typically relevant as standards of comparison at the personal level.

Table 3.3: Comparison to others (%)

	1997	1998	1999	2000
Individual comparison				
Ethnicity	35.3	36.3	16.8	9.5
Class	39.2	36.4	60.5	56.6
Gender	.5	.3	.5	1.1
Age	1.4	1.7	3.0	5.1
Religion	.5	.5	.5	.4
Neighbourhood/friends	11.7	17.5	12.2	17.0
Socio-political values	3.7	1.7	2.5	3.2
Does not compare	7.7	5.7	4.0	7.1
Group comparison				
Ethnicity	54.7	56.1	35.4	28.4
Class	23.6	17.1	34.7	27.2
Gender	.5	1.2	1.3	5.4
Age	1.3	3.1	4.7	7.6
Religion	3.8	6.2	7.5	13.3
Neighbourhood/friends	5.2	4.6	5.6	6.4
Socio-political values	4.9	7.5	7.7	6.7
Does not compare	6.2	4.1	3.1	4.9

For group comparisons ethnicity appeared to be the most important dimension and although its significance declined to almost half of what it was in 1997 it kept its leading position as comparison dimension. Yet, if the trend continues it will soon be taken over by class, which gained significance over the years. However, unlike the situation with individual comparison, the reduced significance of ethnicity was not completely

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

traded off against an increase in significance of class in respect of group comparison. In group comparison gender, age and religion gained significance over the period 1997-2000 as well. This is interesting, because it suggests that in the future inequality will not only be framed in terms of ethnicity and class, but also in terms of gender, age and religion. We will return to this issue in the discussion.

In the case of *individual* comparison class was more important and ethnicity less important among all four racial groups; however, among the Blacks this pattern was far more pronounced than among the other racial groups. Among the Blacks ethnicity became almost irrelevant as dimension of comparison at the individual level (40% in 1997, declining to 7% in 2000). At the same time class became much more important (40% in 1997, rising to 60% in 2000). The same pattern emerged among the Coloureds, Asians and Whites, but less pronounced (28% and 14% for ethnicity and 40% and 52% for class among the Coloureds; 35% and 24% for ethnicity and 32% and 44% for class among the Asians; and 21% and 17% for ethnicity and 35% and 48% for class among the Whites). In the case of *group* comparison among the Blacks and the Coloureds ethnicity declined and class increased in significance as dimension of comparison; class became even more important than ethnicity (29% versus 28% for the Blacks and 31% versus 23% for the Coloureds). At the same time, among the Blacks gender, age and religion acquired significance—increasing from almost zero for all three variables to 7% for gender, 8% for age and 11% for religion. Among the Coloureds gender and age remained irrelevant, but religion increased from 6% to 18%. Among the Asians and the Whites, on the contrary, ethnicity continued to be more important than class, because the significance of ethnicity declined less and that of class increased less than among the Blacks and the Coloureds, or even declined (among the Asians ethnicity dropped from 50% to 40% and class dropped from 16% to 12%; among the Whites ethnicity dropped from 50% to 37% and class increased from 16% to 20%). Among both groups religion became significantly more important: from 3% to 26% for the Asians and from 11% to 20% for the Whites.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

The net result of all these trends and turns was that in the year 2000 *individual* comparisons were predominantly made along class lines. That is to say, people compared themselves to somebody who ranked higher or lower, who had the same or a different job, who was unemployed or employed, or who was wealthier or poorer. This held for three-fifths of the Blacks, half of the Coloureds and the Whites, and two-fifths of the Asians. In that same year, one-fifth of the Asians and the Whites compared themselves to somebody from the same or a different ethnic background. Among the Coloureds this held for one-eighth and among the Blacks only for one-fifteenth. Finally, one-fifth of the Blacks, Coloureds and Asians, and one-tenth of the Whites compared their personal situation with that of their neighbours or friends. A more complicated picture emerged with regard to *group* comparisons. In 2000 class and ethnicity were more or less of equal importance for group comparisons, although Blacks and Coloureds more often made comparisons along class lines and Asians and Whites along ethnic lines. Age, gender and religion became more important too—religion among all four racial categories, and age and gender among the black population only.

Group identification and group comparison. In the case of group comparisons people were asked to describe the people they thought of mostly when they compared their group's situation with that of others. Obviously, this comparison had two components, namely the people they thought of and their group. The figures in Table 3.3 concern the people they thought of, but what about their group? Did the definition of their group make a difference in terms of the people with whom they compared their group? In other words, was the comparison dimension that people employed dependent on their group identification? In Chapter 4 we will elaborate on the question of group identification. For the moment it suffices to link the dimensions of comparison displayed in Table 3.3 to the answers to two questions that will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. We asked our respondents how close they felt to people with whom they shared an important social characteristic. For our present discussion it is relevant to consider how close the respondents felt to people from the same ethnic background, gender, age, religion or class.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

We also asked respondents to describe themselves in a few words. The answers to these questions were coded into various categories. For the moment those descriptions relating to class, ethnicity, gender and religion are important.[4] In Table 3.4 we grouped the respondents into those who did and who did not display a strong class, ethnic, gender, generational or religious identification. For each group we computed the proportion that used the same characteristic as a dimension of comparison. Obviously, people more often chose a dimension of comparison that was central to their social identity, although the correlation was certainly not perfect.

Table 3.4: Group identification and group comparison (%)

Comparison dimension:	Feels close to		Self-description	
	no	yes	no	yes
Class	28.5	35.7	29.5	36.3
Ethnicity	25.8	35.8	28.8	50.3
Gender	1.9	5.5	3.7	2.1
Generation	3.0	10.5	--	--
Religion	5.4	15.2	9.2	26.0

Except for gender where closeness and the self-description produced inconsistent results, these two indicators of social identity generated the same results. This confirms the well-documented finding in social identity literature (Brown, 2000) that social identity not only defines with whom you identify, but also with whom you compare your group.

Types of comparison. If people are employing class, ethnicity, gender, age or religion as dimension of comparison, what kind of comparison are they making? Do they compare themselves with somebody from the same category they are a member of themselves, or with somebody from a different category? Do they compare themselves with somebody who is ranking higher on that dimension or somebody who is ranking lower? We begin our discussion with *class*. As a proxy of class position we assigned our respondents on the basis of scores on our living standard measure to five groups ranging from low to high. First of all, it is interesting to note

4 Age did not show up as a category in the self-descriptions.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

that people were making fewer comparisons in terms of class if they were ranking themselves higher on our class index. However, if people were making comparisons in terms of class, what kind of comparisons were they making and did these depend on their own class? For individual and group comparisons we found similar patterns: people in a lower class compared themselves more often with people in a higher class (20% of respondents in the lower ranks versus 4% in the higher ranks compared themselves with somebody from a higher rank), and people in a higher class compared themselves more often with people in a lower class (15% of respondents in the higher ranks versus 4% in the lower ranks compared themselves with someone in a lower rank). People in the two highest classes compared themselves more often with immigrants (30% for individual comparisons and 20% for group comparisons) than people in the two lowest classes (5% and 10% respectively). People in a lower class compared themselves more often with other employed people (30% for individual comparisons and 24% for group comparisons) than people in a higher class (6% and 5%). Unemployed people compared themselves with employed people (75%) rather than with other unemployed people (25%). Approximately 10% of the people who employed class as standard of comparison compared themselves with people with the same job; a similar proportion compared themselves with people with a different job. Altogether this exercise suggests that the majority of the people who occupied the lower social ranks *and* made comparisons in terms of class were comparing themselves with somebody who ranked higher. The majority of the people in the highest two classes, on the other hand, compared themselves with people who were ranking lower. Note, however, that three-quarters of our respondents were in the lower three classes. This implies that most class comparisons were upward comparisons, that is, comparisons with an individual or a group that was better off. We will return to this matter when we discuss the link between the types of comparisons people make and grievance formation.

What if people made their comparisons along *ethnic* lines? Here we observed significant differences between individual and group comparisons. At the *individual* level the basic pattern was simple. The majority of

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

the Blacks who made ethnic comparisons compared themselves with Whites (61%). Of the Asians 43% compared themselves with Blacks. Equal proportions of the Coloureds compared their personal situation with that of Blacks (30%) or Whites (30%). Half of the Afrikaans-speaking whites compared their personal situation with that of other Whites, and one-third with that of Blacks. Two-thirds of the non-Afrikaans white population compared themselves with Blacks. At the *group* level approximately one-quarter of the Whites and the Asians who made ethnic comparisons compared themselves with Blacks, and one-quarter of the Blacks compared themselves with white South Africans. A quarter of the black population compared themselves with other black ethnic groups (such as Zulus, Xhosas, Sothos, Vendas, etc.). The Coloureds compared themselves with black (15%) or white (20%) South Africans. In the context of ethnic comparisons substantial proportions of all four racial groups employed immigrants as their reference group, especially at the group level. Immigrants did not feature prominently as a reference group in ethnic comparisons among the Blacks, but they did among the Whites, Asians and Coloureds. In class comparisons we saw the same group serving as a standard of comparison. In that context it was predominantly the people from higher classes who employed this standard of comparison. We will return to this issue in our section on comparison and grievance formation.

Younger and older people more frequently made comparisons in terms of age at the individual and the group level. Personal comparisons in terms of age were straightforward: people compared their personal situation with that of people of the same age (90%). Group comparisons in terms of age revealed a more varied pattern, but also fairly straightforward. Half of the respondents who made group comparisons in terms of age compared the situation of their age group with that of people of the same age. Those who compared with a different age group more often chose older people if they were young, and younger people if they were old.

Very few people made individual comparisons in terms of gender or religion, but increasing numbers made group comparisons in terms of those two characteristics. Females more often compared their group with

the opposite sex (63%); males made same-sex and opposite-sex comparisons in equal proportions (52% versus 48%). On the whole, people who made group comparisons in terms of religion indicated that they compared their group with another religious group (80-90%). A wide variety of comparison groups were mentioned. Muslims were the only group that referred to a specific group in significant numbers, namely to Christians (25%).

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Did types of comparison make a difference?

We have shown that comparison has a significant impact on feelings of dissatisfaction (Table 3.2), but what about different types of comparison? Did, for example, comparison in terms of class increase or decrease dissatisfaction and did it have a stronger impact than, for instance, comparison in terms of ethnicity? In a final step in our discussion of the role of comparison in grievance formation, we will try to shed light on this matter.

For both individual and group comparisons we conducted analyses to investigate whether independently of race and changes over time types of comparison made a difference in dissatisfaction.[5] These analyses reveal that for both individual and group comparisons the type of comparison people made did make a difference. In the following pages we will further elaborate on this conclusion. Table 3.5 presents the first bit of evidence. In this table we compare levels of dissatisfaction for different types of comparisons.

---

[5] We conducted analyses of variance with dissatisfaction at the individual and the group level as dependent variables, and with race, time and type of comparison as factors. For both individual and group comparisons we found significant effects for type of comparison independently of race and time ($F = 6.413$, $df = 7$, $p < .001$ for individual comparisons; and $F = 19.404$, $df = 7$, $p < .001$ for group comparisons). In addition we found significant three-way interactions for the three factors ($F = 1.788$, $df = 50$, $p < .01$ for individual comparisons; and $F = 1.885$, $df = 59$, $p < .001$ for group comparisons). For individual comparisons we found a significant two-way interaction with time ($F = 1.781$, $df = 21$, $p < .05$), and for group comparisons with race ($F = 2.444$, $df = 21$, $p < .01$).

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Table 3.5: Grievances and types of comparison (%)

	Individual grievances		Group grievances	
	Low	High	Low	High
Ethnicity	62.3	37.7	67.0	33.0
Gender	63.0	37.0	83.8	16.2
Age	73.0	27.0	82.3	17.7
Class	69.9	30.1	70.3	29.7
Religion	92.4	7.6	90.3	9.7
Neighborhood/friends	87.7	22.3	86.5	13.5
Socio-political values	85.6	24.4	85.5	14.5
Does not compare	88.0	22.0	78.9	21.1

Of the four types of comparison that were actually important at the individual level—ethnicity, class, age, and neighbours and friends—a comparison in terms of ethnicity produced the highest level of dissatisfaction. A comparison in terms of class and age generated somewhat lower levels of dissatisfaction and one in terms of neighbours and friends produced the lowest level of the four. Dissatisfaction with the situation of the group was higher among those who made racial and class comparisons. Gender, age and religion—the remaining three types of comparison that were relevant in the comparison of groups—produced much lower levels of dissatisfaction. Religious comparisons in particular generated very low levels of grievance. Ethnic and class comparisons were the most frequently applied types of comparison in the assessment of the situation of one's group.

Class and ethnic comparisons were responsible for 80% of the grievances at the individual and the group level, although their relative weights differed at the two levels: 60% of respondents with a high level of personal grievance made class comparisons, whereas 20% made ethnic comparisons; 42% of those with high levels of group grievances made ethnic comparisons, while 37% made class comparisons. The effect of class and ethnic comparison on grievance formation is understandable in view of the fact that in all four types of comparisons many of our respondents were in fact making *upward* comparisons, that is, comparing themselves with somebody ranking higher on the social ladder. Yet, the picture must be more complicated than that. Otherwise we would not be able to

explain why, for example, the white population displayed stronger group grievances than the black population, or why the black population had stronger personal than group grievances. We will close our discussion of the role of comparisons with results from an analysis that charts what kind of comparisons aggrieved people from each of the four racial groups were making. This will hopefully help us not only to understand better why grievance patterns diverge among the four populations groups, but also appreciate that people are dissatisfied for different reasons. Table 3.6 focuses on those respondents who were aggrieved personally or as members of their group. For each racial group, we explored what kinds of comparisons were made by those who were dissatisfied. We did so for individual and group grievances and for class and ethnic comparisons.

Table 3.6: Grievances and types of comparison by race (%)

	Blacks	Coloureds	Asians	Whites
Individual grievances: Class comparisons				
Lower with higher	25.4	36.3	17.1	19.8
Unemployed with employed	27.7	20.8	24.4	11.6
Same position	9.4	5.6	13.0	22.3
Other job	5.9	4.8	1.1	.5
Immigrants	10.0	20.7	36.9	15.4
Others	21.9	11.8	7.5	30.4
Individual grievances: Ethnic comparisons				
Whites	67.0	19.9	16.3	54.3
Blacks	21.6	57.1	65.3	43.9
Asians	.8	1.8	7.0	--
Coloureds	3.9	20.7	--	--
Immigrants	5.5	.5	5.3	--
Others	1.2	--	6.1	1.8
Group grievances: Class comparisons				
Lower with higher	27.8	48.3	38.1	15.7
Unemployed with employed	26.6	24.4	--	4.6
Same position	8.3	--	--	25.4
Other job	13.6	2.3	11.3	18.9
Immigrants	6.5	15.7	35.7	19.3
Others	17.2	9.3	14.9	15.1

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

	Blacks	Coloureds	Asians	Whites
Group grievances: Ethnic comparisons				
Whites	52.9	49.4	--	27.3
Blacks	26.3	17.0	37.8	32.4
Asians	2.6	--	9.1	--
Coloureds	2.3	6.5	2.5	.4
Immigrants	10.8	22.9	44.7	24.8
Others	5.1	4.2	5.9	15.1

The figures reflect important differences in grievance formation between the four groups with regard to both the individual grievances and the group grievances. As far as *individual* grievances are concerned, a quarter of the Blacks who were dissatisfied and who were making class comparisons compared themselves with people higher on the social ladder. Another quarter was unemployed and compared themselves with employed people. It should not come as a surprise that these two groups were dissatisfied. After all, they were typical examples of people who made upward comparisons, which comparisons led to dissatisfaction. The remaining three categories were more difficult to interpret in terms of the direction of the comparison. Some were comparing themselves with people in the same position, some with people in other jobs, and some with immigrants. One-fifth mentioned a miscellaneous set of characteristics—sometimes lower in rank, and sometimes difficult to define as higher or lower, for instance where students, housewives or pensioners were mentioned. The pattern among the Coloureds who were personally aggrieved and made class comparisons was akin to that of the Blacks. More than half of them—whether unemployed or not—assessed their personal situation by making a comparison with people ranking higher. Furthermore, one-fifth compared themselves with immigrants. Among the Asians who were dissatisfied 36.9% compared themselves with immigrants, and 41.5% compared themselves with others ranking higher. Among the Whites who were aggrieved the percentage of people making comparisons with people of a higher status was down to 31.4%. One-fifth of the Whites compared themselves with people in the same class. With regard to ethnicity the patterns of comparison were very different for the four racial groups. Of those Blacks

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

who were personally aggrieved and who made ethnic comparisons no less than two-thirds compared themselves with white South Africans. One-fifth compared themselves with black ethnic groups other than their own such as Zulus, Xhosa, Sothos, etc. On the other hand, not even one-fifth of the Coloureds and the Asians who were aggrieved made comparisons with the Whites. The vast majority of these two groups, if they were dissatisfied and made ethnic comparisons, compared themselves with black South Africans. One-fifth of the Coloureds who were dissatisfied compared themselves with other Coloureds. Half of the Whites who were personally aggrieved and who indicated that they made ethnic comparisons were comparing their personal situation with that of other Whites; and two-fifths with Blacks. Interestingly, immigrants were hardly mentioned as a reference group in ethnic comparisons at the individual level.

A different picture emerged when people assessed the situation of the *group* they identified with. In more than half of the cases, the Blacks, when making class comparisons, chose people of a higher social class to compare their group with; also, in more than half of the cases they took the Whites as their standard of comparison when making ethnic comparisons. The differences among the three other racial groups were greater, though. No less than three-quarters of the Coloureds who were dissatisfied compared their group with a higher social class when they made class comparisons; when they made ethnic comparisons 50% compared their group with the Whites. Only a relatively small proportion made group comparisons with the Blacks. Not a single Asian who was aggrieved and made ethnic comparisons compared his/her group with white South Africans, and only one-third compared it with black South Africans. Finally, among the Whites who were aggrieved fewer comparisons were made with both other Whites and Blacks. Similarly, fewer comparisons were made with people of a higher social class. The main difference for both ethnic and class comparisons as far as the minority groups (Coloureds, Asians and Whites) were concerned were the immigrants. Substantial proportions of each group referred to immigrants as standard of comparison both in terms of class and ethnicity. Unlike what one would expect, this comparison generated dissatisfaction, although the causal direction of the link

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

remained unclear. Remember that it was especially people from the higher social classes who made this comparison. This appeared to be true for each of the three minority groups.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Summing up

Social comparison appears to have played an important role in grievance formation. Our findings suggest that the type of comparison had a significant impact on whether people formed grievances. People tended to apply the same characteristic that defined their social identity as a dimension of comparison. Ethnic and class comparisons seem to have been responsible for most of the grievances we observed. This was especially the case when people made upward comparisons. Many of the class and ethnic comparisons made by our respondents were in fact upward comparisons. In addition, people who made upward comparisons were more often dissatisfied. However, not all respondents who were dissatisfied made upward comparisons. Quite a few people who were dissatisfied made so-called horizontal comparisons, that is, comparisons with people in the same position, class or ethnic group. Presumably, what frustrated these people was the fact that people in the same position were better off. This was, we may assume, also the reason why so many Coloureds, Asians and Whites who compared themselves with Blacks were aggrieved. The observation that people who occupied a lower status in society were doing better apparently aroused people's dissatisfaction. Comparisons with immigrants might generate grievances for the same reason.

Intrapersonal comparison and trust in government

Thus far, we have discussed interpersonal comparison, that is, the process by which an individual compares himself to another person or his group to another group. In view of the fact that of the three comparisons included in our research interpersonal comparison had the greatest impact on grievance formation, our consideration of this matter is certainly justified. Nevertheless, significant proportions of variance were explained also by intrapersonal comparisons, that is, comparisons with the past and the

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

future. Hence in the last section of this chapter we consider these two forms of intrapersonal comparison. Tyler and his colleagues (Tyler, Barnes & Kaase, 1997) argue that satisfaction and dissatisfaction in a society are not only determined by the actual distribution of wealth, but also by the quality of the procedures that have produced that distribution of wealth. Elsewhere (Klandermans, Roefs & Olivier, 2001) we have argued that comparisons over time, especially expectations of the future, are influenced by the trust people have in government. Obviously, governments play an important role in the distribution and redistribution of wealth in society. Trust in government is like a blank check, Barnes and Kaase (1979) write. It is the feeling that one's interests are attended to even if the authorities are inclined to little supervision and scrutiny. Such trustworthiness makes people optimistic about the future and it is such optimism that softens current grievances as we saw earlier in this chapter. A significant part of our study dealt with trust in the three levels of government (local, provincial and national). In Chapter 6 we will discuss the results with regard to trust in government in more detail. For now we will only explore to what extent the outcomes of intrapersonal comparison were influenced by trust in government. We asked our respondents how often they trusted the local, provincial and national government to do what was right for people like them. Table 3.7 groups the correlations of trust in national government with the outcomes of comparisons for the three levels of comparison we distinguished. We also computed correlations with trust in provincial and local government. The results of these analyses were, however, essentially the same. Hence, we restricted ourselves in this context to the correlations for national government, as these were the ones for which we had the full range of figures from 1994 until 2000 available. Indeed, one could say that these correlations stand for government as a whole.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Table 3.7: Trust in government and social comparison

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Dissatisfaction with personal situation							
Others	-.14	-.12	-.15	-.07	-.10	-.17	-.08
Past	-.11	-.16	-.28	-.18	-.22	-.23	-.17
Future	-.07	-.34	-.37	-.32	-.37	-.36	-.25
Dissatisfaction of situation of group people identify with							
Others	-.15	-.15	-.20	-.25	-.24	-.22	-.18
Past	-.11	-.18	-.26	-.21	-.29	-.16	-.20
Future	-.07	-.32	-.33	-.30	-.40	-.35	-.23
Dissatisfaction of situation of South Africans in general							
Past	-.12	-.22	-.25	-.27	-.36	-.28	-.31
Future	-.13	-.41	-.34	-.40	-.45	-.43	-.35

Except for the year 1994, which deviated from the later years, the correlations were remarkably stable over time, which suggests the robustness of the relationship.[6] On the whole, lack of trust in government coincided with less positive evaluations of one's situations, be it at the individual, the group or the national level. But important for our argument this held especially for expectations of the future at all three levels of evaluation. The more people trusted that government would do what was right for people like them the more optimistic they were about the future. This held for all four racial groups. Correlations between trust in government and the outcomes of comparisons with other South Africans or with the past were significantly weaker. Indeed, these outcomes mostly correlated with trust in government because they were related to expectations of the future. If we took that overlap out the correlations would have been reduced considerably.[7]

---

6 In the year 1994 we conducted our survey in the month before the election. That period was characterised by a high level of uncertainty about the future (see Roefs, Klandermans & Olivier, 1998). This is what we seem to have picked up here.

7 Partial correlations controlling for future expectations were reduced to values between -.02 and -.10, with the exception of those for the year 1994.

For obvious reasons the correlations were highest for expectations for the situation of South African people overall. National government is responsible for everybody's wealth, and therefore it was to be expected that optimism or pessimism about the future of South Africans in general correlated stronger with trust in government than optimism or pessimism about the future of one's group or one's personal fate.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Conclusion

We started this chapter with the question whether the enduring inequality in South Africa continued to generate grievances and how such grievances were framed. The answer to the first question seems to be in the affirmative. Inequality continued and so did grievances about the distribution of wealth in the country, although over the seven years of our study South Africans became on average *more* satisfied. Grievance levels declined among all four racial groups.

At the personal level grievances appeared to be more dependent of people's living standard and less on their racial background. At the group level race was never very important as an explanation of differences in dissatisfaction. Living standard and living in the centre or the periphery were far more important as determinants of dissatisfaction. The evaluation of the situation of the people of South Africa in general was still very much influenced by race as a factor. Hence, in the case of personal and group satisfaction class had become more important than race as a distinguishing characteristic between South Africans who were satisfied and South Africans who were dissatisfied. In short, being satisfied or dissatisfied with your personal share or that of your group in the distribution of wealth in South Africa seems to have been a matter of what you had rather than of who you were in the year 2000. To be sure, race and class were still very much overlapping in South Africa, although we demonstrated in the previous chapter that the link was loosening. Our analyses in *this* chapter revealed, however, that as far as grievance formation was concerned class had taken over the position of race. The exception to this rule was the evaluation of the situation of the people in South Africa. In that setting race continued to be more differentiating than class. Although

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

in the last year of our study the pattern seems to have changed, the four population groups tended to display significant differences in their assessment of the situation of South Africans overall. This raises the intriguing question of which South Africans the four population groups had in mind when they evaluated the situation of the people in South Africa. Our data suggest that each population group took its own people as its standard of evaluation. Against this background it is encouraging that in 2000 the differences between the four groups had shrunk. This could perhaps mean that, in the eyes of South Africans, the people of South Africa increasingly included all racial groups rather than predominantly their own. We will return to this question in our chapter on identity.

Feelings of satisfaction and dissatisfaction depended much more on processes of social comparison than on objective circumstances, both quantitatively in terms of the intensity of grievances and qualitatively in terms of the framing of grievances. Indeed, group grievances were almost completely determined by comparisons and not by the objective situation of the person who was making the comparison. It is interesting to speculate about the mechanisms that determined the outcomes of group comparisons. If it were not people's personal situation that determined their evaluation of the situation of their group, what determined their evaluation? Obviously, evidence available to them through communication played an important role. However, such evaluations were also the result of processes of social construction in which all kinds of information sources were used. Impressions, rumors, political communication as well as factual information may all have contributed to the outcome of group comparison.

Feelings of dissatisfaction were especially formed via comparison with others, from the observation that others were doing better than oneself or one's group. Such feelings may have been sharpened or softened by the observation that someone's situation had improved or worsened over the previous years, and the expectation that it would improve or worsen in the years to come. As for the latter, trust in government was apparently an important factor in the formation of optimism about one's future, both personally and as a member of a group. This conclusion has important

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

political implications, as it means that in fact a government policy that gains people's trust not only makes people more positive about government but also has a moderating influence on their grievances.

Interestingly, satisfaction and dissatisfaction differed depending on whether people were assessing their personal situation, the situation of the group they identified with, or the situation of the people of South Africa. This was found both in terms of the grievances people expressed and in the feelings of relative deprivation they displayed as a result of the social comparisons they were making. This was the most explicit in the case of white and black South Africans. On average, black South Africans seemed to say that their personal situation was deplorable, but that their group was doing fine, whereas white South Africans seemed to espouse the opposite opinion. Politically this finding has important implications. It suggests that among black South Africans some credit accumulated, which nurtured their hope for the future despite their dissatisfaction with their personal situation. Some day they will enjoy the improvements themselves. On the other hand, among the white population dissatisfaction with the situation of their group as a whole may have generated concerns about their own future. Sooner or later the situation of their worse off group members may hit them as well. It is therefore a good sign that the Whites became less dissatisfied with the situation of their group over the past few years.

Comparison with others, thus, played an important role in the formation of grievances. Over the years of our project significant changes took place in the way people framed their grievances. Race or ethnicity as a framing devise lost much of its appeal. When people assessed their personal situation they mostly used class-related characteristics as frame of reference. To a lesser extent they used ethnicity or neighbours and friends as a dimension of comparison. As most people who were making class or ethnic comparisons were making upward comparisons, it should not come as a surprise that 80% of the personal grievances could be accounted for by these two types of comparisons. Race or ethnicity also became less important as a dimension of comparison at the group level. This was partly traded off against class-oriented comparison, but gender, age and religion gained importance as dimensions of comparison as well. This suggests that

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

the framing of grievances became more diverse. No longer were grievances framed in terms of race alone, but in terms of class, gender, age and religion as well. Yet, ethnicity remained one of the two most important dimensions of comparison when people assessed the situation of their group. The four population groups derived dissatisfaction framed in ethnic terms from different comparisons: among Blacks it was derived from both comparisons with Whites and with different ethnic groups within the black community; among Coloureds comparisons with Blacks, Whites and immigrants generated grievances; comparison with Blacks and immigrants made Asians dissatisfied; and white South Africans formed grievances on the basis of comparisons with Whites, Blacks and immigrants. Note that not a single group compared itself with Coloureds or Asians.

The choice of a specific dimension of comparison appeared to be related to people's social identity. People tended to look for a comparison group along the very dimension that they perceived as central to their social identity. A strong ethnic identification made it more likely that people would choose another ethnic group to compare their group with. So did a strong class, gender, generational or religious identification. If the comparison led to a conclusion that the other group was doing better, grievances intensified in all likelihood if someone's group identification increased.

An unexpected finding is that many people who were dissatisfied referred to immigrants as a standard of comparison, either within an ethnic or within a class-related frame of reference. As a matter of fact, most immigrants in South Africa were illegal immigrants from surrounding countries. Moreover, this standard of comparison was especially employed by people in higher classes and the three minority populations. Obviously, these groups saw immigrants as a threat to their position, but xenophobia seems to have been at play as well (Olzak, 1992; Koopmans, 1996).

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Chapter 4

The formation of collective identity

Apartheid imposed racial identity upon South Africans. Whether they liked it or not they were Blacks, Coloureds, Asians or Whites. An elaborate legal system served not only to assign people to these categories, but also to define the rights and duties of each category—where one was allowed to live, whom one was allowed to marry, what kind of schools one was allowed to go to, what jobs one could take, and which buses, beaches and restaurants one was allowed to use.

Apartheid officially came to an end in 1994 and since then the idea of a "rainbow nation" has been promoted. South Africans are no longer just Blacks, Coloureds, Asians or Whites, but Zulus or Xhosas, Hindus or Muslims, English or Afrikaans speaking, male or female, lower class or upper class, living in Gauteng or the Eastern Cape, supporting political parties such as the ANC, IFP, DA or UDM, to mention only a few of those many social categories people are members of. Deracialisation made room for a whole variety of other categories as potential sources of identification, and the more people identified with others in those categories, the more they were prepared to act as members of that category.

In a country as heterogeneous as South Africa subgroup identification can easily lead to intergroup conflict, especially if these subgroups are treated differentially (Zegeye, Liebenberg & Houston, n.d.). In fear of intergroup hostility governments tend to foster superordinate national identities and to suppress the expression of subgroup identities. For instance, in Franco's Spain every sign of regional identification was severely suppressed (Johnston, 1991). In a similar vein, protest groups are easily blamed for being disloyal, unpatriotic and forsaking the superordinate national identity, as the fate of many protest movements on the African continent and the peace movements in the United States and Europe during the cold war showed. However, history has demonstrated time and again that suppression of subgroup identity reinforces identification

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

(Zegeye, Liebenberg & Houston, n.d.). For example, it has been argued that the formation of Afrikaner nationalism was, in fact, stimulated rather than discouraged by the policy of the British to suppress Afrikaner identity (Marx, 1998).

Contrary to common sense, we argue that subgroup identification and national identification are *not* mutually exclusive. In fact, we propose that it is healthy for a society if people combine a strong national identification with strong subgroup identifications. We draw on recent social psychological studies that suggest, on the one hand, that attempts to force people to forsake their subgroup identity in favour of a superordinate identity backfire and, on the other hand, demonstrate that the formation of superordinate identity prevents subgroup identity from becoming divisive (Huo, Smith, Tyler & Lind, 1996; Hornsey & Hogg, 2000; Gonzalez & Brown, 1999; Klandermans, Sabucedo & Rodriguez, 2000). Indeed, this literature suggests that the combination of super- and subordinate identity is the cement of society. Identification with such subgroups as class, gender, ethnic or religious community, neighbourhood or generation helps people to engage in meaningful bonds, while at the same time superordinate national identity prevents subgroup identity from being divisive. Within this frame of reference, we argue that protest, although it necessarily increases subgroup identification, does not automatically weaken a superordinate, national identity.

Identity formation in the new South Africa is the subject of this chapter. We will begin with a description of how subgroup identity developed during the first years of transition and pose the question: Will social identity in South Africa become more complex and diversified? Our next question concerns national identity. To what extent have the various population groups in South Africa developed a national identity? Then we get to the interface of subgroup and national identity: To what extent are the two identities mutually exclusive or is a combination of subgroup and national identity socio-politically healthy? In order to provide an answer to the latter question, we look into the impact of patterns of identification on two political variables, that is, people's attitudes toward government and their preparedness to take part in peaceful protest.

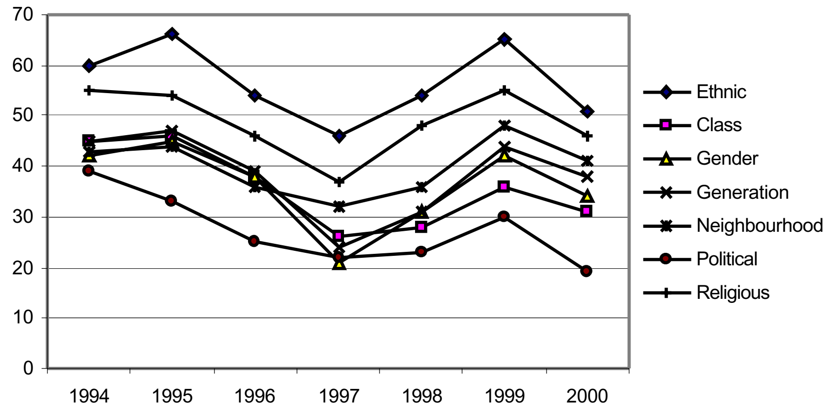
Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Subgroup identification

A first marker of subgroup identification is the language people use to describe themselves. From 1997 onwards we asked our respondents to describe themselves in a maximum of three words. An interesting indicator of changing patterns of identification was a change in the words people used. In 1997 almost half of the respondents (47%) described themselves in terms of racial categories. In 1998 this was down to a quarter (27%), in 1999 to less than one-fifth (17%) and in 2000 it was further down to less than one-eighth (12%). Gender- and class-related descriptions were declining as well, but to a lesser extent (gender from 38% to 16% and class from 23% to 15%). Descriptions related to someone's religion became somewhat more important (from 4% to 7%). However, the real growth was among a whole range of individual, personalised descriptions. Obviously, people's self-descriptions reflected a process of personalisation. The categories people used to describe themselves became more exclusive over the years.

For a more systematic analysis we turn to the answers to a set of questions about how close people felt to those in society they shared an identical place with. This question could be answered on a five-point scale ranging from "not close" to "extremely close". Nine categories were included in the questionnaire: people who spoke the same language, had the same ethnic background, had the same financial situation, had the same kind of job (or were also unemployed), were of the same gender, belonged to the same generation, lived in the same neighbourhood, had the same political affiliation, or had the same religion. Language and ethnic background, and financial situation and work were combined into single measures of ethnic and class identification respectively. People who chose the two highest scale points (very close or extremely close) were assumed to have identified with that category. Figure 4.1 depicts the results for these forms of identification over the seven-year period of our study.

Figure 4.1: Patterns of identification (%)



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

The development over time of the different forms of identification was remarkably similar. The levels of all seven forms of identification declined steadily until 1997, then they all increased in the run-up to the 1999 election and dropped again in 2000. Another interesting observation concerns the growing disparity between the various forms of identification. In 1994 the difference between the extremes was 20%; in 2000 it was 30%. In 1994 ethnic and religious identification stuck together at the high end of the scale, whereas all the others varied between 40% and 45%. Political identification was the first to decline and kept the lowest level all along. In 1997 identification with the neighbourhood diverged from the other identification categories to a higher level. In 1999 class identification dropped compared to gender and generation. Finally, in 2000 gender and generation moved somewhat away from each other. The result of all these changes was a greater variation in identification patterns.

Ethnic identification was high among the Blacks and the Whites and low among the Coloureds and the Asians. We did not find disproportionately high levels of ethnic identification among the larger black ethnic groups (Zulus, Xhosas and Tswanas). A further breakdown of the white populations revealed that it was predominantly the Afrikaner community that demonstrated high levels of ethnic identification. Non-religious

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

people, obviously, did not display much religious identity. Members of the various churches in South Africa did not differ in terms of religion, except for the Jewish population, who had a very strong religious identification. Union members showed stronger class identification than non-members, and people involved in political parties displayed stronger political identification than people who were not. People living in the centre (Gauteng or Western Cape) identified less with their neighbourhood than people living in the periphery. The younger age groups identified more with their generation than the older ones. Males and females did not differ in respect of gender identification.

Multiple identities

People identified with more than one category at the same time. Such multiple identities encompassed on average three categories, but over 40% of the respondents identified with four or more categories. On the other hand, 20% of the population identified with none of the categories they were presented with, whereas 25% identified with two categories or less. People who identified with only one or two categories were more likely to identify with their ethnic or religious group. One could say that people who identified with different social categories were more integrated in the fabric of society. One could also say that they had more complex social identities. Interestingly, the number of categories people identified with followed the same pattern as the individual categories: declining until 1997, increasing until 1999 and declining again in 2000. Multiple identities expanded and contracted in a cyclical fashion. Social psychological identity literature emphasises that identity is context dependent (Turner et al., 1994). Circumstances make some identities salient and people react to this by identifying strongly with the salient identities. We will get back to what the possible dynamics behind this cyclical patterns might be, but will look first at the differential complexity of multiple identities.

We explored to what extent age, wealth, education, racial category, or living in the centre or the periphery made a difference in regard to the number of categories people identify with. Wealth and education did not have an influence independent of race, but age and centre/periphery loca-

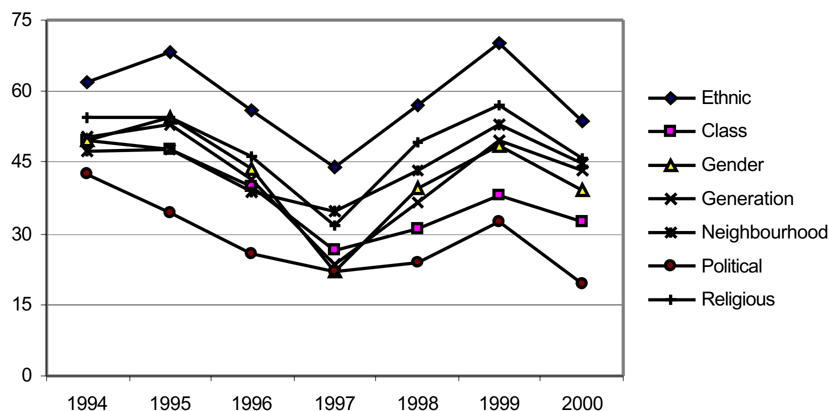
Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

tion did. Independent of race, older people tended to identify with more categories, and so did people living in the periphery. On average black people identified with the most categories (3.4) and the Asians with the least (1.7). The Coloureds and the Whites occupied an intermediate position (2.8 and 2.2 respectively). This suggests that older people, people living in the periphery and black and coloured South Africans were more integrated in society and had more complex social identities than younger people, people living in the centre or Asian and white people. This may in part reflect objective differences. Society in the centre *is* in all likelihood more individualistic than in the periphery, and older people presumably *do* have more social bonds than younger people. Furthermore, our results suggest that Asian and white South Africans were less integrated in society. This could signify that the Asian and white population groups felt less integrated in the new South Africa. In the next section and in the section on national identity we will see that this was indeed the case.

Identification patterns among the four population groups

A final step in the analyses for this section is a comparison of the identification patterns of the four racial groups. Figures 4.2a-4.2d present the results for the various social categories that were included in our questionnaires, by race.

Figure 4.2a: Patterns of identification, Blacks (%)



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Figure 4.2b: Patterns of identification, Coloureds (%)

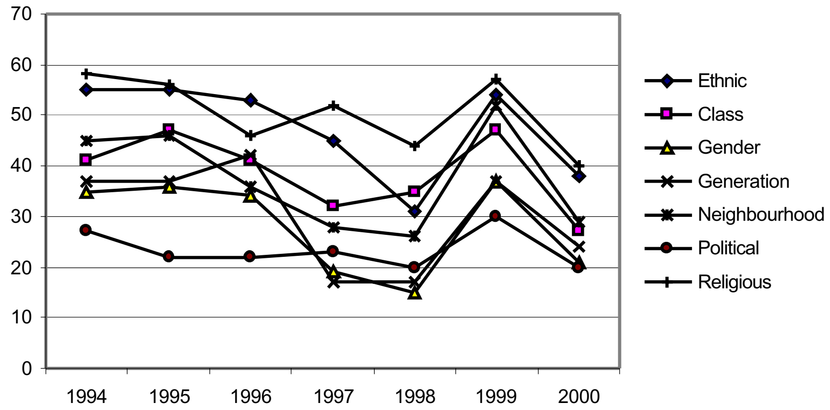


Figure 4.2c: Patterns of identification, Asians (%)

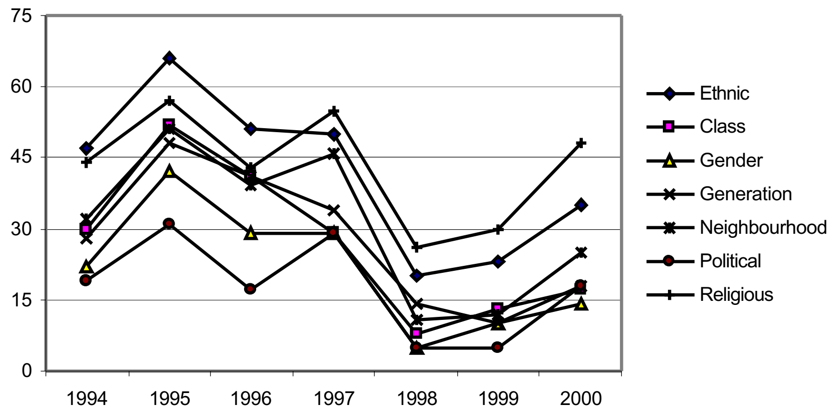
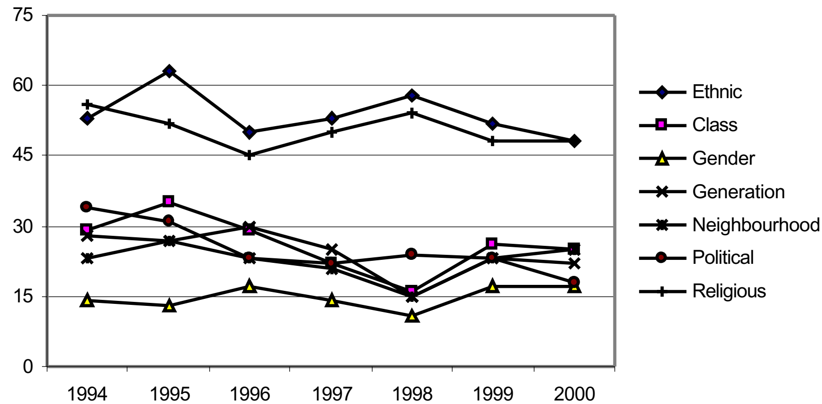


Figure 4.2d: Patterns of identification, Whites (%)



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Among the black population ethnic identity was by far the strongest all along. At a lower level we found gender, generation, religion and neighbourhood. Initially, class identification reached the same level as these categories but after 1997 class identification dropped to the same low level as political identification. Over time two different patterns showed up, namely that for political and class identity and that for ethnic, gender, religious, generational and neighbourhood identity. In respect of political and class identity there was a steady decline from 1994 onwards, a slight increase in line with the general movement between 1997 and 1999, and again a drop in 2000. This held especially for political identity. It seems paradoxical that precisely the two identities that were strongly related to the struggle against apartheid declined to the extent they did. This suggests a depolitisation of people's identity. We will get back to this issue in our discussion. In respect of ethnic, gender, religious, generational and neighbourhood identity there was a small increase in 1995 but a steep decline between 1995 and 1997. Between 1997 and 1999 there was an equally sharp increase, and again a decline in 2000. This was very much the pattern we observed among the population in general. We will return to these findings in our closing remarks in this section.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Among the Coloureds we found strong religious and ethnic identification. Yet, the latter was not as prominent among the Coloureds as among the Blacks. Indeed, among the Coloureds religious identification became stronger than ethnic identification from 1997 onwards. Interestingly, identification with class and with neighbourhood were strong among the Coloureds as well. Only in 2000 these two forms of identification dropped to a much lower level. Gender and generational identification were in the first few years close to class and neighbourhood identification, but dropped markedly in 1997 and remained at that low level. Looking into developments over time, we can distinguish three different patterns.

(1) Religious, class and political identification were relatively stable until 1998. They increased in 1999, but declined again in 2000.

(2) Ethnic and neighbourhood identification declined steadily until 1998, increased sharply in 1999 and dropped again in 2000.

(3) Gender and generational identification remained stable during the first three years, but in 1997 they showed a steep decline and although they increased in 1999 the decline in 2000 made them end at the same low level as political identification.

The net outcome of all these changes in 2000 was two clusters: religious and ethnic identification close together at a high level, and at a lower level—but also close together—the remaining five forms of identification.

We found only one pattern among the Asian population: an increase in the first year followed by a modest decrease in the next year. Some forms of identification recovered a bit in the following year but the others dropped dramatically. In 1998, all forms of identification declined substantially. Unlike the Blacks and the Coloureds the Asians did not display an increase in 1999. They did, however, reveal stronger identification with all seven categories in the year 2000. The two strongest forms of identification among the Asians were ethnicity and religion. Initially, ethnicity was stronger than religion, but from 1997 onwards the order was reversed. The two weakest forms of identification were political affiliation and gender. Eventually, gender and political identification among the Asians were the lowest of all four population groups. The others (genera-

tion, neighbourhood and class) initially occupied an intermediate position, but were at the same low level as gender and political identification from 1998 onwards, with the exception of identification with the neighbourhood. As a result, in 2000 we found religion to be the strongest form of identification among the Asians. Next in line ranked ethnicity, followed by identification with someone's neighbourhood, in turn followed by class, gender, generation and political affiliation, with each of the consecutive categories featuring at a much lower level than the previous one.

Among the Whites we found a pattern fundamentally different from those of the other population groups: fairly stable levels of identification and none of the cyclical patterns we witnessed for the other groups. In addition, we found two clear clusters among the white population throughout the whole seven-year period: high levels of ethnic and religious identification, and much lower levels of identification with all other social categories, and a very low level of gender identification. Indeed, over the years the differences within these two clusters became smaller.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Summing up

Although the apartheid state had been dismantled ethnicity remained the strongest form of identification for the population as a whole (hovering around 60%), followed by religious identification (around 50%). Political identity lost most of its appeal to people (dropped from 39% to 19%). Except for the Whites, political identity became the weakest form of identification. The remaining identities (gender, generation, neighbourhood and class) all fluctuated around 45%.

Subgroup identity in South Africa seems to have gone through an interesting process of change and fluctuation. People's self-descriptions seem to have moved away from the major social categories, namely race, class and gender, and were replaced by more personalised descriptions. At the same time at an aggregate level there was an increasing diversity in patterns of identification. At the individual level, most people appear to have reflected multiple identities, that is, they identified with more than one social group. Of the respondents 70% identified with two or more social categories and over 40% with four or more categories. Such multi-

ple identities seem to have expanded and contracted. Our data suggest that some groups were more integrated in the fabric of society than others: people who lived in the periphery, black or coloured people, and older people.

We observed significantly different patterns of identification between the four racial groups. The most interesting feature was the stability of the patterns of identification among the Whites as compared to the fluidity of the same patterns among the three other groups. In our view this reflected the fact that the Whites had a more stable and clear position in the South African society than the Blacks, Coloureds and Asians. The end of apartheid destabilised the position of the latter three. They had to redefine their identity. Typically, redefinition makes social identity even more context dependent. Changing circumstances are reflected in changing patterns of identification. This is what we found among the so-called historically disadvantaged groups. During the seven years of our research they showed dramatic changes. It is difficult to decide what exactly determined these dynamics. A possible explanation might be that after the change of government all kinds of bonds loosened. Apartheid made it clear who were the allies and who were the enemies, be it government or another race. The end of apartheid meant that these bonds lost part of their significance. This we observed in the decline of identification among Blacks, Coloureds and Asians. The elections of 1994 and 1999, however, brought realignment. All the categories gained significance again. Obviously, election campaigns framed appeals to all those different categories, which therefore became more salient than before. However, this appears to have been only a temporary effect. After the elections much of the effect faded again, although levels of identification in 2000 were higher than those in 1997.

National identity

From 1997 onwards we began to investigate national identity, initially with one question only. We asked people to what extent they agreed with the statement, "Being a South African is an important part of how I see myself." In 1998 we added another statement: "It makes me proud to be called a South African." In the year 2000, 42% and 44% of our respon-

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

dents "strongly agreed" with the two statements respectively (Table 4.1). This was the last figure in a row that suggested a trend towards a stronger national identity. Indeed, if we include those South Africans who displayed a moderate level of identification (those who "agreed" with the statements) one could say that a vast majority (over 80%) of the South African population identified with their country. As the two questions correlated strongly (Pearson's r = .75), we decided to use the first question only for further analysis, because we started to use that question one year earlier than the other one.

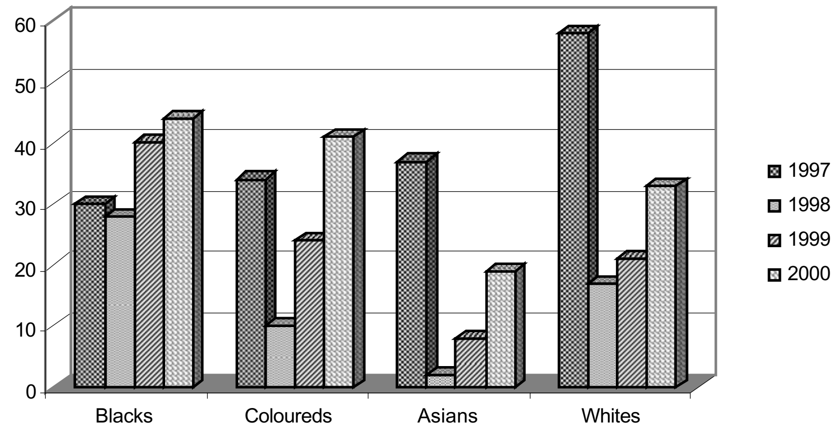
Table 4.1: National identity (%)

	1997	1998	1999	2000
Being a South African is an important part of how I see myself				
Do not agree	15	14	16	13
Agree	50	62	49	45
Strongly agree	35	24	35	42
It makes me proud to be called a South African				
Do not agree		14	14	10
Agree		61	47	46
Strongly agree		25	39	44

These apparently stable figures hide significant shifts in the strength of identification. The shifts become visible if we concentrate on the highest levels of identification and break the data down into the four racial categories (Figure 4.3). In 1997, 30% of the Blacks "strongly agreed" that being a South African was an important part of how they saw themselves. This increased steadily to 44% in 2000. Simultaneously there was a dramatic decrease among the Coloureds, Indians and Whites. In 1998, only 10% of the Coloureds, 2% of the Asians and 17% of the Whites revealed a strong national identity. After 1998 the figures improved again, among the Coloureds eventually to 41%, a level higher than that in 1997. However, among the Asians and Whites it did not reach the same strength as three years before. In 1997, 37% of the Asians displayed a strong national identity and in 2000 19%; for the Whites these figures were 58% and 33% respectively.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Figure 4.3: Strong national identity (%)



Initially, among the Whites national identification was weaker among the English-speaking population (48% in 1997) than among the Afrikaans-speaking population (63% in 1997), but this difference disappeared in 2000 when over 30% of both population groups identified with their country. Among the Blacks the Zulu population deviated from the overall pattern for the Blacks. National identification among them stayed at the same level (35% in 1997 and 36% in 2000). In that same period the percentage of the Sotho and Xhosa people displaying a strong national identity increased (28% to 51% for the Sotho; and 36% to 48% for the Xhosa).

Among the Indians and Whites females consistently exhibited a stronger national identity than males. No such differences were found among the Blacks and Coloureds. No differences in national identification were observed between generations and people with different levels of education. In 1997, national identification was weaker among South Africans from lower classes, but from 1998 onwards this turned into a curvi-linear relationship: lower levels of identification among people with a low living standard, higher levels among people in the middle of the

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

scale, and low levels of identification among those with the highest living standard.

Thus, South Africans displayed a strong national identity. In the year 2000 more than 40% of the population strongly agreed that being a South African was an important part of how they saw themselves and that they were proud to be called a South African. In that year, national identity was strongest among the black population, but considerable proportions of the other population categories had strong national identities as well. However, among the Coloureds, Asians and Whites this occurred after an initial dramatic drop in identification as observed in early 1998. These results reflect the political climate of those days. In the year 1997 frustration and disappointment culminated in many spheres of life (Chapter 3 of this publication; see also Muthien, Khosa & Magubane, 2000). The National Party stepped out of the Government of National Unity, and the government's transformation programmes (the RDP and GEAR) did not fare very well. Moreover, government was not very successful in delivering on its promises. As we reported in Chapters 3 and 6 it was especially the population groups other than the Blacks who were disappointed. The results with regard to national identity bear witness to this state of affairs.

National identity and subgroup identity

To what extent did national and subgroup identities exclude each other? Did subgroup identity undermine national identity or did the two actually reinforce each other? These are the questions we turn to now. In order to be able to answer them, we assigned our respondents to one of the following four groups: (1) people who had neither a strong subgroup identity nor a strong national identity; (2) people who had a strong subgroup identity but no strong national identity; (3) people who had no strong subgroup identity but had a strong national identity; and finally, (4) people who had both a strong subgroup identity *and* a strong national identity. Following the social psychological literature (Brown, 2000), we labelled the fourth category "dual identity". We assigned people to one of the two groups with a strong subgroup identity if they displayed a strong identifi-

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

cation with at least one of the seven categories included in our study. Table 4.2 reveals the proportion of our respondents who belonged to each of the four categories over the four years (1997-2000).

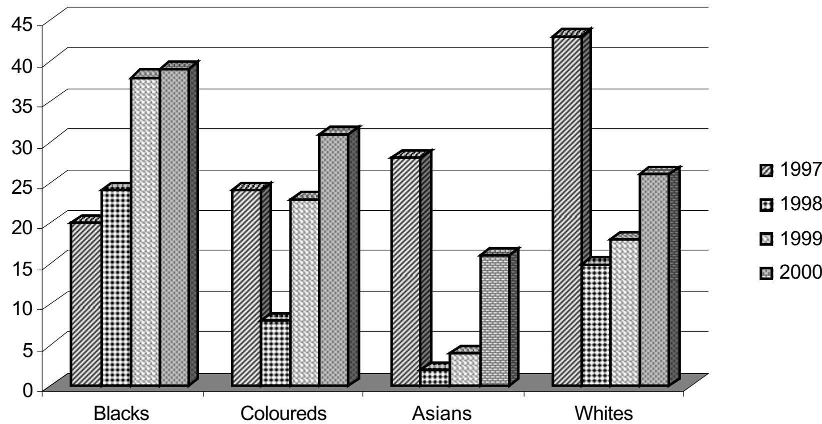
Table 4.2: National identity and subgroup identity (%)

Identity	1997	1998	1999	2000
No strong subgroup identity/no strong national identity	25	22	13	18
Strong subgroup identity/no strong national identity	39	55	51	40
No strong subgroup identity/strong national identity	11	3	3	6
Strong subgroup identity/strong national identity	25	21	33	36

We made a few interesting observations. First, national identity and subgroup identity did not exclude each other. In fact, we found a modest positive correlation between the two (± .20), suggesting that people who identified with a larger variety of groups were also more likely to identify with their nation. Second, the proportion of the population that displayed a dual identity increased over the years and the proportion of those with a subgroup identity only decreased. The two other groups increased as well, but this was after an initial decline. Third, very few people who did not identify with a subgroup displayed a strong national identification. This is especially interesting because it suggests that national identity *presupposed* subgroup identity, rather than that subgroup identity *undermined* national identity. This result confirmed findings by Klandermans and his Spanish colleagues (Klandermans, Sabucedo & Rodriguez, 2000) in a study of multiple identities among Dutch and Spanish farmers. In this study it was also found that identification at a higher level of inclusiveness presupposed identification at a lower level of inclusiveness.

The four South African population groups developed in a divergent way. In 1997, 20% of black South Africans had a "dual identity". This proportion increased gradually to 39% in 2000 (Figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4: National identity and subgroup identity (%)



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

The coloured population went from 24% in 1997 to 8% in 1998, but in 1999 dual identification was back to the level of 1997. In 2000 it increased further to 31%. The Asians and the Whites experi enced a similar decline in dual identification from 1997 to 1998 (28% to 2% for the Asians, and 43% to 15% for the Whites). Both groups recovered in 1999 and 2000, but did not reach the level of 1997 (4% in 1999 and 16% in 2000 for the Asians, and 18% in 1999 and 26% in 2000 for the Whites).

The occurrence of dual identity, obviously, differed among the four population groups. This can be due to a decline in both subgroup and national identity, as was the case for the Asians, or a decline of national identity as was the case for the Whites. It can also be the result of the combined effect of increases and decreases at different points in time, as was the case for the Blacks and the Coloureds.

Dual identity and politics

Is a dual identity healthy for a society? In order to answer this question we compared our four groups on two variables regarding people's relation to politics, namely trust in government and people's preparedness to take part in peaceful collective action. Both variables will be discussed in more

detail in the chapters to come, but for now they serve to test our assumption that a dual identity is politically healthy. "Politically healthy" in terms of these two variables means that dual identity comes with more trust in government and a greater readiness to take part in peaceful action.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Table 4.3: Dual identity and politics

Identity	Trust in government	Prepared to participate in peaceful action
No strong subgroup identity/no strong national identity	2.7	2.4
Strong subgroup identity/no strong national identity	2.7	2.6
No strong subgroup identity/strong national identity	2.8	2.6
Strong subgroup identity/strong national identity	3.2	2.8

The results in Table 4.3 confirm our expectations: Trust in government and action preparedness were the highest among those respondents who displayed a dual identity. Interestingly, the figures for trust in government show that only those with a dual identity were different; the remaining three identification groups did not differ in terms of trust. This suggests that at least as far as trust in government was concerned it was the *combination* of subgroup and national identity that made the difference. As for action preparedness, it was the people with no identification at all who differed from the people with either subgroup or national identification. That makes, of course, sense. One needs some level of collective identity to participate in collective action. However, again it is important to note that action preparedness was the highest among those with a dual identity.

Broken down by the four racial categories we found the same patterns among the Blacks, Coloureds and Asians. The Whites showed a different pattern. Among them trust in government and preparedness to take part in peaceful action were always low, lower than in any of the other population groups, no matter how subgroup and national identity combined. This suggests that for the Whites national identity was less of a political matter and more of a social or cultural matter. Indeed, among them we found a

stronger correlation between ethnic identity and national identity than among the other population groups (Whites = .23; Blacks = .16; Coloureds = .06; Asians = .06).

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Conclusion

In the first years of democratic government in South Africa social identity seems to have diversified. Among the Blacks, Coloureds and Asians diversification proceeded in a seemingly disorderly fashion. The social and political changes in these first years are reflected in dramatic fluctuations in patterns of identification among the historically disadvantaged groups in South Africa, but the social identity of the Whites remained remarkably stable. Despite the fluctuations ethnic identity remained strong in all four groups. Although a strong ethnic identity in an ethnically heterogeneous society may appear to be a potential danger, this is not necessarily the case. Indeed, we have suggested that a strong national identity in combination with strong subgroup identities is a better guarantee of peaceful and stable social and political relations than a strong national identity alone, especially if such strong national identity is enforced upon people by making them forsake their subgroup identities. Suppression of ethnic identity or any other subgroup identity in favour of a strong national identity is not a viable strategy for nation building. On the contrary, chances are high that such a repressive strategy will backfire and reinforce subgroup identity, in all likelihood at the expense of national identity because nobody will identify strongly with a nation that represses his/her subgroup identity. Thus, opposed to common sense or to what some politicians seem to believe, we have shown that subgroup identity and national identity do not necessarily exclude each other. Rather, they may become mutually exclusive in a context where subgroup identity is suppressed. Moreover, we found support for our assumption that dual identity is healthy in a socio-political sense. People who display a dual identity trust government more and are more prepared to take part in peaceful action.

Our findings corroborate debates in Western multicultural societies about the question of whether cultural minorities should or should not forsake their cultural background and assimilate into the national culture.

In those countries there is growing evidence that dual identity is to be preferred (see the empirical studies of Gonzalez & Brown, 1999; Hornsey & Hogg, 2000). Indeed, super- and subordinate identities are *not* mutually exclusive in that context either. Berry (1984), for example, developed a typology of cultural relations based on the assumption that the two types of identities are orthogonal. Furthermore, social psychological research suggests that intergroup hostility and in- and outgroup bias decline if groups are allowed to nourish both subgroup and superordinate identities. In addition, Huo, Smith, Tyler and Lind (1996) demonstrate that a sufficiently high level of superordinate identification makes it possible for authorities to maintain cohesion within an ethnically diverse community. However, studies by Gonzalez and Brown (1999) and Hornsey and Hogg (2000) emphasise that superordinate identity only has this effect if people can maintain their subgroup identity as well.

It is not always easy to decide what social psychological dynamics are at work here. We suggest that a strong national identity makes it possible for people to look at subgroups in a different way and to accept that subgroups in a society are treated differentially. For instance, a study by Smith and Tyler (1996) suggests that white Americans who identify with "Americans" and also with "Whites" take a more positive stand towards affirmative action than white Americans who do not combine these two forms of identity. Tyler, Boeckmann, Smith and Huo (1997) argue that this is so because superordinate identity changes the relationship between subgroups and authorities. These authors hold that the absence of superordinate identity makes that relationship solely instrumental in that people ask what authorities are doing for *their* group. Superordinate identity makes it possible for people to accept disadvantages imposed on their subgroup in the interest of the larger community, as people trust authorities to make sure that their group will benefit next time.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Chapter 5

Involvement in civil society

South Africa's transition to democracy triggered a lively debate about civil society in this country (Marais, 1998; Muthien & Olivier, 1999). Among the issues that fuelled the debate were questions such as: What is civil society like? What role did it play in the past? What should be its role in the future? In the literature civil society is described as a realm, distinct from, yet interacting with, the state, consisting of numerous associations organised around specific issues, and seeking to form links with other interest groups. Using the social capital generated through association and organisation around policy concerns and interests, civil society sustains negotiations and bargaining with the state (Camerer, 1992). It is accepted that civil society organisations serve primarily as a complement to or a check on government. They cannot replace or assume the overarching functions of the state as the agent of development of society as a whole. Civil society institutions not only provide an important link between citizens and the state, but also ensure accountability on the part of the state (Foweraker & Landman, 2000).

The recent transition to democracy in South Africa requires of South Africans to critically assess the role civil society has played in this country. This is of particular importance given the central role that civil society structures have played in the demise of the apartheid state and the subsequent establishment of a constitutional democracy. One of the key challenges that have been confronting civil society in South Africa since 1994 is to (re)define its role vis-à-vis the new state. The new state on its part needs to clarify its relationship with civil society. This mutual role clarification is particularly important given that the present South African state is run by the former liberation movement (Klandermans, Roefs & Olivier, 1997). The large numbers of activists that have moved into government since the 1994 election have presented civil society both with

opportunities and new challenges. While this enhances the influence of the liberation movement, it has left the movement in a leadership crisis.

Drawing from the experience in former communist countries and in Latin America, the literature on democratic transition (O'Donnell & Schmitter, 1986; Ginsburg, 1996 for a discussion of the South African case) suggests that in societies that experience a transition from an authoritarian regime to a democracy the new regime tends to demobilise the very movements and organisations that struggled to bring it into power. Others, on the other hand, argue that there is little evidence of demobilisation (Adler & Webster, 1995; Muthien & Olivier, 1999; Foweraker & Landman, 2000). Civil society organisations, these authors write, continue to play an important role. In their view a robust civil society constitutes an essential pillar of a mature liberal democracy. Foweraker and Landman convincingly support their claim with evidence from a longitudinal study of the transitions in Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Spain.

Such findings corroborate one of the central tenets of the leading paradigm in social movement literature, namely resource mobilisation theory, which emphasises the crucial importance of organisations and social networks for the generation of social movements (McAdam, McCarthy & Zald, 1996). Since this assumption was first formulated (McCarthy & Zald, 1973), numerous studies have confirmed the argument, be it by documenting the role of organisations and social networks in recruitment and mobilisation, or the role of organisations in the strategic planning and timing of protest (but see Piven and Cloward 1979 for a diverging view).

In other words, civil society is supposed to form an essential link between citizens and the state, be it in support of or opposition to the state (see also Jenkins & Klandermans, 1995; Meyer & Tarrow, 1998). Whatever theory might prove to be valid in the South African context, undoubtedly (as the South African National NGO Coalition observed) civil society organisations have had to adopt new roles as participants in the policy-making process, partners in service delivery, and monitors of the new government's performance. This has implied a shift in orientation, as the

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

skills, structures and modes of interaction involved in political resistance on the one hand, and reconstruction and development on the other hand, differ markedly. The new era calls for technical expertise instead of mass mobilisation, long-term strategies instead of spontaneous actions, administrative capacity instead of resistance creativity, and positive policy input instead of negative critique, according to the NGO coalition (Sangoco, 1999).

In this chapter we investigate the involvement of the South African population in civil society and assess whether there is any sign of demobilisation. We will first describe to what extent South Africans participated in civil society organisations between 1994 and 2000 and whether that participation changed over time. Next we will explore what were possible antecedents of differences in participation. Finally, we will try to assess the role of civil society organisation in the new South Africa. Did involvement in civil society organisations mediate between citizens and the state? Did we witness a process of demobilisation between 1994 and 2000? These are the questions that concern us in the closing section of this chapter.

Participation in grassroots organisations

Over the years, on average 60% of the South African population were involved in grassroots organisations. Approximately half of those people participated in only *one* organisation, mostly a church organisation. The remaining half participated in two or more organisations, with 5% even in four or more. The Blacks, Coloureds and Whites were very similar in this regard, but the Asians deviated from this pattern. Less than one-third of the Asians participated in grassroots organisations. However, when we omitted church organisations the pattern for the four population groups changed: Black South Africans were then far more involved in civil society organisations than the other three groups. A quarter to 40% of the black population were involved in grassroots organisations other than church organisations, as compared to 15% to 30% of the other groups.

The involvement in civil society fluctuated over the years since 1994, as the graphs in Figures 5.1a and 5.1b show.

Figure 5.1a: Participation in grassroots organisations, including church organisations

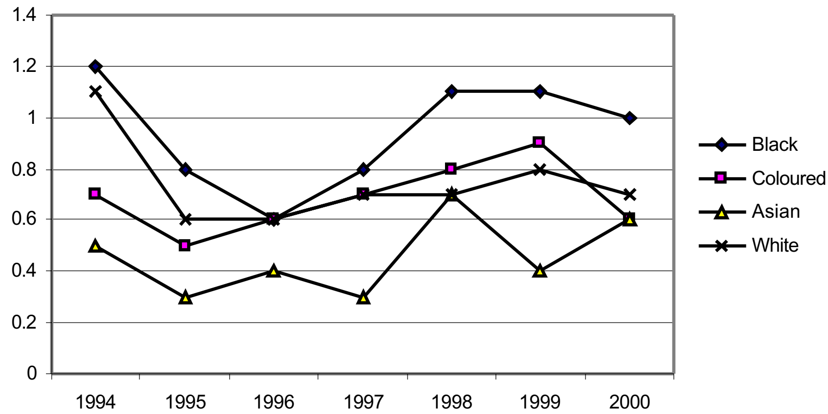
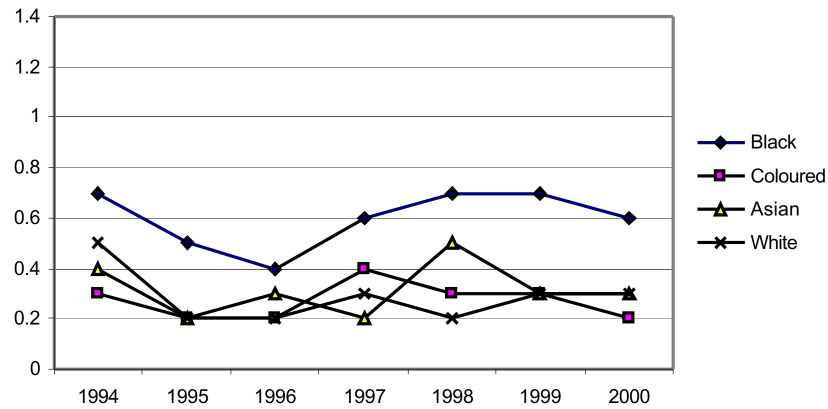


Figure 5.1b: Participation in grassroots organisations, excluding church organisations



In all four population groups participation dropped considerably between 1994 and 1995 (with or without church organisations taken into account). Among the Blacks participation continued to decline between 1995 and 1996; among the others the level of participation stabilised or improved

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

slightly. But from 1996 onwards participation among black South Africans began to increase again and almost reached in 1998 the level of 1994. After 1999 it declined again somewhat. This pattern emerged irrespective of whether participation in church organisations was taken into account or not.

Among the Coloureds and Whites we witnessed an increase in participation between 1995 and 1999, be it less spectacular than among the Blacks. The developments over time in these groups were remarkably similar, including a modest decline in the last year of our study. The Asians diverged from the general pattern. First of all, the level of participation among the Asians was the lowest of all four groups and, second, in their case participation only began to increase after 1997. However, these differences—both in regard to level of participation and in regard to its development over time—appeared to be predominantly due to membership in church organisations. Once church organisations were omitted, patterns of participation in grassroots organisations among the Coloureds, Asians and Whites were not only more similar but remained closer to the level of 1995, with some peaks in the intermittent years.

These figures suggest that after an initial decline between 1994 and 1995 participation in grassroots organisations stabilised and, among the Blacks, even returned to levels close to those of 1994. As such they give an indication of people's embeddedness in civil society. But rather than jumping to conclusions too quickly, we continue our assessment of people's involvement in civil society by looking into participation in individual organisations. In fact, the results pictured in Figure 5.1 are based on participation figures in the eight types of organisations that were included in our surveys from the very beginning. In the course of our study we included seven more types of organisations that were presumed to be relevant.[1] Table 5.1 presents the levels of participation in these fifteen organisations as they developed over time.

---

[1] The analyses reported in Figures 5.1a and 5.1b were conducted also for summary measures that included the remaining organisations. These analyses revealed the same patterns.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Table 5.1: Active member in grassroots organisations (%)

Organisations	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Political party	20.6	13.1	8.6	14.8	10.3	14.5	10.5
Trade union	7.7	6.1	5.3	7.1	7.8	11.1	9.5
Hawkers association	*	*	*	*	5.2	3.3	2.6
Land owners committee	*	2.1	1.9	2.4	5.0	5.2	2.7
Civic organisation	6.5	4.3	3.4	4.5	6.8	6.0	4.9
Street block committee	8.8	5.2	4.2	5.8	7.2	7.3	6.7
Squatters or tenants Committee	3.4	2.7	2.8	5.8	3.6	3.1	3.3
Anti-crime group	*	*	*	*	9.7	7.1	7.5
Cultural organisation	11.3	6.2	7.6	7.5	12.6	11.2	8.9
Youth organisation	10.3	8.7	6.8	8.5	10.3	8.4	8.4
Women's organisation	*	7.0	6.2	7.7	10.9	10.2	8.1
Educational organisation	*	6.9	4.7	6.6	11.6	8.8	9.4
Environmental organisation	*	*	*	*	*	6.1	3.3
Burial society or stokvel[1]	*	*	*	*	21.1	24.8	23.6
Church organisation	45.2	31.2	26.9	31.2	44.7	42.7	43.2

[1] Stokvels are savings clubs where members rotate access to the money among its members on say a monthly basis.

* Not measured

Membership of political parties decreased significantly since 1994. About one in five of the respondents was an active member of a political party shortly before the founding election of 1994. This decreased overall to one in ten in March 1998. In the run-up to the 1999 election this figure rose to 14.5%, but a year later it returned to the level of 1998 again. In 1994 active membership of political parties was highest among Africans (24%), followed by Whites (17%) and then Coloureds and Asians (5% each). The decline since 1994 confirms our findings with regard to political identification. Both suggest that South Africans were disengaging from active politics. As the level of participation in political parties was already low among the Coloureds and Asians, the downward trend reflected in the figures in Table 5.1 predominantly originated among the black and white population. Among the Blacks the level of participation halved (from 24%

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

in 1994 to 12% in 2000, with a return to 18% in the election year 1999); among white South Africans the disengagement was even more evident, as active membership decreased from 17% in 1994 to 4% in 1998. In the election year it increased again to 8%, but a year later it was down to 5%. It is quite possible that the high level of involvement in 1994 was "abnormal" and the country thereafter achieved "normal" levels of active political engagement. Note, however, that political parties continued to generate high levels of participation compared to other organisations. Most of the time only church organisations and burial societies and stokvels ranked higher. We will return to the issue of political disengagement in our chapter on political participation.

Interestingly, after a modest decline in the first three years participation in trade unions *increased* to a level higher than before. This trend could be witnessed among all four population groups. Moreover, participation in trade unions was about equally strong in all four groups. Obviously, trade unions continued to be a significant player in South Africa's civil society. Two other types of organisations in the socio-economic realm—hawker associations and landowner committees—drew their members predominantly from the black population.

The four community-based organisations that were included in our surveys—civic organisations, street block committees, squatter or tenant committees and anti-crime groups—lost some ground in the years after the election in 1994, but were able to reclaim most of it between 1998 and 2000. With the exception of the anti-crime groups these were predominantly "black" organisations. On average participation levels among black South Africans were three to four times higher than those among the other groups. The anti-crime groups were the only exception, as in 2000 more white people (10%) were engaged in such groups than black people (8%).

The five organisations in the socio-cultural domain—cultural, youth, women's, educational and environmental organisations—also managed to retain their membership. Women's and educational organisations even showed some growth. On the whole, they all went through the same cycles that every grassroots organisation in South Africa seems to have gone through: a decline in membership after the first election, an increase at the

time of the second election, and some levelling off in the final year of our study. The racial distribution of membership over the five types of organisations showed some interesting variation. Unlike any other organisations, cultural organisations showed the largest membership among the Asian population (around 13% as compared to around 10%, 3% and 7% for the Blacks, Coloureds and Whites respectively). Youth and women's organisations were about twice as large among the black population (8-10%) than among the other population groups (3-5%). Initially this also held for educational and environmental organisations, but in 2000 black, Asian and white South Africans supported those organisations in approximately the same proportions (8-10% for educational organisations and 3-4% for environmental organisations). Only the coloured population lagged behind (3% and 2% respectively).

In 1998 we began to ask whether people were involved in burial societies and/or stokvels. Both were essentially economic support organisations that existed primarily in black communities (about 30% of the Blacks were members of such organisations), although there were some in the coloured communities as well (about 10% of the Coloureds were members of such organisations).

Finally, church organisations were by far the most important organisations in South Africa. Interestingly, even church organisations experienced the cycle that all civil society organisations went through. Membership participation declined in the years between 1994 and 1997, but then recovered and reached approximately the same level as in 1994. This, at least, was the pattern we observed among the black population. Among the Coloureds and Whites the 1994 level was not reached again. Among both groups the level of participation fluctuated considerably, but both were some 10% below the initial level. In view of the observed fluctuations among these groups the level may rise again in the future. Church organisations were relatively unimportant among the Asian population, fluctuating between 10% and 15%.

In sum, although we witnessed a decline in participation in grassroots organisations immediately after the 1994 election, we found little evidence of a demobilisation of civil society in South Africa in the course of the

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

transition process. Among the three minority groups levels of participation remained more or less stable after the initial decline; among the black population we witnessed a strong increase. The net result of all the discussed trends was that in 2000 only 2% less South Africans participated in some civil society organisation than in 1994 (56% compared to 58%). This is not to say that nothing changed. On the contrary, the profile of the citizens' involvement changed significantly. Political parties lost half of their active participants, trade unions and socio-cultural organisations gained active participants, and community-based organisations consolidated their share of citizen participation. These trends might signal a depoliticisation of civil society. Our findings with regard to political identification seem to suggest the same but, obviously, political parties did not hold a monopoly in policy making. Other civil society organisations were involved in politics as well. We will return to this issue in the final section of this chapter on the role of civil society in the new South Africa.

Determinants of participation

It is clear from the previous section that people differed considerably in their levels of participation in various civil society organisations. What were the determinants of these differences? Obviously, the four population categories differed significantly in their membership patterns both quantitatively and qualitatively. But did such individual characteristics as social class, being unemployed, age, gender, education, and living in the centre or periphery make a difference in addition to race? And what about patterns of identification? Did people who displayed different patterns of identification exhibit different patterns of participation? These are the questions that concern us in the second part of this chapter.

Race alone explained between 2% and 5% of the variance in participation in civil society organisations, depending on the combination of organisations included in the analyses.[2] The remaining individual

[2] We conducted regression analyses with summary measures based on participation in the eight organisations that were included all the time, the eleven that were included since 1995, the fourteen that were included since

characteristics added 3% to 4%, and patterns of identification added another percentage point to the variance explained. Altogether race, individual characteristics and patterns of identification explained 7% to 8% of the variance in participation in grassroots organisations. With the exception of age all characteristics contributed independently of the others. Living standard appeared to be the strongest determinant (β = .15), followed by level of education (β = .12) and unemployment (β = -.07). Gender and living in the centre or periphery were the weakest determinants (β = -.04 and β = .03 respectively). People were more embedded in civil society if they had a higher living standard, were better educated, were employed rather than unemployed, were male rather than female, and lived in the periphery rather than the centre. As for identification patterns people were more involved in civil society if they identified with some group in the South African community (β = .10). If, in addition, they had a strong national identification, embeddedness in civil society increased further (β = .09).

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Individual characteristics and participation

The findings in the previous section were based on summary measures of participation. There is, however, reason to assume that individual characteristics such as those included in our study varied in their impact on participation in individual organisations. In this section we will unpack these global correlations and look into the more detailed links between membership in specific organisations and individual characteristics. In the next section we will do the same for identification patterns.

Social class. People who were more embedded in civil society had a higher living standard. Did this hold for every single organisation or did organisations differ in this respect? In order to look more closely into the link with social class we categorised our respondents into four groups on the basis of different living standards and compared levels of participation of the four groups. Indeed, living standard was linked to participation in all

1998, and the fifteen that were included since 1999. All these regression analyses revealed the same pattern.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

types of organisations, but not always equally strongly, and perhaps more interesting for all but one type of organisation (churches) we found a curvilinear relationship, with the lowest and the highest classes participating less than the two middle classes. Apparently, people in the lowest class lacked the resources for active membership in grassroots organisations, while people in the highest class were not interested. In two cases the differences were larger than the overall correlation would suggest: membership of hawker associations and membership of burial societies or stokvels (eta = .16 and .25 respectively)[3]. In five cases they were in synchrony with the overall correlation (etas ranging from .12 to .14): political parties, youth organisations, civic organisations, street block committees, and squatter and tenant committees. The remaining etas were below average (etas ranging from .05 to .10): trade unions, cultural organisations, church organisations, women's organisations, educational organisations, landowner committees and environmental organisations. Church organisations were the only organisations that deviated from the general pattern, as they drew a smaller proportion from the lowest class, but equal proportions from the three others. In general, thus, people from the middle two categories of our class indicator were more likely to participate in grassroots organisations, while those from the lowest and the highest category were less likely to participate.

Unemployment. People who were unemployed were less likely to participate in grassroots organisations. However, when we unpacked the components of this global correlation, this participation appeared to have been dependent on the organisation. Sometimes the unemployed were *less* involved, but sometimes they were *more* involved. This explains why the correlation with the overall measure of involvement was relatively low. The unemployed were less involved in trade unions, church organisations and educational organisations (etas .10, .04 and .04 respectively), but more involved in youth and women's organisations, civics, street block and squatter/tenant committees, hawker associations, and burial societies and

---

[3] Eta is a measure of association that indicates differences between groups. Unlike betas or correlations it is a non-linear measure.

stokvels (etas between .03 and .06). Neither unemployment nor employment made a difference to participation in political parties, cultural and environmental organisations, landowner committees, and anti-crime groups.

Level of education. Higher levels of education made it more likely for people to be involved in civil society. At the level of individual organisations this held for seven of the organisations that were included in our surveys: political parties, trade unions, cultural, youth, church and educational organisations, and anti-crime groups (etas ranging from .03 to .12). However, in the case of seven types of organisations the relationship appeared to be the opposite: civics, street block, squatter, tenant and landowner committees, hawker associations, and burial societies/stokvels (etas ranging from .03 to .18). Educational level did not impact on involvement in environmental organisations.

Gender. Females were less involved in civil society organisations than were males. At least this was what the overall pattern suggested with etas ranging from .03 to .11. There were three exceptions, however, which obviously lowered the global correlation between gender and involvement in civil society: Women were *more* involved in church organisations (eta .06), women's organisations (eta .23) and burial societies/stokvels (eta .05). It should not come as a surprise that women were more likely to be involved in women's organisations than were men, nor should their stronger involvement in church organisations surprise us.[4] Burial societies and stokvels may also be more related to the social roles of females than related to those of males.

Living in the centre or periphery. People who lived in the periphery appeared to participate more in civil society organisations than did people who lived in the centre, however, the correlation was weak. Living in the centre or periphery did not impact on participation in eight types of organisations. Participation in trade unions, civics, street block, squatter/tenant and landowner committees, as well as participation in youth,

4 In most societies women are more involved in religious organisations than are men.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

educational and church organisations were not dependent on where one lived. Participation in political parties, cultural organisations, women's organisations and burial societies/stokvels was more likely in the periphery than in the centre (etas between .05 and .08), but participation in anti-crime groups, hawker associations and environmental organisations was more likely in the centre (etas in the range of .07 to .10).

Individual characteristics obviously influenced participation in grass-roots organisations. People from the middle classes in particular were more likely to participate in civil society than those in the lowest and highest classes. Although the strength of the relationships differed for the various organisations, the nature of the relationship between social class and involvement in civil society was the same for all organisations in our survey. This was not the case for the other characteristics. Education, being employed or unemployed, gender, and living in the centre or periphery encouraged participation in some organisations, but discouraged participation in others. Finally, age did not have any impact in this respect.

Identification and participation

People who identified with some group within the South African community participated more frequently in civil society organisations. If, in addition, they had a strong national identification their involvement in civil society further increased. This we reported in a previous section in regard to the summary measure of participation in civil society organisations. Further analyses revealed that this pattern held for every individual organisation included in the survey.[5] This is an interesting finding in more than one respect.

First of all, it shows that a sense of collective identity reinforced involvement in civil society organisations. This was, of course, to be expected. If people identified with other people with whom they shared a place in society, they would be more likely to participate in organisations that relate to that place. This was indeed what we found.[6] People with

5 We observed significant etas for all organisations in the range of .07 to .14.

6 All the reported relations were significant, with etas ranging from .07 to .19 .

strong class identification were more likely to participate in labour unions, but also in hawker associations and burial societies or stokvels. Youth with a strong generational identification were more likely to participate in youth organisations. People with a strong identification with their neighbourhood were more likely to participate in organisations such as civics, street block committees and burial societies/stokvels. People with a strong political identification participated more frequently in political parties and people with a strong religious identification were more likely to participate in church organisations. Women with a strong gender identification participated more often in women's organisations. Finally, people with a strong ethnic identification participated more frequently in political parties and church organisations, a finding that must be interpreted against the background that in South Africa both politics and religion were to a large extent ethnically demarcated.

Second, the finding that a strong national identification correlated with participation in civil society suggests that national identity and being embedded in civil society went very well together. Indeed, this is what we found for the individual organisations as well. The causality of this relation could, of course, go either way. The most interesting aspect of our findings with regard to patterns of identification was, however, the fact that subgroup identification and national identity reinforced each other. The highest levels of involvement in civil society were found among those South Africans who combined a strong subgroup identity with a strong national identity. This confirms our findings with regard to the "healthiness" of a dual identity in our chapter on identity.

In sum. Some of the variance in involvement in civil society could be explained by such factors as social class, gender, being employed or unemployed, education, and living in the centre or periphery. Some other variance could be explained by the extent to which people displayed subgroup identity and national identity. The proportion of the variance we could account for by these variables was modest, altogether not much more than 8%. Yet, our findings confirm that embeddedness in civil society was influenced by people's place in society and patterns of identification related to that.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

The role of civil society organisations

The previous sections bore evidence that civil society was not in decline. Substantial proportions of the population were actively involved in the network of organisations that constituted civil society. Indeed in 1998 and 1999, in the run-up to the second election, more people were involved in grassroots organisations than ever. In 2000 their proportion declined again but ended only 2% below that of 1994. What role did civil society play in the new South Africa? Did it mediate between citizens and the state as civil society literature indicates?

Mediating between citizens and the state. One way of approaching this issue was to explore whether involvement in civil society organisations reinforced trust in government and stimulated political participation. In Chapters 6 and 7 we will discuss the evaluation of government and political participation in more detail, but for the present discussion it suffices to assess whether being involved in civil society indeed fostered trust in government and stimulated political participation. Therefore, we computed the correlations between trust in government, political interest, intention to vote, preparedness to participate in peaceful collective action and actual participation, on the one hand, and participation in grassroots organisations, on the other hand (Table 5.2). These correlations served as indicators of the mediating function of civil society organisations between citizens and the state.

The correlations in Table 5.2 are based on the combined data of the surveys since 1995. As we were interested in the role of civil society in the *new* South Africa we omitted the year 1994. Several observations can be made. The first is fairly straightforward. Participation in every civil society organisation included in the survey increased trust in government, interest in politics, intention to vote, intention to participate in peaceful action, and the likelihood that someone would participate in collective action. That said, a few qualifications are to be made. Participation in church organisations was of limited weight. To be sure, the correlations were statistically significant, but they were very modest indeed. This was not surprising. Church organisations were—mostly although not necessarily—apolitical

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Table 5.2: The role of civil society 1995-2000: Pearson's correlations

Civil society	Trust in government	Political interest	Intention to vote	Preparedness to participate in peaceful action	Participated in collective action
Political party	.13	.23	.16	.21	.20
Trade union	.09	.17	.07	.19	.20
Hawkers association	.13	.15	.08	.16	.11
Land owners committee	.11	.16	.07	.14	.11
Civic organisation	.14	.12	.10	.19	.16
Street block committee	.13	.10	.09	.17	.16
Squatters or tenants committee	.12	.09	.08	.18	.15
Anti-crime group	.11	.16	.06	.18	.18
Cultural organisation	.06	.11	.06	.16	.13
Youth organisation	.11	.14	.09	.20	.17
Women's organisation	.10	.06	.06	.15	.09
Educational organisation	.09	.15	.06	.19	.16
Environmental organisation	.13	.13	.06	.12	.12
Burial society or stokvel[1]	.15	.08	.08	.13	.10
Church organisation	.04	.04	.02	.04	.05

[1] Stokvels are savings clubs where members rotate access to the money among its members on say a monthly basis.

* All correlations are significant at $p < .01$.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

organisations. Thus one would not expect that participation in church organisations would strongly politicise people. Participation in political parties, on the other hand, generated the strongest correlations. This was not surprising either. Political parties are, after all, designed to mediate between citizens and the state. They are the specialists, so to say. Yet, it is obvious that they were not holding a monopoly. On the contrary, a variety of organisations appeared to be active in the same market place. The correlations between level of involvement in these organisations and our indicators of political mediation fluctuated for all organisations more or less within the same latitude. These correlations basically tell us that involvement in civil society organisations increased involvement in the political domain, be it in the form of more trust in government or higher levels of participation in electoral and protest politics.

The correlations with the two indicators relating to protest politics (preparedness and reported participation) were on average higher than those relating to electoral politics. The correlations with intention to vote were on average the lowest. This is an interesting finding because it suggests that participation in civil society organisations reinforced protest politics more than electoral politics. Trust in government and political interest produced correlations in between those for protest and electoral politics. The finding that participation in grassroots organisations stimulated trust in government and political interest, on the other hand, is important because it underscores that the effect on participation in protest politics was rather a matter of being integrated in society than of being estranged from it.

On the whole, the observed correlations were very much the same for the consecutive years of our study. Therefore, the correlations in Table 5.2 provide a good summary assessment of the mediating role of civil society organisations. There is, however, one significant exception to this rule. In the year 1999—the run-up to the second election—almost every correlation of participation in a civil society organisation with trust in government doubled and then returned to a much lower level in 2000. We have mentioned already that in the years 1998 and 1999 the participation in grassroots organisations was higher than ever. Apparently, in the election

year participation in those organisations also translated into higher levels of trust in government. The political psychological dynamics behind this finding are not easy to define, but it seems as if in the election year state and civil society were more intertwined.

The old versus the new state. Did the role of civil society change? In an attempt to answer this question we compared the correlations in Table 5.2 with those for the year 1994—the last year of the old regime. As fewer organisations were included in our first survey we could only compare the seven organisations listed in Table 5.3.

The results with regard to trust in government immediately catch the eye. In 1994 people who were involved in civil society organisations trusted government less, whereas from 1995 onwards people who were involved in civil society organisations trusted government more. This reflects, of course, the change of power. It alludes to the fact that before that change took place civil society mobilised *against* the state (Muthien & Olivier, 1999). Unlike what these authors suggest this phenomenon did not emerge in black civil society only. In fact, within the black community being more or less involved in civil society in 1994, did not make a difference in terms of trust in government. In 1994 the Blacks did *not* trust government, irrespective of their involvement in civil society. However, Coloureds and Asians who were involved in civil society organisations trusted government much *less* in 1994 than those who were not involved in civil society. After 1994, however, we found the reverse pattern. Coloureds and Asians who were involved in civil society trusted government more. Among Whites, being more or less involved in civil society in 1994 did not make a difference either. Whites trusted government more in those days than any other population group irrespective of their involvement in civil society. The only organisations that did make a difference were church organisations. Those Whites who were in 1994 more involved in church organisations trusted government even more.

The results with regard to political interest were very much the same in 1994 and after 1994. This held for all four population groups. Being

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Table 5.3: The role of civil society—old and new: Pearson's correlations

Civil society	Trust in government		Political interest		Preparedness to participate in peaceful action		Participated in collective action	
	1994	1995>	1994	1995>	1994	1995>	1994	1995>
Political party	-.09	.13	.24	.23	.30	.21	.25	.20
Trade union	-.04	.09	.15	.17	.19	.19	.15	.20
Cultural organisation	.03	.06	.14	.11	.12	.16	.12	.13
Youth organisation	-.08	.10	.14	.14	.22	.20	.19	.17
Civic organisation	-.05	.14	.15	.12	.24	.19	.22	.16
Street block committee	-.07	.13	.14	.10	.23	.17	.21	.16
Church organisation	.06	.04	.04	.04	.02	.04	.04	.05

involved in grassroots organisations increased interest in politics in the old *and* new South Africa alike.

The role of civil society organisations in regard to action mobilisation seems to have changed, although not dramatically. Participation in political parties, civics and street block committees stimulated preparedness to participate in collective action and actual participation in 1994 more than in the years after the change of power. On the other hand, participation in trade unions and participation in cultural organisations seem to have gone in the opposite direction. South Africans who were actively involved in those two types of organisations were more likely to be involved in collective action in the years after the change of regime than before. Youth organisations and church organisations retained their role in action mobilisation, which was relatively important in the case of the former and negligible in the case of the latter. However, the picture for youth organisations appears to have been more complex once we break our sample down into the four population groups: Among the Blacks, Asians and Whites youth organisations became less important for collective action mobilisation, but among the Coloureds they became more important. The reduced significance of civics and street block committees for collective action mobilisation restricted itself to actual participation among the Blacks and Coloureds; that for action preparedness remained the same. Among the Asians and Whites participation in these two types of organisations lost its significance for both action preparedness and actual participation. The role of political parties declined in all four population groups. This confirms our findings with regard to political identification and the findings to be discussed in our chapter on political participation. Political parties were becoming less central in the multi-organisational field that defined South Africa's civil society, although the correlation with regard to collective action was still relatively strong.

The transformation of discontent into collective action. Obviously, civil society organisations played a significant role in collective action mobilisation. Klandermans (1997) argues that organisational networks are necessary conduits for the transformation of discontent into collective action. They support and constrain the social construction of collective

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

identities and grievances, the politicisation of collective identity, and the recruitment of participants. In the last section of this chapter we will test whether civil society organisations in South Africa actually played these roles. We will not be able to give a detailed account of all the dynamics separately, but we will present data in support of this assumed role of civil society organisations. For that matter, we computed Pearson correlations between dissatisfaction, on the one hand, and preparedness to participate in peaceful action and actual participation in collective action, on the other hand, for people who were actively involved in civil society organisations and people who were not (Table 5.4).

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Table 5.4: The transformation of discontent into collective action: Pearson's correlations of dissatisfaction with action preparedness and participation by involvement in civil society organisations (1995-2000)

	Preparedness to participate in peaceful action		Participated in collective action	
	Not involved	Actively involved	Not involved	Actively involved
Political party	.06	.09	.02	.11
Trade union	.07	.10	.03	.10
Hawkers association	.06	.19	.01	.12
Land owners committee	.06	-.01	.02	-.01
Civic organisation	.07	.04	.03	.12
Street block committee	.06	.14	.03	.13
Squatters or tenants committee	.03	.08	.01	.09
Anti-crime group	.03	12	.00	.10
Cultural organisation	.06	.16	.03	.09
Youth organisation	.07	.05	.03	.11
Women's organisation	.02	.10	.01	.04
Educational organisation	.03	.08	.02	.00
Environmental organisation	.04	.06	.01	.10
Burial society or stokvel[1]	.05	.09	.01	.00
Church organisation	.05	.10	.02	.06

[1] Stokvels are savings clubs where members rotate access to the money among its members on say a monthly basis.

A look at the findings with regard to participation in the past reveals that participation in all but three types of organisations (landowner committees, educational organisations and burial societies or stokvels) seems to have facilitated participation in collective action. In the case of women's and church organisations the differences between the correlations were relatively small, but for the other the differences ranged between .06 and .11.

Preparedness to participate in peaceful action in the future revealed a more varied pattern. Participation in landowner committees and burial societies or stokvels did not matter much in this respect either, and participation in church organisations was only marginally relevant. Participation in hawker associations, street block committees, anti-crime groups and cultural organisations, on the other hand, seemed to have retained its significance for collective action mobilisation. Participation in civics and in youth and environmental organisations, however, was not relevant. Involvement in political parties and trade unions only weakly related to a higher action preparedness. Finally, involvement in educational organisations and women's organisations was related to a higher willingness to protest.

In sum. Involvement in civil society organisations seemed to foster trust in government and involvement in politics. For obvious reasons, participation in political parties had the most influence and participation in church organisations the least. All other organisations were about equally important. Participation in civil society organisations seemed to reinforce participation in protest politics more than did participation in electoral politics. The role of civil society organisations changed significantly with the change of regime in 1994. Whereas in 1994 involvement in civil society seemingly made people trust government less, it made people trust government more after 1994, especially in 1999, the second election year. Civil society mobilised *against* the state before the change of power took place. Only after the transition it became a pillar of democracy. With regard to the remaining indicators we found no qualitative changes. Some organisations became less important for protest politics, others became more important. Finally, participation in civil society organisations helped people to translate discontent into collective action, certainly in the past,

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

but also with regard to future intentions. Interestingly, some organisations (civics, youth and environmental organisations, political parties and trade unions) that were instrumental for action mobilisation in the past lost that capacity for future collective action, while others (educational and women's organisations) became more important.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Conclusion

Civil society in the new South Africa is vibrant and viable. Close to 60% of the South African population were actively involved in at least one of the organisations included in our study. Half of those participated in only one organisation, most of the time a church organisation. The remaining half participated in two or more organisations. Black South Africans were more involved in civil society organisations than any other population group. Over the years of our study 25% to 40% of the Blacks were involved in organisations other than churches as compared to 15% to 30% of the other populations groups. Whereas participation in grassroots organisations remained fairly stable among the Asians, Coloureds and Whites, it declined significantly among the Blacks in the first years after the change of power, but recovered in the last few years. Apparently, it took some time for "black civil society" to reorganise itself. After decades of mobilisation against the state, "black civil society" *became* the state. Thousands of officials left black civil society organisations in order to move into government. The liberation movement literally took office (Klandermans, Roefs & Olivier, 1997).

Not only did substantial proportions of the populace participate in civil society organisations, but participation in these organisations also had a significant influence on people's assessment of government and on their interest and participation in politics. South Africans who were actively involved in civil society trusted government more, were more interested in politics, were more likely to vote in an election and were more likely to participate in collective action. Moreover, if they were dissatisfied with some aspect of life, active participation in civil organisations made it more likely that they would turn that dissatisfaction into participation in collec-

tive action. In conclusion, there was very little evidence of demobilisation, as civil society continued to mediate between citizens and the state.

Over the years the configuration of civil society changed, however. Some organisations gained while others lost significance, the most important example of the latter being political parties. Not only did fewer people participate actively in political parties, but political parties also became less central in the mediation between citizens and the state. This process took place among the Blacks and Whites in particular; the Asians and Coloureds had always been less involved in politics and therefore had little to lose. In their introductory chapter in *The politics of social protest: Comparative perspectives on states and social movements* Jenkins and Klandermans (1995) argue that social movement organisations are becoming increasingly important as an alternative to political parties in the process of mediation between citizens and the state. Meyer and Tarrow (1998) even coined the phrase "social movement society" to refer to this phenomenon. South Africa seems to be no exception to that rule.

Whereas fewer people participated in political parties, more people became actively involved in trade unions over the years. However, trade unions lost some of their significance as intermediaries between citizens and the state. Community-based organisations and socio-cultural organisations retained their position in the multi-organisational civil society. Among the latter type of organisations, women's organisations and educational organisations even grew and became more significant as intermediaries.

Active involvement in civil society reinforced participation in protest politics more than participation in electoral politics. This is not to say that civil society in the new South Africa mobilised against the state, as it did before the regime transition. In this respect the comparison of 1994 with the years after 1994 was very revealing. In 1994 active involvement in civil society meant both *more* participation in protest politics and *less* trust in government. After the change of power took place involvement in civil society still meant more participation in protest politics, but under the new regime it combined with *more* trust in government. These findings evidenced that in addition to creating links between citizens and the state,

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

civil society in South Africa began to play that other role Foweraker and Landman (2000) find so important, namely ensuring accountability on the part of the state. In this context protest is not meant to undermine or replace the regime, but to remind it to deliver the public goods it promised the people. Simon and Klandermans (2001) argue that rather than becoming estranged from the state, people will mobilise if they identify with the larger community. Our findings with regard to patterns of identification support that assumption.

People's embeddedness in civil society appeared to be influenced by their place in society and patterns of identification related to that. People with a strong class identification were more likely to participate in labour unions, hawker associations and burial societies; women with a strong gender identification were more likely to be actively involved in women's organisations; people who identified with their neighbourhood were more often participating in community-based organisations such as civics and street block committees. People with a strong political identification were more actively involved in political parties and those with a strong religious identification in church organisations. Ethnic identification, finally, made it more likely that they would participate in political parties or church organisations. In other words, collective identity reinforced active involvement in civil society organisations. The more people identified with others who occupied the same place in society, the more likely they were to participate in organisations related to that place. If a strong subgroup identity was combined with a strong national identity this increased the likelihood that people would be actively involved in civil society. In fact, the two forms of identification (subgroup and superordinate national identity) reinforced each other. Obviously, the causality of this relation was unclear. A so-called dual identity may have generated higher levels of involvement in civil society, but the opposite causal path was equally plausible. A high level of involvement in civil society may have generated a strong dual identity. The most plausible assumption is that the two reinforced each other. This was the more plausible because active involvement in civil society reinforced active participation in protest politics, which in turn bolstered collective identity.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Chapter 6

The evaluation of government

With Hennie Kotze

The multi-racial South African democracy was born in 1994. The second democratic election (1999) consolidated the political transition. The ANC secured a convincing mandate for a second term and the change of presidency from Mandela to Mbeki went smoothly. Yet, as we have seen in the previous chapters, the social and economic problems of the country have been enormous and the government has remained under significant pressure to satisfy the demands of the population. Nobody has expected the post-apartheid regime to be able to redistribute the country's wealth overnight, but seven years is a long period and people may begin to wonder when government will deliver on its promises and satisfy their needs. In a democracy that is still in a process of consolidation, a decline in confidence in government capacity to satisfy people's needs—especially if the decline is linked to poor government performance—can have a dramatic impact on democratic values. In such circumstances it may become very difficult to sustain democratic institutions.

The legitimacy of democratic institutions to a large extent depends on the trust that voters have that the government will do what is right—at least most of the time. If most of the voters show distrust or political cynicism towards government—especially over an extended period—the legitimacy of the government may be challenged. Similarly, should trust in government decline among those people who are active in the movements, organisations and institutions of civil society, a democracy is in trouble. One should realise, however, that it is difficult for a government to gain the trust of all voters, because there will always be a proportion of voters who will be suspicious of their government. Because a government is dependent on the continued support of taxpayers for the necessary resources for effective governance, it remains essential that the majority of voters retain trust in their government. It is also important that voters

support the law voluntarily. Without trust it becomes increasingly difficult to obtain such support. Cynicism about the political process also means that political participation declines and so consequently does the quality of a democracy.

In the process of consolidating democracy in South Africa, the sustainability of democratic institutions—of which the government forms the core—is strenuously tested. Not only must the government be responsive to different interests but it must also address the inequalities in society. In the case of South Africa with its apartheid past the establishment of democratic values is a more complex process than in other states that have taken the democratic route. As a result of the deep racial and class divisions in South Africa one could expect these divisions to be reflected in patterns of trust in government.

In this chapter we will look into the question of how South Africans evaluate their government. We will do so in two separate sections. In the *first section* we will discuss the evaluation of the national government. From 1994 onwards we asked our respondents how often they trusted the government to do what was right for people like them. We will discuss how levels of trust in government as indicated by the answers to this question developed since 1994. We will also discuss how levels of trust are related to other evaluations of government, and how they are linked to the distribution of wealth in the country. We will furthermore look into the relationship between trust and people's assessment of their situation in terms of grievances, feelings of relative deprivation and pessimism about the future. Finally, we will relate trust to political affiliations and involvement in civil society.

In the *second section* we will compare the three levels of government in South Africa. In 1997 we began to ask our respondents to evaluate their provincial and local governments. At the time when new political relations in South Africa were being crafted, decentralisation was a hotly debated issue between the ANC, on the one hand, and the other political parties, on the other hand. Seven years later provincial and local government became part and parcel of South African politics. At the same time, stories about the incompetence of provincial and local government abounded and at the

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

time of writing this report the unresolved problem of the relationship between local authorities and traditional leaders came into the open in the run-up to the local government elections. All in all, we felt that it was important to evaluate these other layers of government as well. We will therefore present findings about the differential evaluation of national, provincial and local government and we will compare the evaluations of provincial government by province. Of special interest are those provinces where the political composition of the provincial government differed from that of the national government, that is, in KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape.

Trust in national government

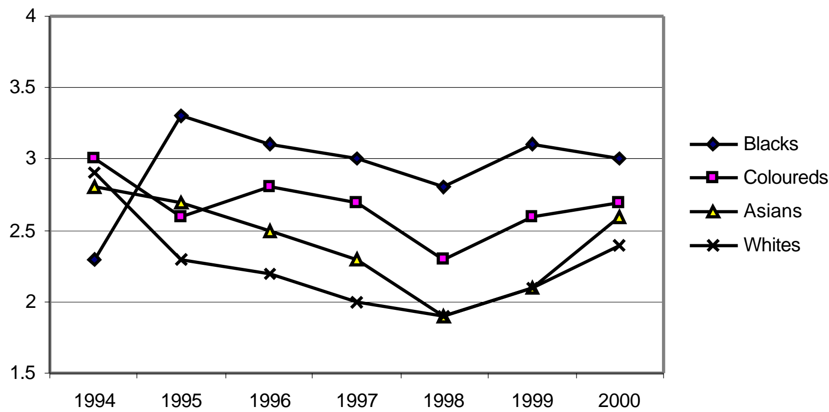
Over the seven years of our study South Africans changed considerably in the extent to which they trusted government. Obviously, these changes were related to the major political events of those years, among them the first two democratic elections at national level. The first marked the change of power from the National Party (NP) government to the Government of National Unity (GNU) dominated by the ANC. The 1994 survey was conducted in the run-up to the first election. Although at the time the country was still under NP rule constitutionally speaking, in practice the Transitional Executive Council (TEC) and its substructures were in control. The Multi-Party Negotiating Council (MPNC) had at that stage already tabled legislation aimed at leveling the political playing fields. Yet, it is clear from Table 6.1 that it was still the "ancien regime" that was at issue. Obviously, the majority of the population did not have trust in the government of those days.

Table 6.1: Trust in national government (%)

Trust	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Never/seldom	48.2	30.7	34.7	38.5	46.4	37.6	35.3
Sometimes	31.3	33.5	36.1	39.5	31.9	30.0	35.3
Mostly/always	20.5	35.8	29.3	21.9	21.6	32.5	29.4

Just under 50% of the respondents indicated that the government could seldom or never be trusted. Only one-fifth thought that the government could be trusted always or mostly, while one-third thought that it could be trusted only sometimes. This result clearly demonstrated the non-legitimacy of the NP government. The year 1995 showed the reverse pattern. There was a 15% growth in the proportion of respondents who trusted government and almost the same percentage decline in the proportion of respondents who seldom or never trusted the government. Figure 6.1 reveals that the increase in trust during the period 1994-1995 could be ascribed mainly to a change in attitude among black people. This finding is understandable against the background of the election results. After all, the ANC, which obtained 62% of the votes, obtained control of the Government of National Unity. Whereas black respondents previously had doubts about the government, they now felt that this government would do what was right for people like *them*. As opposed to this the other groups, the majority of whom in all three cases did *not* vote for the ANC, did not think that the government would do what was right for *them*.

Figure 6.1: Trust in government



Taking into account the process of democratic consolidation in South Africa, it is disturbing that there was an annual decline in trust in govern-

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

ment in the period 1995-1998. This decline took place among all four population groups. The Coloureds were the only exception as their trust in government grew between 1995 and 1996, but in the period 1997-1998 it declined sharply. The year 1998, as indicated before, was a year of frustration and dissatisfaction. This became clear in the chapter on grievances and relative deprivation, and the chapter on identity. The results in Table 6.1 and Figure 6.1 suggest that government was blamed for the discontent. In the remainder of this chapter we will discuss findings that confirm this suggestion. However, for now it is important that after 1998 trust in government rose again. In 1999 the second national election took place, which suggests that the increase was an effect of the election. However, the rise in trust between 1998 and 1999 took place among all race groups. Moreover, trust continued to increase in 2000 among South Africans, with the exception of the black population, who displayed a modest decline. This may partly rule out the "campaign effect" as the most probable cause for this rise, because one would have expected that the election campaign and the election results would have negatively affected those groups where the majority did not support the governing party, as was the case after the first election. However, the upward trend continued precisely among those groups that were less supportive of the ANC. Much of the increase in trust among non-ANC supporters could be attributed to the relatively peaceful transition from apartheid to democracy. The year 1999 signalled the end of the first term in office of the first democratic government. The fact that this landmark in the country's constitutional development was achieved with relative stability did much to reinforce minority confidence in the new government. In other words, as an institution government became more acceptable, and thus trusted, by all groups. This should indeed be regarded as an important indicator of the level of consolidation of democracy in South Africa.

Trust in perspective

Trust in government is the result of a whole range of beliefs and attitudes about government and about the situation of people in South Africa. In this section we will try to unravel how trust was embedded in such beliefs and

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Ta[illegible] 2: Attitudes toward national government (%)

Attitudes	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Pe[illegible] me can have an influence on govern mental decisions (agree)	36.2	46.3	39.6	36.4	31.6	45.1	40.9
Th[illegible] f the way the government has performed over the last year, has it d[illegible] ter than you expected/not as well as you expected/about as well as y[illegible] cted? (better than expected)		33.2	34.4	13.7	9.7	22.6	18.6
Ho[illegible] do you approve or disapprove of the way in which the present g[illegible] ent performed its job during the past year? (approve)				38.3	34.6	40.0	47.2
Di[illegible] ersonal situation get better or worse because of de cisions of the g[illegible] ent the past year? (better)				35.8	31.9	37.4	31.9
Di[illegible] uation of the people you feel closest to get better or worse because c[illegible] cisions of government during the past year? (better)				40.9	35.1	39.5	33.7
On[illegible] ble the government did do what it promised to do during the elections? (agree)				28.7	27.3	32.8	36.1
How often do you think that you can be sure of the good intentions of the government? (mostly/always)				30.3	29.0	34.8	29.5
To what extent does the government treat people equally? (mostly/always)				29.8	27.6	34.1	31.6
In your view, how big a problem is corruption in government? Not at all a problem/not such a big problem/a big problem? (not at all a problem)						5.7	6.3

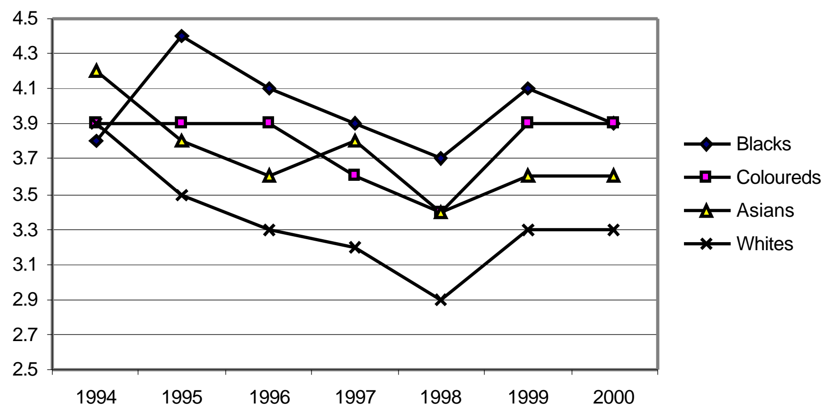
Note: Not every question is asked each year.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

evaluations and how it was generated. First we will look into the question of whether trust was related to other beliefs and attitudes about government. In the course of the years we asked various questions regarding the government. Some questions concerned government performance, others concerned its intentions and principles. Table 6.2 gives an overview of these questions and the answers given by our respondents. The percentages presented in the table reflect the proportions of our respondents who exhibited a positive view of government on the respective dimensions.

Quite obviously, the governmental change in 1994 made *more* people feel that they could influence government. Like trust in government this was predominantly because the Blacks felt that they had more influence. This is clearly demonstrated in Figure 6.2. As this figure shows, the feeling that one has influence on government increased sharply among black South Africans from 1994 to 1995. In contrast, all other groups showed a decline. From 1995 onwards, however, the feeling that one has influence declined among all four population groups. This trend continued until 1998. Understandably, the election campaign made people feel they had more influence. After the 1999 election this levelled off, although not completely. As a consequence, the level of perceived influence on governmental decisions was still much higher in 2000 than in 1998.

Figure 6.2: Influence on government



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

We now return to Table 6.2. In 1995 we began to enquire about government performance. The figure reveals a dramatic decline in the proportion of our respondents who believed that government did "better than expected". Whereas in 1995 and 1996 one-third of the population indicated that the government did better than expected, this percentage was down to less than 10% in 1998. In the following two years, however, there was an improvement. Among all four population groups we found the same pattern, although the decline was the sharpest among the white population. Moreover, it took the white South Africans longer to improve their rating of the government. The black population showed the sharpest increase in the run-up to the 1999 election, but this election effect faded after the election (Figure 6.3).

Figure 6.3: Government's performance

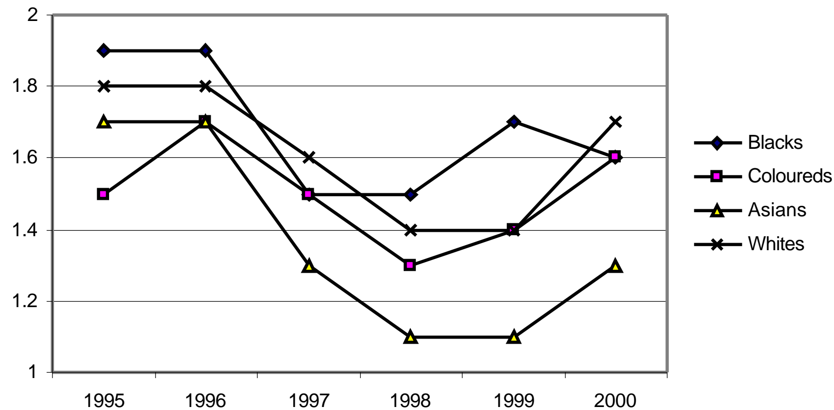


Table 6.2 shows the same fluctuations, although less dramatic, for two other questions regarding government performance. Roughly one-third of the respondents felt that their personal situation or the situation of the group they identified with improved because of the decisions of the government. Comparing the four population groups we found the obvious differences: the Blacks were the most positive, the Whites the least positive, and the Coloureds and Asians were in between, but the fluctuation over the years was the same for all four groups. Interestingly, the evalua-

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

tions of the government in terms of the extent to which it kept its promises and in terms of a general approval of the way it did its job deviated from the overall pattern in that it became increasingly positive in 2000. As a result more than one-third of the respondents felt that the government kept its promises and close to one-half approved the way the government did its job. The three final questions touched on principles rather than performance. Somewhat less than one-third of South Africans believed in the positive intentions of the government and felt that the government treated people equally. Here we found again the obvious differences between the racial categories. However, the four groups did *not* differ in their assessment of how big a problem corruption was in government. Very few respondents believed that corruption was not at all a problem. Indeed, three-quarters of the respondents believed that it was "a big problem".

Approval versus trust. The answers to the questions discussed so far were, of course, correlated. Further analysis shows a theoretically significant difference between trust in government and approval of the job the government did. To be sure, trust in government and approval of government were linked (the correlation between the two was .49), but the two seem to have tapped different evaluative dimensions. Approval of the job of government seems to have tapped the evaluation of government performance, in other words it was an evaluative statement looking backwards to what the government accomplished thus far. Trust in government, on the other hand, seems to have been directed at the future and government intentions. Whereas the expression of approval was a report on past performance, trust was an estimate of future performance. This is reflected in the results in Table 6.3. This table shows how different evaluative dimensions were tapped by approval of and trust in government.[1] The figures in the columns reflect the overlap between the eight assessments of government discussed so far and approval and trust. Obviously, approval and trust had a lot in common with the other eight indicators of governmental performance. The various evaluative dimensions shared close to

[1] The results in Table 6.3 are from four regression analyses with approval and trust as the dependent variables.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Table [illegible]3: Dimensions of approval and trust: Standardised regression coefficients

Dimensions	Approval			Trust	
	Model 1	Model 2		Model 3	Model 4
Kept promises	.24	.35	*Intentions*	.36	.53
Intentions	.20	.30	*Influence*	.20	.24
Prestations	.16	.20	*Equal treatment*	.12	
Equal treatment	.12		*Kept promises*	.09	
Changed pers. situation	.10		*Changed group situation*	.07	
Changed group situation	.08		*Prestations*	.06	
Influence	.04		*Changed pers. situation*	.02	
R^2	.49	.45	R^2	.46	.42

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

50% of the variance.[2] However, three dimensions were the most important for approval of government: the extent to which the respondents believed government kept its promises; the perceived intentions of government; and the extent to which people felt that government performed better than expected. The second column presents the results of an analysis with these three variables only. The three alone accounted for almost the same proportion of common variance (45%) as all eight variables together. Trust in government had two primary correlates: government intentions and the influence people felt they could exert on governmental decisions. These two variables accounted for most of the common variance (42%).

In sum, both trust and approval were composites of various evaluations. Although these evaluations strongly overlapped we were able to distinguish between approval as an assessment of *past* performance and trust as an estimate of *future* performance. Over the years, between one-third and two-fifths of the South African citizens trusted that government would do what was right for people like them, while between one-third and one-half of them approved government performance in the past. Comparison of the four population groups revealed that black South Africans were the most positive in their evaluation and white South Africans the least positive. The coloured and Asian populations occupied an intermediate position. People's evaluation of government developed in a cyclical manner. The same cyclical pattern was observed for most forms of evaluations. In response to the change of power after the 1994 election the black population became significantly more positive in its evaluation of government; the other population groups became less positive. However, from 1995 onwards all four groups became more negative, a process that continued until 1998. In the run-up to the 1999 national election South Africans became more positive about government on all sorts of evaluative dimensions. On some dimensions this trend continued into 2000; on others it levelled off again. On the whole, however,

---

2 This is confirmed by the factor analyses we conducted. The various indicators of governmental performance loaded on a single factor that explained 50% of the variance.

government was rated more positively in 2000 than in the years before the 1999 election. Whether this level of trust can be retained or whether we will see a similar decline as we saw in the years after the 1994 election remains to be seen.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Why people trust their government

What was behind the differences and fluctuations in the evaluation of government? In order to answer this question we explored for each year what could be the possible determinants of differences in approval or trust.[3] Four groups of determinants were investigated: (1) race and ethno-linguistic group; (2) demographics and objective indicators of the distribution of wealth; (3) grievances, feelings of deprivation and pessimism about the future; and (4) political affiliation and involvement in grassroots organisations. The patterns for the two variables over the various years were remarkably similar. Therefore, we present by way of a summary the results of two regression analyses for the combined sample over the period 1997-2000, neglecting the time differences (Table 6.4). We chose this period because during those years we measured both approval of government and trust in government.

The four groups of variables explained about a quarter of the variance in both types of evaluations. The patterns of the correlations were almost identical for approval and trust. Ten percent (10%) of the variance in both evaluations was explained by race. In both cases demographics and distribution of wealth added a negligible proportion to the variance explained (less than 1% in the case of trust and just over 1% in the case of approval).

A substantial proportion of the variance explained was added by people's subjective evaluation of their situation (12% in the case of trust and over 14% in the case of approval). Political affiliation and involvement in grassroots organisations added another 3% in the case of trust, and 2.5% in the case of approval. Thus independently of race, objective circumstances and characteristics did not affect the evaluation of

---

3 We ran regression analyses for each year with approval of government and trust in government as the dependent variables.

Table 6.4: Determinants of trust and approval in national government: Standardised beta's

Variables	Approval	Trust
Racial category	-.17***	-.14***
Age	.02	.04**
Gender (female=2)	-.01	.01
Highest education	-.03*	-.01
Centre-periphery (periphery=2)	-.04***	-.03*
Living standard	.03	-.02
Unemployed	.00	-.01
Grievances	-.19***	-.16***
Pessimistic about own future	-.16***	-.14***
Pessimistic about group's future	-.12***	-.13***
Supports ANC	.19***	.20***
Involvement in grassroots organisations	.03**	.02*
R^2	.27	.25

* p< .05;
** p< .01;
*** p< .001

Note: These analysis is based on the surveys from 1997 to 2000.

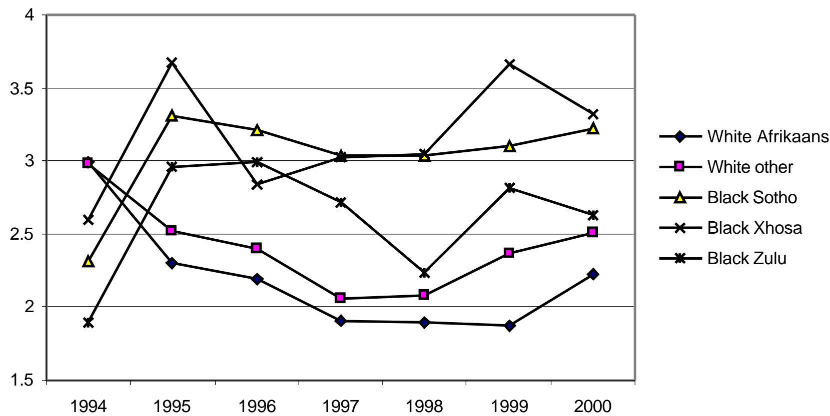
government. Race and class appeared to overlap to the extent that once the influence of race was accounted for, class did not add independently to the explanation of trust in government. However, the subjective evaluation of those circumstances, and political affiliation and involvement in grassroots organisations did. In other words, what mattered for the evaluation of government was not so much how wealth was distributed in society but how that distribution was evaluated and to what extent and how people were embedded in civil society. In the remainder of this section we concentrate on race, subjective evaluation of the social situation, and embeddedness in civil society as determinants of the evaluation of government. Each of these factors was linked to a broader spectrum of related variables. The factors are discussed in the context of this spectrum. As the pattern for approval was so much similar to that of trust we restricted ourselves to trust. Trust was more informative about

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

how people perceived their future and therefore a useful indicator of the legitimacy of government. Moreover, trust was measured since 1994, so that we were able to draw a picture that spanned the whole transition period.

Race versus ethno-linguistic group. Race obviously was an important factor in the evaluation of government performance. The four racial groups were, however, too crude as categories to describe the impact of ethnicity on the evaluation of government in South Africa. A very simple way of demonstrating this is a comparison of the variance in trust explained by race and that explained by ethno-linguistic group. As it turned out, 11% of the variance in trust could be explained by race and 23% by ethno-linguistic group. Such figures leave little doubt that the impact of ethnicity was not fully covered by race. Figure 6.4 shows why. In this figure the scores on trust in government of the Blacks and Whites were further broken down by major ethno-linguistic categories.

Figure 6.4: Trust in government by ethno-linguistic group



From 1994 to 1995 all three black groups displayed a sharp increase in trust in government. Note, however, that the levels of trust among the Zulu population were significantly below those of the others, especially of the Xhosa. Among the white population, on the other hand, the Afrikaans-speaking and English-speaking Whites began to diverge. In 1994 the two

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

groups showed the same level of trust, but from 1995 onwards the English-speaking Whites trusted government more than the Afrikaans-speaking Whites. This pattern continued until 2000. Indeed, over the years the gap between the two groups widened.

From 1995 onwards the three black groups differed considerably both in terms of levels of trust in government and in terms of changes in those levels over time. The most stable were the Sothos. A slight decline between 1995 and 1998 was compensated for by an increase between 1998 and 2000. In 2000 they were more or less at the same level as the Xhosas but the latter achieved that level via a significantly different trajectory. A sharp increase in trust took place among this group between 1994 and 1995, followed by an almost equally sharp drop between 1995 and 1996. Between 1998 and 1999 this decline was again followed by a strong increase. The Zulus were the least positive of the black groups. A steady decline between 1996 and 1998 was compensated for in 1999 by an improvement, but trust declined again between 1999 and 2000. As a result, the Zulus ended in 2000 at the same level as the English-speaking Whites. Further analysis revealed that this decline should be ascribed to the supporters of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). Zulus who supported the ANC followed the same trend as the other black population groups. Indeed, trust among the IFP supporters oscillated in the same range as that among the white population.

The diverging trend among the Zulu population reflected the complicated position of the IFP in the political landscape of South Africa. Although the IFP should not be labelled as an ethnic Zulu party out of hand, its power base resided in this cultural grouping, especially in rural KwaZulu-Natal. Right from the beginning the party expressed its reservations about the creation of a new political system—an indication of its distrust in the political process at that stage. Its major worry was that a new political dispensation might usurp the powers held by traditional authorities and in the process rob them of their cultural heritage. The strong positive stance that the IFP took with regard to the creation of a federation—it believed that such a model would entrench cultural autonomy—bore testimony to the IFP's determination and was almost

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

responsible for its non-participation in the 1994 election. Albeit late, the IFP eventually decided to participate. After the ANC victory the IFP was allocated a number of ministerial posts in the Government of National Unity (GNU) due to the requirements of the Interim Constitution, which stipulated that all parties with more than 10% support should be represented in the cabinet. This restored a measure of confidence among Zulus in the *bona fides* of government, and explained the rise in trust between 1994 and 1996, although trust in the ANC-dominated government faded subsequently.

Grievances and expectations. People's assessment of their situation turned out to have an important influence on their evaluation of the government. The less satisfied they were with their social and economic situation and the more concerned they were about the future the less favourable that evaluation. Obviously, they held government responsible for their situation and the changes therein, whether for better or worse. As explained in Chapter 3 relative deprivation was measured in three different ways: comparison with others, comparison with the past, and expectations of the future. In the analyses reported in Table 6.4 only the latter was included. This was based on the finding that comparisons with others and the past were less important with regard to trust in government. But let us return for a while to the original variables. Table 6.5 presents data on the link between trust in government, on the one hand, and relative deprivation and grievances, on the other hand, over the seven surveys.[4]

There are a few interesting features. First of all, the results confirmed our earlier conclusion that trust was an estimate of government performance in the future. Of the three measures of relative deprivation, expectations of the future were consistently the most important determinant, the only exception being the year 1994. In that year, trust in government was predominantly influenced by feelings of dissatisfaction about one's socio-economic situation. Apparently, on the eve of the first democratic election the political future was too uncertain to elicit strong

---

[4] Table 6.5 is based on regression analyses per year with trust as the dependent variable and with indicators of individual and group deprivation, and grievances as the independent variables.

links between trust in government and expectations of the future (Roefs, Klandermans & Olivier, 1998). After all, the incoming government would definitely be different from the outgoing government. Another interesting finding concerned the years 1997 and 1998. In 1998 trust in government was at its lowest level of all the years of our research. In that year trust was predominantly determined by concerns about the future. Note that this was preceded in the year 1997 by a strong correlation between trust and grievances. These findings underscored that the period 1996-1998 was one of dissatisfaction, frustration and concern about the future. These feelings translated into an ever declining trust in government. However, the year 1998 was a turning point. Feelings of dissatisfaction and deprivation subsequently decreased, which translated into much higher levels of trust in government at the closure of our study than some years before.

Table 6.5: Grievances, relative deprivation and trust: Standardised beta's

Variables	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Grievances	-.30	-.05	-.09	-.27	-.04	-.14	-.05
Oneself compared to others	.05	-.03	.03	.14	.03	.04	.05
Oneself compared to past	.00	.03	-.11	.02	-.05	-.07	-.06
Pessimistic about own future	-.02	-.21	-.21	-.17	-.21	-.16	-.16
Group compared to others	-.02	-.04	-.03	-.06	-.03	-.06	-.10
Group compared to past	-.01	.03	-.03	.01	-.03	.09	-.05
Pessimistic about group's future	-.05	-.22	-.12	-.18	-.23	-.28	-.08
R^2	.09	.14	.17	.18	.21	.20	.10

These findings made us decide to focus on concerns about the future in the remainder of this section. It was emphasised that the subjective evaluation of a situation impacted on trust in government irrespective of race. In other words, the observed relationship was found for all four racial categories.

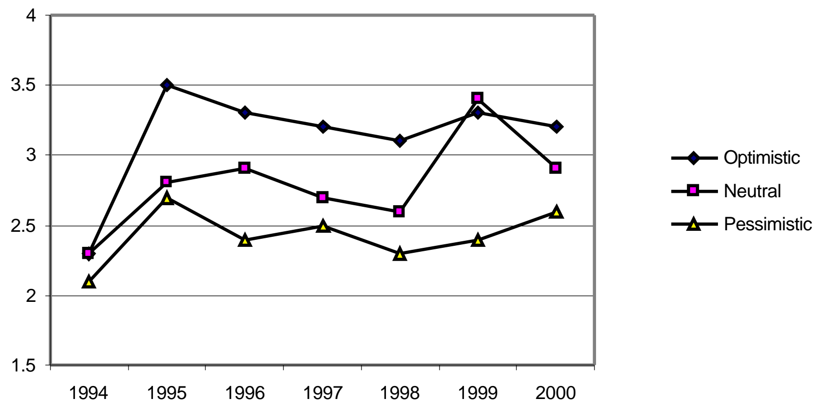
Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

We conclude this section with a discussion of the diverging ways in which concerns about the future influenced trust in government among black, coloured, Asian and white South Africans (Figures 6.5a (a-d) and Figures 6.5b (a-d)).

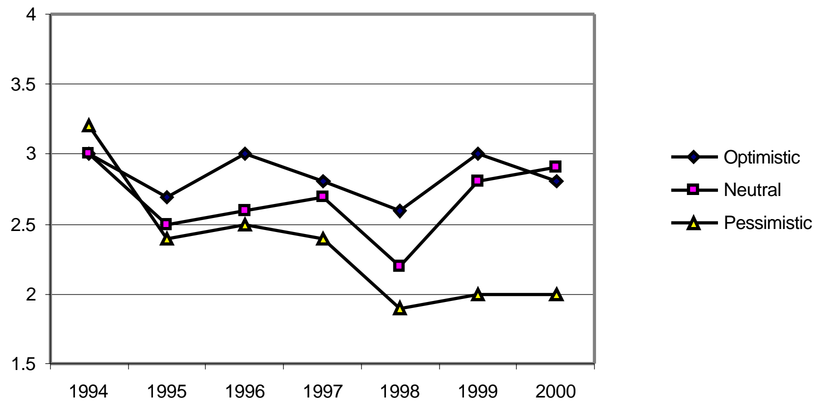
Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Figure 6.5a: Trust in government and expectations for own future

a. Blacks

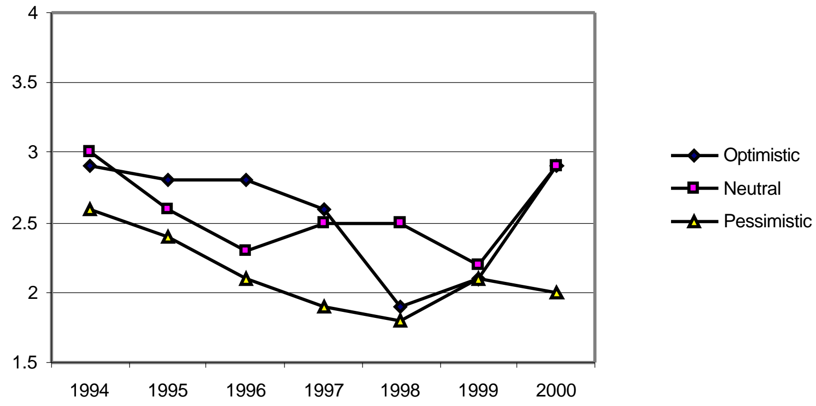


b. Coloureds



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

c. Asians



d. Whites

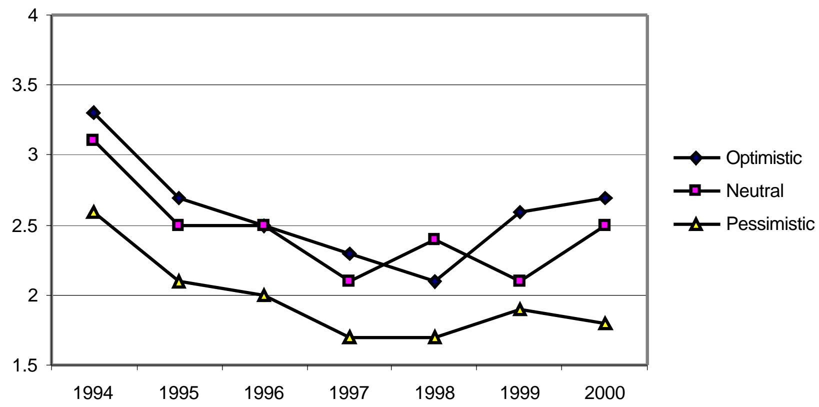
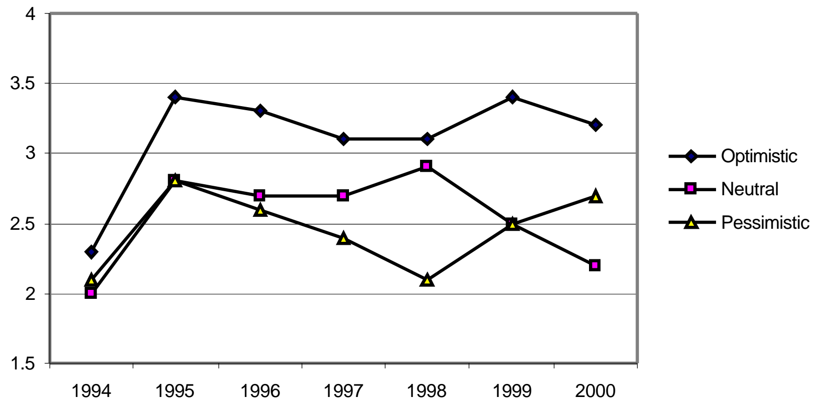
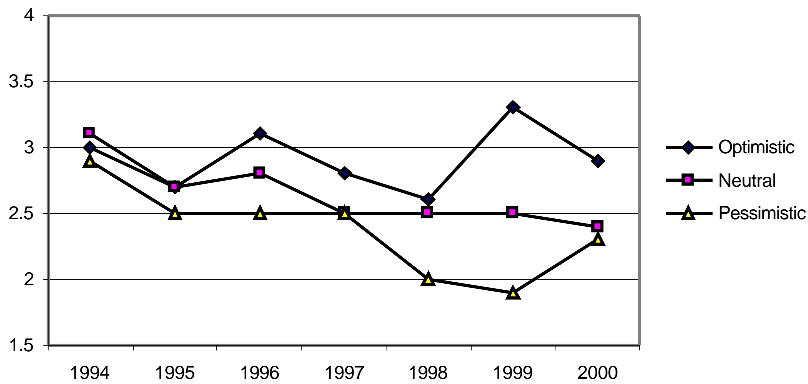


Figure 6.5b: Trust in government and expectations for groups' future

a. Blacks

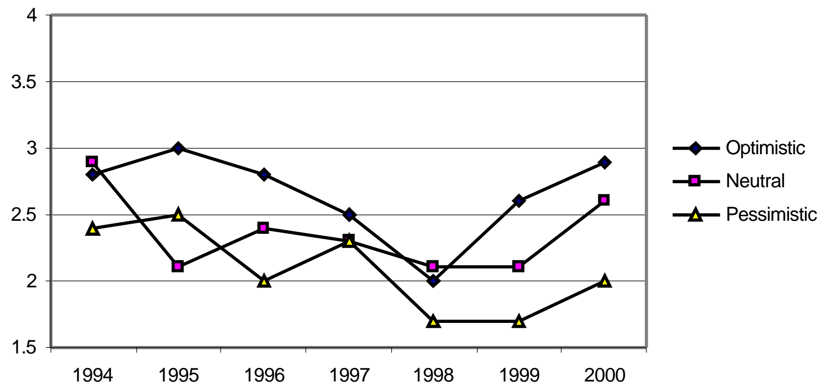


b. Coloureds

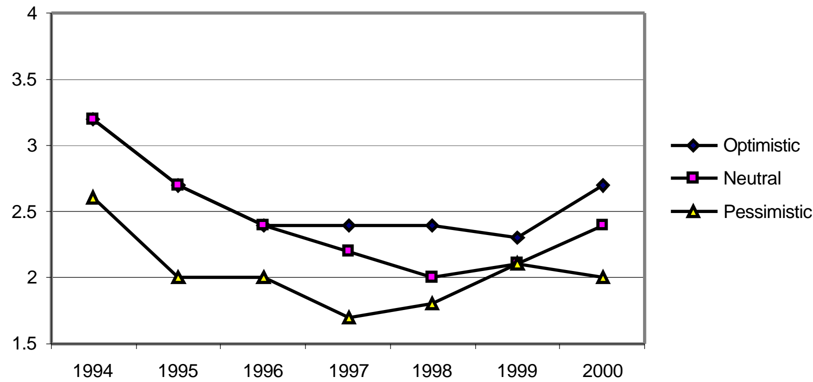


Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

c. Asians



d. Whites



In these figures trust in government was broken down for three different types of expectations about the future: people who felt optimistic about the future, people who felt neutral about it, and people who felt pessimistic about it. We did so for the four population categories, in order to show that indeed trust and concerns about the future were linked for each category, but in a different way. We present the results for both expectations about

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

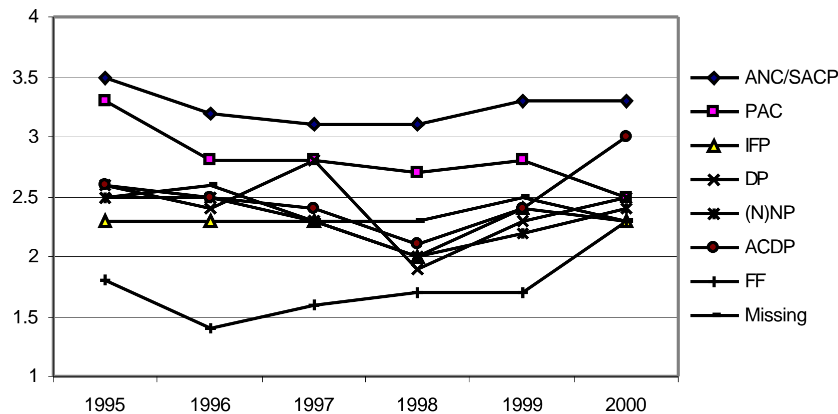
people's own situation and the situation of their group. A first observation is that expectations about the future were indeed linked to trust in government in all four groups for both the individual and the group. This is important because it tells us that trust in government was not a matter of race alone. Note, however, that the levels of trust between the four graphs of the racial groups were different. In other words, racial groups differed in terms of trust in government, but within the four groups trust varied dependent on expectations of the future. This is, of course, what the results in Table 6.4 already showed us, but the graphs visualise the matter.

A closer look tells us, however, that within each group different patterns emerged depending on their expectations of the future. Interestingly, among the Blacks trust in government remained relatively stable although the levels of trust differed for those who were pessimistic, neutral or optimistic about the future. The only deviations from this pattern were the year 1998 as far as the future of the group was concerned, and the year 1999 as far as an individual's own situation was concerned. Among the Coloureds it was especially those who were pessimistic about the future who lost trust in government. The other two groups remained relatively stable over the years. As a consequence, the gap in terms of trust between Coloureds with diverging expectations of the future grew. Among the Asians and Whites trust in government initially declined irrespective of expectations of the future. After 1998 and 1999 trust among the Asians increased except for those Asians who were pessimistic about the future. Among the white population the difference was between those who were pessimistic about the future and the others. Over time the pattern for all three groups was very much the same but those who were pessimistic trusted government significantly less than those who were neutral or optimistic. In fact, there was very little recovery of trust in government among the pessimists in the last two years.

Political affiliation and participation in grassroots organisations. Finally, we will look into embeddedness in society as a factor in the

evaluation of government. Figure 6.6 presents the results for trust in government broken down by party preference.[5]

Figure 6.6: Trust in government by party preference



This figure suggests that the core distinction was between the ANC and the other parties. Except for the supporters of the Freedom Front (FF) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), the political parties other than the ANC converged in their evaluation of government. It is interesting that between 1999 and 2000 trust in government declined among the PAC supporters and increased among the FF supporters. As a consequence, at the closure of our study both reached the same level as the other parties. This finding made us decide to distinguish between our respondents in terms of those who supported the ANC and those who did not support the ANC. This factor we included in the analyses reported in Table 6.4. Not so surprisingly, it turned out to be the strongest determinant of the evaluation of government.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

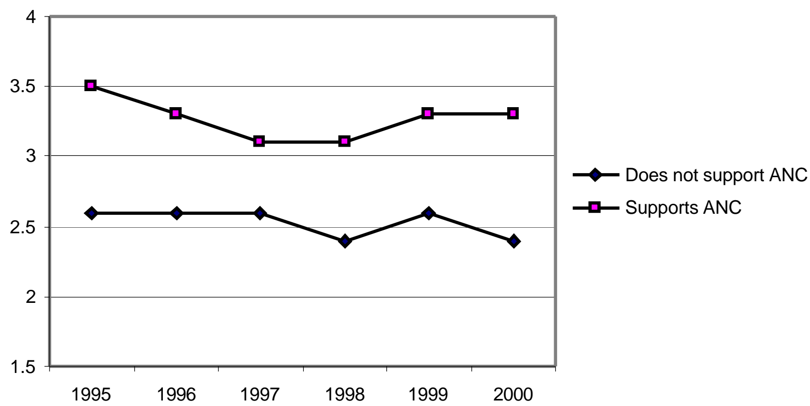
---

[5] In 1994 the vast majority of South Africans had never voted before. Therefore, we felt that we could *not* ask which party people would vote for had there been an election. Thus Figures 6.6 and 6.7(a-d) start with the year 1995.

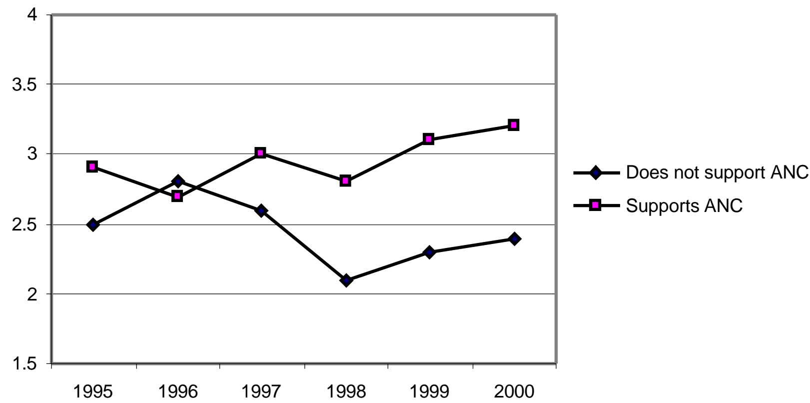
Figures 6.7a-d therefore, presents the breakdowns of supporters and non-supporters of the ANC for the four racial categories over the seven years.

Figure 6.7: Trust in government of supporters and non-supporters of the ANC by race

a. Blacks

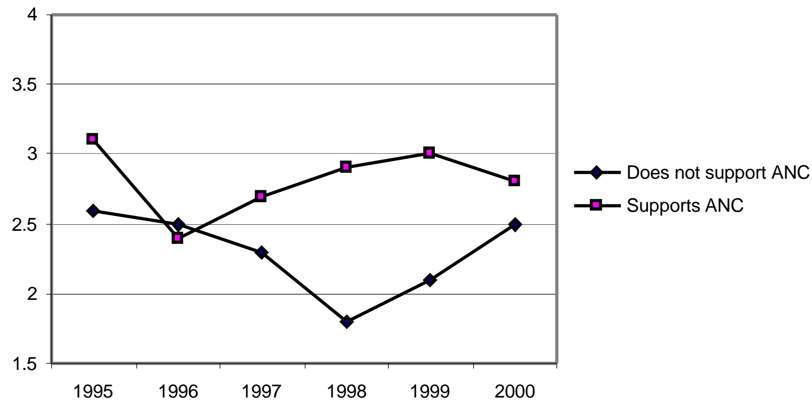


b. Coloureds

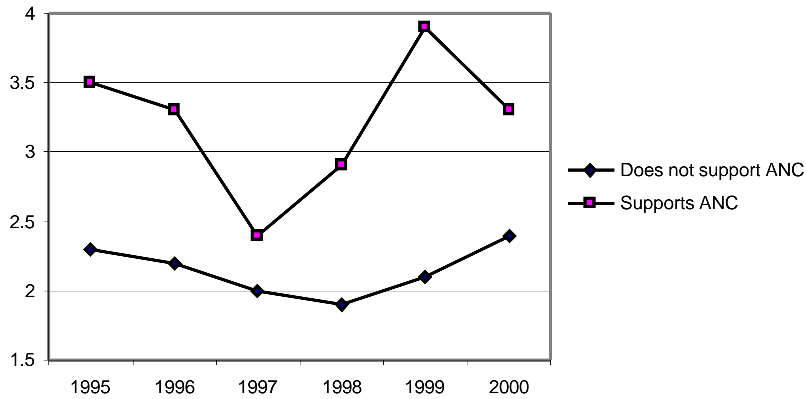


Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

c. Asians



d. Whites



Before we discuss these results a warning is appropriate. Among the Asians and Whites there were few ANC supporters; hence these figures were very sensitive to sampling biases. Yet, the patterns of supporters and non-supporters of the ANC for the four groups were in fact very similar.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

But let us start with those who did *not* support the ANC. Those figures were based on solid numbers for all four groups. Interestingly, the scores were less different than one would perhaps expect: slightly over 2.5 for the Blacks and between 2.5 and 2.0 for the Whites. Among the Coloureds and Asians the fluctuations were larger, but with two exceptions they were within the 2-2.5 range as well. On the whole, supporters of the ANC trusted government significantly more than non-supporters, irrespective of their race. Yet, the patterns differed. Among the black ANC supporters we found overall the highest level of trust in government. Among white ANC supporters trust in government was high as well, although 1997 saw a sharp decline. From 1995 to 1999 trust in government among the coloured and Asian ANC supporters developed in a very similar way. After a decline between 1995 and 1996 trust in government increased for both groups until 1999; among the Coloureds it continued to increase between 1999 and 2000, but among the Asians it levelled off again. The Asians, as the smallest racial group, never quite associated themselves with any of the political parties and were always fickle in their support for the government.

The patterns of supporters and non-supporters were remarkably similar for the Blacks and Whites, on the one hand, and the Coloureds and Asians, on the other hand: large differences between supporters and non-supporters all along between the first two population groups, and increasing differences between supporters and non-supporters among the Coloureds and Asians, although the Asians deviated from that pattern in the last year of our study.

A small but significant proportion of variance in trust in government was explained by people's involvement in grassroots organisations. The more people were involved in such organisations the more they trusted government, which finding supports one of the basic tenets of civil society theory. This was, of course, already mentioned in Chapter 5 in the context of our discussion of the role of civil society organisations in the new South Africa. The multivariate analyses that are presented here reveal, however, that involvement in civil society retained its impact on trust in government independent of the other factors that were included in these analyses. In

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

fact, the findings that were reported in Chapter 5 confirmed that the influence of organisational involvement was larger than the figures in Table 6.4 suggest. These figures are based upon a variable that counted the number of organisations people were members of and on an analysis that took all our respondents together irrespective of the year they were interviewed. But as the discussion in Chapter 5 showed, in specific years involvement in grassroots organisations was more important than in others and that not all organisations were equally important. Significantly, in the run-up to the 1999 election the impact of embeddedness in civil society was the largest (twice the size of the overall figure in Table 6.4). In 1998 and 1999 more people were members of grassroots organisations than before, and in the election year this translated more than in other years into trust in government.

In sum, since the 1994 election we saw a steady decline in trust in government among all South Africans. The year 1998, however, was a turning point. From that year onwards trust in government began to increase again. This may have been partly an effect of the 1999 election, but the election cannot explain everything. Had it been an election effect, one would have expected it to be the strongest among the population groups that were more supportive of the ANC. However, the decline and subsequent increase in trust took place among each population group. In fact, the tendency to trust government more was stronger among those population groups that supported the ANC less: the Whites, Asians and Coloureds. This suggests that a genuine growth in trust in governmental institutions took place. This may probably be explained by the fact that the Whites, Coloureds and Asians envisioned the transformation process in what may be described as something close to a worst-case scenario. From such a low-confidence base, levels of trust in government structures could only have increased.

Whether people trusted government appears to have been dependent on their ethnic background, the assessment of their personal situation and that of the group they identified with, whether they supported the ANC and whether they were involved in grassroots organisations. Theoretically and practically this is an important finding. It is theoretically important

because it suggests that trust in government depends on a mixture of, on the one hand, pre-established links with a party in power (involuntarily such as in the case of ethnicity and voluntarily such as in the case of party support and involvement in grassroots organisations) and, on the other hand, subjective evaluations of the social and economic situation of oneself and one's group. The finding is practically important because it shows that trust in government *is* related to government performance. Trust in government is very much a matter of concern about the future. In the words of Gamson (1968:8) trust is the conviction that the political system or parts of it will be able to deliver the necessary preferred outcomes. Doubts about government intentions and a felt lack of influence make people worry about government performance in the future.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

National, provincial and local government

In addition to national government the South African political sphere encompasses provincial governments in the country's nine provinces and local governments in hundreds of municipalities. Each of the three layers has its own impact on people's lives. National government is mainly responsible for creating, legislating and administrating (i.e. budgeting and implementing) policies that have a bearing on the well-being of the nation as a whole. In addition, it also represents the nation's interests outside the borders of South Africa.

Provincial government looks after the specific needs of people in each of the country's nine provinces. Each province has a provincial legislature, which is tasked with making provincial laws for that particular province, provided that it does not clash with national legislation or the spirit of the national constitution. In terms of the Constitution provinces have legislative and administrative powers over a wide range of issues, with the obvious exclusion of foreign affairs. These powers can, however, only be exercised to the extent that provinces have the administrative capacity to give effect to their intentions. Additionally, provinces may draw up their own individual constitutions, but in line with the content of the national constitution. Thus far only the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal have taken

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

this initiative. The latter's proposal was, however, rejected by the Constitutional Court.

Local government, the third level of governance, underwent a major transformation in 2000. The number of municipalities was dramatically reduced from 843 to 253 in order to facilitate efficient administration and a more equitable distribution of resources between affluent and previously disadvantaged communities. The new local authorities were categorised in terms of metropolitan councils, local councils and district councils, all having been ascribed particular responsibilities by the Constitution, ranging from the provision of basic services to recreational facilities.

Since their institution under the new dispensation provincial and local governments throughout the country have been accused of incompetence, corruption, inefficiency and failure to deliver. Yet, some were remarkably effective or improved considerably over the years. Obviously, for a complete picture we must assess people's evaluation of governmental institutions at those lower levels of government as well. In the second section of this chapter on the evaluation of government we will, therefore, focus on provincial and local government. We will first compare how South Africans appreciated the three layers of government. Next we will explore to what extent differences in evaluation could be explained by the variables we employed in our analyses regarding the evaluation of national government. Our next step will be an obvious one, namely, a comparison of the evaluation of provincial government by province.

A comparison of the three levels of government

Table 6.6 provides a comparison of national, provincial and local government with regard to four indicators: how often people trusted government to do what was right for people like them; how much influence they believed they had on government's decisions; how much they approved the way government was performing its job; and whether the situation of the group people felt closest to changed for better or worse due to government decisions.

Table 6.6: Evaluation of provincial and local government (%)

Evaluation	1997	1998	1999	2000
Trust (mostly/always)				
- national government	22.0	21.6	32.5	29.4
- provincial government	22.8	20.5	26.9	28.6
- local government	-	-	27.4	25.5
Influence (agree)				
- national government	36.4	31.7	45.1	40.9
- provincial government	31.6	30.9	38.4	36.1
- local government	35.5	36.4	45.0	41.6
Approval (approve)				
- national government	38.3	34.6	40.0	46.9
- provincial government	33.7	28.5	33.6	41.9
- local government	32.5	32.4	32.3	38.3
Changed group's situation (better)				
- national government	40.9	35.1	39.5	32.7
- provincial government	37.1	30.1	33.8	30.6
- local government	31.0	25.3	29.7	28.0

Note: Trust in local government was only asked in 1999 and 2000

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Trust in government was very similar at the three levels. In 1997 and 1998 about one-fifth of the South African population trusted national and provincial government. In 1999 this percentage increased to one-third for national government and slightly over one-quarter for provincial government. In that year we also began to measure trust in local government, which apparently showed similar patterns as trust in provincial government. In 2000 trust in national and local government slightly dropped again but, interestingly, trust in provincial government increased somewhat. These similarities suggest that trust in government at the three levels correlated. This was confirmed by the fact that, on average, trust in national government correlated .45 with trust in provincial government and .29 with trust in local government; in turn trust in provincial government correlated .48 with trust in local government. This pattern of a lower cor-

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

relation between the national and the local level would repeat itself for the other indicators. Apparently, proximate levels of government were evaluated more similarly than the more distant levels. However, the correlations we found were not so high that one could say that people trusted either any government or none. There was certainly room for independent assessment of the different levels of government depending on people's experience with that level.

Perceived influence on government showed greater variation between the three levels. If, however, the idea was to bring government closer to the people, the creation of provincial and local levels of government seems to have failed so far. In fact, the provincial level seems to have been the most difficult to influence in the eyes of the citizens. In 1997 and 1998 some 30% of the population believed that they could have an influence on the decisions of provincial government. In 1999 and 2000 this percentage increased by five to six points, but remained below the figures for the national and local government. And, although they deemed local government easier to influence than provincial government, it is interesting to see that the local level was not doing any better than the national level. Estimates of someone's ability to influence government at the national, provincial and local level correlated (national and provincial at .52, national and local at .43, and provincial and local at .58).

On the whole, South Africans approved the performance of national government more than that of provincial and local government. Interestingly, approval increased for each layer of government over the years, but in 2000 almost half of the respondents approved the performance of national government whereas approximately two-fifths approved the performance of provincial and local government. These evaluations correlated (national-provincial at .49, national-local at .37, and provincial-local at .52). Finally, as far as the situation of the group people identified with was concerned, national government mattered more than provincial government and provincial government mattered more than local government (correlations between levels of governance: .62, .41, and .50 respectively). Note, however, that the proportion of the people who felt that the

situation of the group they identified with improved because of decisions taken by each level of government declined over the years.

The four evaluation dimensions converged. The mutual correlations were high and factor analyses revealed that at both the provincial and local level all four loaded on a single factor that accounted for 58% of the variance. That is to say, someone who trusted provincial government in all likelihood also believed that he could influence it, approved government performance and felt that provincial government had improved the situation of the group he or she identified with. The same held for local government. We also checked to what extent the evaluation of provincial or local government was influenced by people's concerns about corruption. Indeed, when we added concerns about corruption to the analyses, in both cases these concerns loaded on the factor that the four evaluative dimensions had in common. In other words, a negative evaluation of provincial or local government was also partly based on concerns about corruption, and a positive evaluation on the lack of such concerns.

In sum, a clear picture emerged from the findings regarding the layers of South African politics. As far as trust in government was concerned the three levels of government were rated very similarly. At first, one-fifth and later about one-quarter of the respondents felt that they could trust government to do what was right for their people, irrespective of the level of government at issue. Note, however, that these were not necessarily the same people who gave identical ratings to all three levels of government. Although we found moderately high correlations, they were certainly not so high to conclude that people who had confidence in one level of government would automatically have confidence in any other level. We will return to this issue when we discuss determinants of trust. Trust, as we noted in our discussion of trust in national government, was more a matter of believing in the good intentions of government than a positive evaluation of its past performance. This held for provincial and local government as well.[6] Our findings regarding influence may come as a

[6] We conducted the same analyses and found the same higher correlations between trust and intentions as we did in the case of national government.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

disappointment to those who designed South Africa's political landscape. Lower levels of government did not seem to imply more influence to the people. Indeed, local politics were not rated higher than national politics, and provincial politics were rated the lowest of all. The low rating of provincial politics may have been due to its lack of visibility compared to that of national politics and its remoteness from the people when compared to local politics. However, people may have been very ignorant about local politics, which ignorance may have led to inflated influence estimates. The remaining two evaluative dimensions concerned the past performance of government. More differences were observed here between the three political layers, although the differences were never very large. Yet, the general picture was consistent: national politics were always evaluated more positively than provincial and local politics. This situation was further entrenched by the Mbeki government's tendency to centralise political power. In the eyes of the ordinary observer it was fairly obvious that the real leaders resided in Pretoria and not in Bisho, Johannesburg or Bloemfontein.

The determinants of evaluation

In an attempt to better understand the results we investigated the same four groups of determinants as we did in the case of national government: (1) race and ethno-linguistic group; (2) demographics and objective indicators of the distribution of wealth; (3) grievances, feelings of deprivation and pessimism about the future; and (4) political affiliation and involvement in grassroots organisations. Table 6.7 summarises the results for both provincial and local government with regard to trust in government and approval of its past performance.

In many ways the patterns revealed in these analyses were similar to those we found for national government. Yet, there were a few important differences. First of all, the four clusters explained less. Whereas they could account for 27% and 25% of the variance in approval of and trust in national government respectively, for provincial and local government these figures were significantly lower: 17% of the variance in approval of provincial government and 15% of the variance in trust, and 12% of the

variance in approval of local government and 9% of that in trust. In terms of the variables included in the analyses this was predominantly due to the lower impact of race and of political affiliation and involvement in grass-roots organisations.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Table 6.7: Determinants of trust and approval in provincial and local government: Standardised beta's

Determinants	Provincial government		Local government	
	Approval	Trust	Approval	Trust
Racial category	-.10***	-.08***	-.07***	-.01
Age	.01	.01	.00	.01
Gender (female=2)	.02	.01	.01	.02
Highest education	-.02	-.03*	-.01	-.01
Centre-periphery (periphery=2)	-.06***	-.04***	-.02	.02
Living standard	.00	-.04*	.04*	-.02
Unemployed	-.01	-.00	-.00	-.02
Grievances	-.22***	-.18***	-.26***	-.21***
Pessimistic about own future	-.12***	-.08***	-.08***	-.04**
Pessimistic about group's future	-.10***	-.10***	-.07***	-.08***
Supports ANC	.12***	.14***	.04***	.09***
Involvement in grassroots organisations	-.00	-.00	.03**	.03**
R^2	.17	.15	.12	.09

* p< .05;
** p< .01;
*** p< .001

Interestingly, race was much less important in the assessment of provincial and local government than in that of national government. Whereas 10% of the variance in approval of, and 9% of the variance in trust in national government could be accounted for by race alone, these figures were only 3% and 4% for respectively approval and trust in the case of provincial government and 1% for both dimensions in the case of local government. In those cases where race did explain a significant proportion of the variance, it implied that the Blacks were more positive than the Coloureds,

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

the Coloureds more positive than the Asians, and the Asians more positive than the Whites.

The second factor that appears to have been less important was political affiliation and involvement in grassroots organisations. Whereas political affiliation and involvement in grassroots organisations added another 2-3% to the variance in the evaluation of national government accounted for, this figure was at best 2% in the case of trust in provincial government, only 1% in the case of approval of provincial government and trust in local government, and zero in the case of approval of local government. This was mainly due to the reduced impact of political affiliation. In the evaluation of both the provincial and local government, supporting the ANC was less important than in the evaluation of national government. This was especially true for the evaluation of local government. In essence, supporting the ANC meant a more positive evaluation of government. Involvement in grassroots organisations added to a positive evaluation of local government, but had no impact on the evaluation of provincial government.

The objective indicators and characteristics were not relevant in this context either. In the case of provincial government they added 1% to the variance explained. This was mainly because living in the periphery made people evaluate provincial government more negatively. This suggests, of course, that the provincial governments were evaluated differentially by their people. This issue will be attended to in the next section where we compare the provinces with each other.

The subjective evaluation of the socio-economic situation was the only group of variables that more or less kept its weight. It added 12% and 9% to the variance explained in the case of approval of government and trust in provincial government, and 10% and 8% respectively in that of local government. These proportions were more comparable to those we found for the assessment of national government (15% for approval and 12% for trust). The results were essentially identical to those for national government: the more aggrieved people were and the more concerned they were about the future, the less they approved and trusted both provincial and local government.

Another interesting finding in this regard is the relatively large influence of grievances on the evaluation of provincial and especially local government. In the context of the evaluation of national government grievances had approximately the same influence as concerns about the future, or slightly more. However, in the context of the evaluation of provincial and local government, the impact of grievances was considerably larger, especially in the case of local government and with regard to approval of government's past performance. This finding was confirmed by the pattern of correlations of grievances with another indicator of past performance—the extent to which government's decisions had changed someone's personal situation and the situation of the group he/she identified with.[7] The finding that grievances were more strongly related to past performance of governments makes sense. Grievances—as we discussed in Chapter 3—indicated how satisfied or dissatisfied people were with outcomes as distributed. Unsurprisingly, achievements in that respect were linked to government's past performance. That dissatisfaction or satisfaction in this respect especially influenced the evaluation of provincial and local government is understandable and interesting at the same time. Many of the parameters that were used to construct our grievance measure were linked to the responsibilities of the provincial or local government—such as health care services, education, conditions of the neighbourhood, and safety. Therefore, it is understandable that provincial and local governments were evaluated on that score. Correlations computed for the individual items that comprised the grievance measure lent some support to this conclusion.[8] It is, however, interesting that the evaluations of provincial

---

7 The correlations were -.24 for the provincial and local level and -.19 for the national level.

8 A more general parameter—human rights—correlated somewhat stronger with the evaluation of national government (-.25 for national government versus -.20 for provincial government and -.21 for local government). A parameter that was clearly linked to local politics—safety of the neighbourhood—correlated stronger with the evaluation of local politics -.15 for local government versus -.10 for national and provincial government as far as safety was concerned.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

and local government were indeed more than the evaluation of national government dependent on grievance levels, as this suggests that people *did* differentiate between the various political layers of the country.

Finally, it is worth noting that the variance accounted for by the models in Tables 6.4 and 6.7 declined from the national to the provincial to the local level. There was an obvious reason for this decline. After all, an important source of variation in the evaluation of government was government itself. Obviously, there was only one national government, but nine provincial governments and hundreds of local governments. These numbers made for increasing variation in evaluations. In other words, one would expect that going from the national to the provincial to the local level less variance would be explained by general factors that were unrelated to the provinces or municipalities people were living in, while more and more variance in the evaluation of government would be accounted for by differential government itself. We did not have enough cases to account for the differences in evaluation at the local level, but we were able to compare provinces.

Comparison of provinces

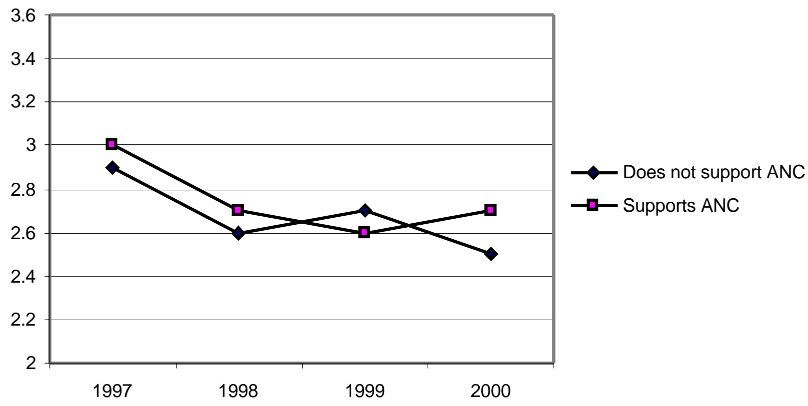
Obviously, the governments of the provinces in which the respondents lived differed in their performance. Political observers would not find it difficult to point to all kinds of differences in the way provinces were governed since 1994. Probably the most obvious difference was that between provinces governed by the ANC and those that were not. Power structures within ANC provincial governments were almost completely a function of decisions by the ANC's National Deployment Committee (NDC). This centralised style of government contrasted with the much larger influence that provincial party structures had in the non-ANC provinces. Another important difference was effected by whether provinces had to reincorporate homelands and "self-governing territories". Not unexpectedly the highest levels of mismanagement since 1994 were found in those provinces where such areas had to be re-incorporated: the Eastern Cape (which had to re-incorporate the homelands Transkei and Ciskei), the Northern Province (which had to re-incorporate the homeland Venda

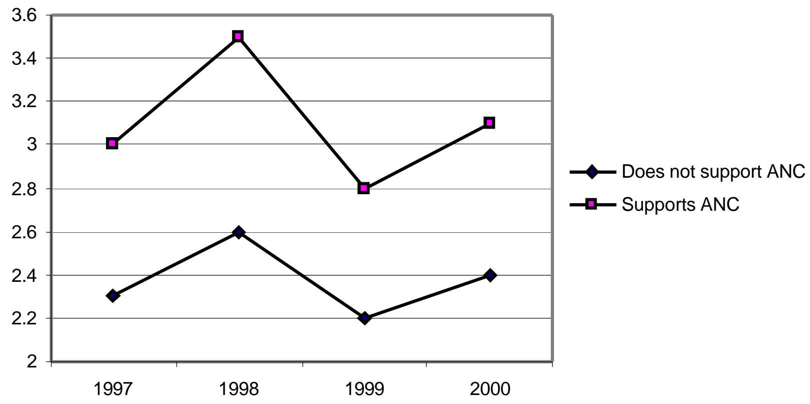
Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

and the self-governing territory Lebowa), and Mpumalanga (which had to take over responsibility for the self-governing territories KaNgwane and Gazankulu). It is especially Mpumalanga that achieved notoriety for corruption scandals. The situation improved, though, and during the year 1999/2000 provincial expenditure was brought into line with revenue (*South African Survey*, Millennium Edition, p. 381).

Not only political observers but also the average citizen noticed differences between governance in various provinces. Depending on the province they lived in, people evaluated their provincial government differently. The fact that people from different provinces showed different levels of trust in their respective governments was reflected in the finding that 4% of the variance in trust in provincial government could be explained by which province people lived in. As the provinces differed in relation to the position of the political parties in them, we again compared supporters of the ANC with non-supporters. This comparison was especially interesting in respect of the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, the two provinces where the ruling party was not the ANC. As we may expect on the basis of our previous analyses, the combined impact of the province where someone lived and the party he/she supported accounted for a larger proportion of the variance in the evaluation of provincial government than province alone (9% instead of 4%). Therefore, as we did with regard to national government, we broke our sample down into those who supported the ANC and those who did not. Subsequently we explored to what extent supporters and non-supporters of the ANC in each province trusted their provincial government and approved its performance. Figures 6.8a-i presents the results for trust in provincial government. As the patterns for trust and approval were very much the same we will only present the figures on trust.

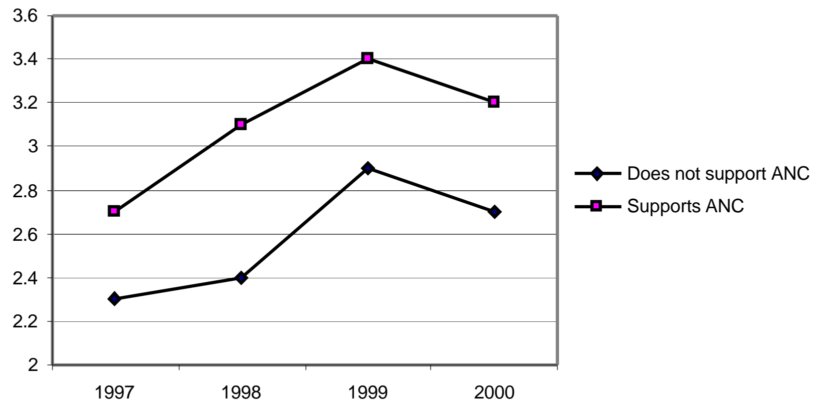
Figure 6.8: Trust in provincial government of supporters and non-supporters of the ANC by province



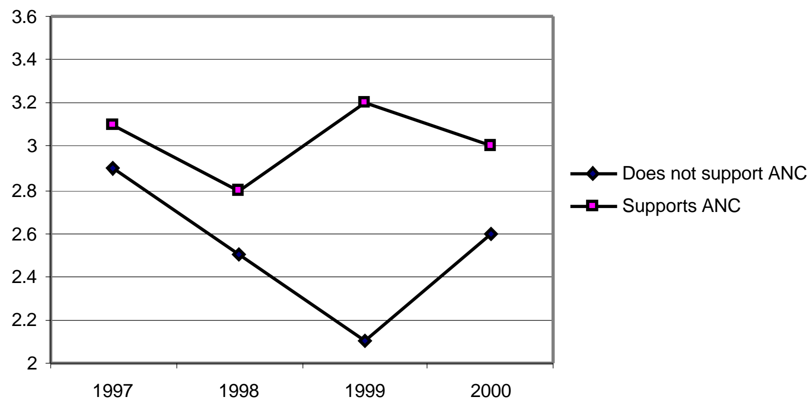


Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

c. Eastern Cape

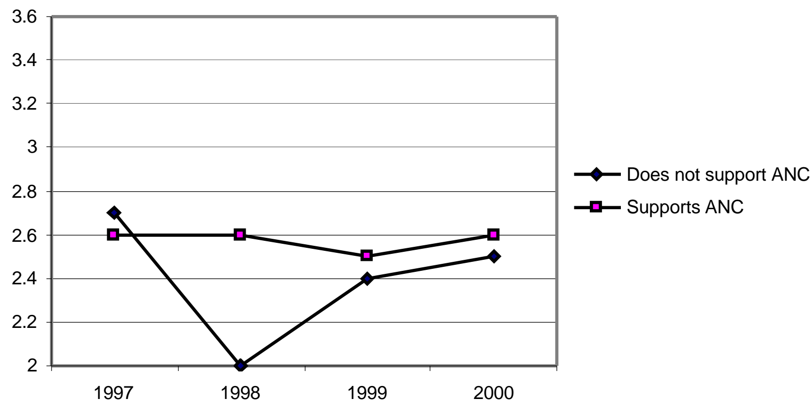


d. Free State

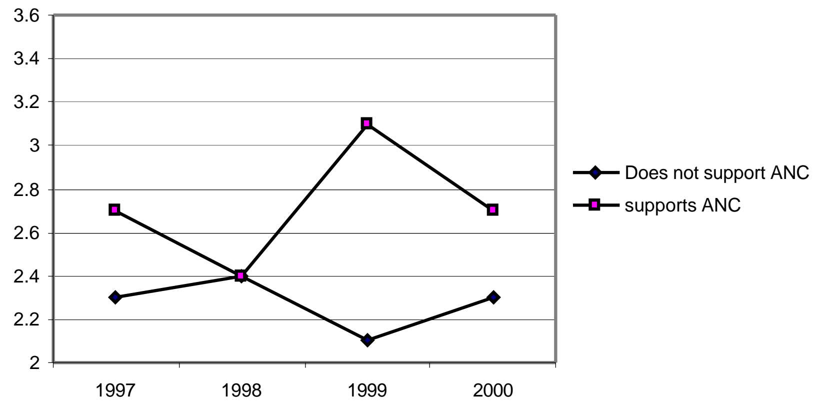


Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

e. KwaZulu-Natal

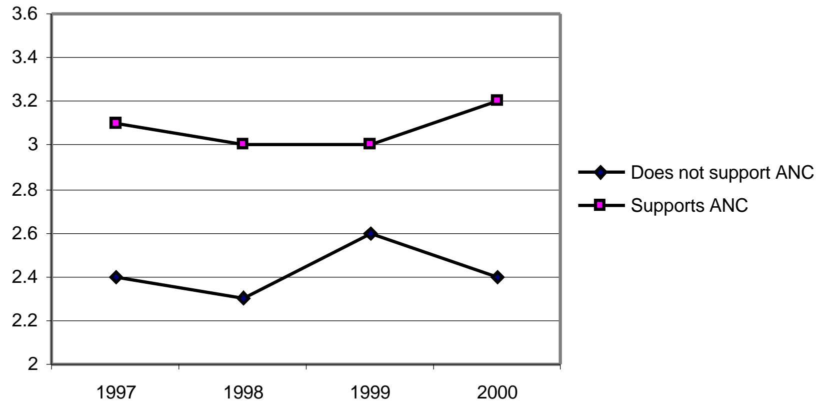


f. Mpumalanga



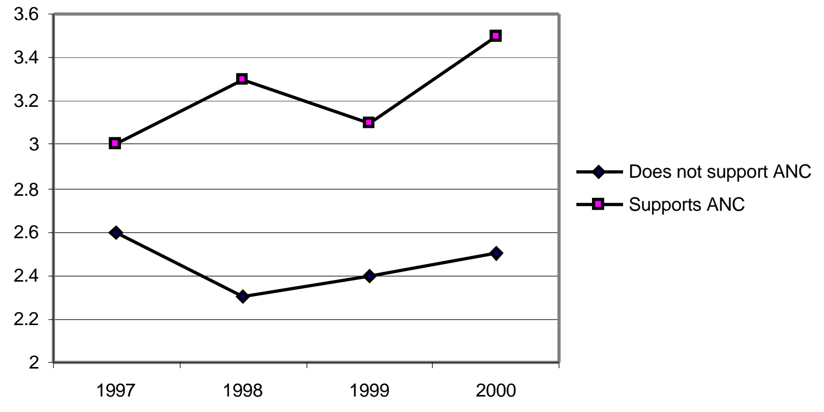
Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

g. Northern Province

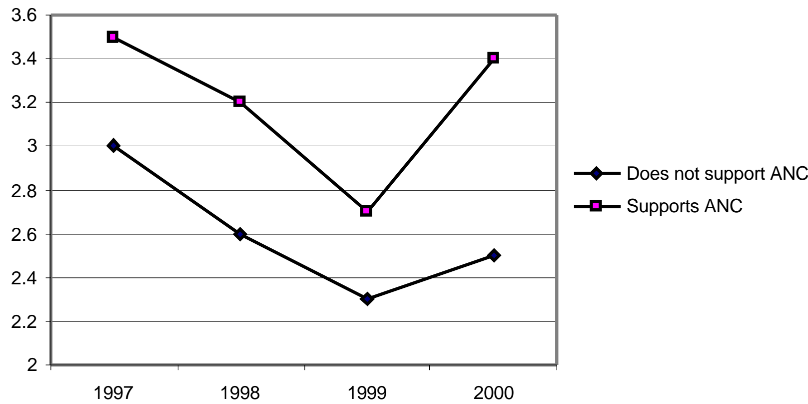


Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

h. Gauteng



i. North West



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

First, with a few exceptions, there was a fair amount of fluctuation in trust in provincial government among both supporters and non-supporters of the ANC. These fluctuations were, of course, related to variation in government performance over time. We will return to this matter in the next paragraph when we discuss the provinces separately. Second, with the exception of the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal, there were significant differences between supporters and non-supporters of the ANC. On the whole, ANC-supporters were significantly more positive about provincial government than non-supporters. This is not surprising, as the ANC was in power in all those provinces where we found such a difference. Third, there were significant differences in evaluation between the provinces. For example, in the year 2000 supporters of the ANC in Gauteng and North West scored high (around 3.5 on our five-point scale), whereas those in Mpumalanga, the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal scored low (around 2.5).

A comparison of the nine provinces revealed some significant differences between supporters and non-supporters of the ANC and in the development of trust over time. Let us first have a look at the two provinces where the ANC was not involved in government—the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. Western Cape supporters and non-supporters

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

alike showed declining trust in provincial government. Indeed, there was hardly any difference between the two groups. With the exception of the year 1998 the same held for KwaZulu-Natal. As far as trust in provincial government was concerned both provinces were in 2000 at the lower end of the scale. In the case of the Western Cape this was the result of a decline in trust, but in KwaZulu-Natal trust in provincial government was low from the very start. Obviously, the absence of an ANC government made ANC supporters trust provincial government far less than in the other provinces where the ANC was in power. On the contrary, non-supporters of the ANC in the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal ranked the provincial government relatively high. Indeed, they trusted their provincial government more than the national government. This should not come as a surprise. In both provinces the polarised level of provincial party politics made it very unlikely that the two strongest parties would endorse each other's rule.

Two provinces showed an increase in trust—Gauteng and the Eastern Cape, and in both cases ANC supporters and non-supporters were of the same opinion. In both provinces the ANC government was able to shift resources to more needy areas, apparently without taking away too much from non-supporters. In Gauteng the comparatively strong economy helped; in the Eastern Cape—one of the poorest provinces in the country—government focused on the alleviation of poverty as well as the eradication of corruption. Investment in the latter province, such as in respect of the proposed Coega harbour project, and increases in orders from international motor manufacturers in Uitenhage may have restored the faith in both national and provincial government among Eastern Cape respondents.

In the remaining five provinces ANC supporters trusted their ANC provincial government much more than non-supporters of the ANC. Mpumalanga in 1998 was the only diversion from this rule. Interestingly, we found only small differences in evaluation of provincial and national government between non-supporters of the ANC in provinces where the ANC was in power. Trust in both levels of government was low. Among ANC-supporters, however, trust in national government was most of the

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

time higher than trust in provincial government, despite the fact that both were ANC governments. This was presumably related to the fact that provincial government had been more often under severe criticism because of failing policies, internal conflicts and the like. This was also the reason why in the Northern Cape, Free State and North West we witnessed sharp declines in trust in provincial government at various points in time.

Conclusion

The evaluation of national government developed according to a cyclical pattern. Since 1994 between one-fifth and one-third of the South African population said that they trusted government "mostly" or "always." It is difficult to say whether this was high or low. Be this as it may, for our purpose the fluctuations over time and the comparisons between population groups and levels of government were of much more interest.

On the whole, trust in government increased at first—immediately after the 1994 election—but then declined until in 1998 it reached the same low level as in 1994. In the run-up to the 1999 election trust increased and reached again a level of one-third of the population, but in 2000 the upward trend levelled off. The black majority, and the coloured, Asian and white minorities went first through different and then through similar trajectories in this regard. Initially—from 1994 to 1995—trust in government increased considerably among the Blacks, but declined considerably among the other population groups. Then it declined among all four groups until the low in 1998 and then increased again among all four groups between 1998 and 2000.

More generally, the various evaluation criteria of government—be they influence on government, approval of government or the assessment of government performance—evolved through the same cycle as trust in government. The four population groups occupied identical relative positions with regard to the various evaluation criteria: the Blacks were the most positive, the Whites the least, and the Coloureds and Asians occupied intermediate positions. However, in one respect the four groups did not differ, namely in their opinion on corruption. Virtually every South African citizen felt that corruption was a big problem. This did not

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

necessarily mean that government had become more corrupt than before. Indeed, one of the factors that distinguished the post-1994 government from the pre-1994 government was the public acknowledgement by the former of the endemic levels of corruption in the public service. The homelands, which had to be reincorporated into South Africa, were especially notorious for the extent of maladministration that pervaded their governments. In reaction to this the Heath Investigative Unit, under the leadership of Judge William Heath, was created to investigate cases of corruption in the Eastern Cape, which included Ciskei and Transkei, the two largest homelands. As the unit grew in stature, its mandate was expanded to include cases elsewhere in the country. The work of this unit and its high public profile contributed a great deal to putting corruption on the public agenda.

Grievances, concerns about the future and political affiliation were the three factors that affected trust in government the most. South Africans who were dissatisfied with their situation, who were pessimistic about their future and who did not support the ANC trusted government the least. Against this background the observed fluctuations and differences in evaluations of government are understandable. On the one hand, differences in grievances, in pessimism and in support for the ANC help one to understand why the four population groups differed so much in their evaluation of government. In the previous chapters we discussed how the Blacks, Coloureds, Asians and Whites differed in these respects and therefore in their evaluation of government. On the other hand, changes in these variables help one to understand why the evaluation of government fluctuated over time. In the years right after the change of power the black majority became optimistic about the future, while the three minorities became pessimistic. In line with these changes evaluations of government changed as well. In the following years the assessment of the situation became less positive for all four population groups until the low point in 1998. In that year the evaluation of government reached an all-time low as well. However, 1998 appeared to be a turning point. Both objectively and subjectively people's situation began to improve and as a consequence their evaluation of government became more favourable.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

These general trends should not come as a total surprise. The first two years after the 1994 election can be regarded as the “honeymoon years” for the post-apartheid dispensation. Although many symbolic changes occurred in these years, it was too short a period to effect major structural changes in the livelihood of most South Africans. By 1996, however, the realisation dawned—and government acknowledged—that some of the electoral promises were over-ambitious and that economic growth was not living up to government predictions. This brought down levels of trust to the lowest point in 1998 when economic prospects were further dashed by the Asian crisis. Trust picked up again in 1999, which may be explained by the effect of the 1999 election campaign on respondents. At the time of our final survey (February 2000) both the president and the minister of finance also expressed very positive sentiments with regard to the country’s economic prospects.

Nor should it come as a surprise that supporters of the ANC evaluated government far more positively than non-supporters. The non-supporters were certainly not exclusively white. On the contrary, as we will see in Chapter 7, substantial proportions of the Coloureds, Asians and Blacks did not support the ANC. Among black South Africans, for example, an important group of non-supporters were Zulus in KwaZulu-Natal who supported the IFP. Interestingly, non-supporters maintained a less positive evaluation of government irrespective of their racial background. Whether they were black, coloured, Asian or white, if they did not support the ANC they evaluated government equally negatively. Black or white supporters of the ANC, on the other hand, evaluated government more positively than coloured or Asian supporters.

National government’s performance was evaluated more positively than provincial and local government performance. However, as far as trust was concerned the three levels of government were rated very similarly. Interestingly, national and local government were rated similarly in regard to people’s perceived influence on government, whereas provincial government was rated significantly lower. This suggests that attempts to bring government closer to the people were more successful with regard to local government than with regard to provincial government. Appar-

ently, provincial government was much more exposed to pressure and public influence relating to its procedures and policies than national government. However, even if this was the case, it was likely to go unnoticed. Provincial government's low visibility also made it difficult to measure up against the direct contact between citizens and local government. In addition, it appears as if provinces were bypassed in terms of governing powers while a host of legislation was passed to strengthen the hand of local authorities to deliver more effectively to their constituencies.

Although the assessment for the various levels of government correlated, there remained enough room for the three levels to vary independently. It was certainly not the case that someone evaluated all or no levels of government positively. This was also apparent in the different configurations of determinants of the three evaluations. At the provincial and local level it was predominantly grievances and concerns about the future that mattered, whereas at the national level race (more specifically ethnolinguistic background) and being affiliated to the ANC or not made the difference. Understandably, the evaluation of provincial or local government was to a lesser extent determined by general factors such as race, grievances and political affiliation. After all, one would expect the assessment of provincial and local government at least partially to be determined by provincial or local government itself. At the provincial level we were actually able to test this assumption and, indeed, three patterns emerged. In the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal provincial government differed politically from national government: the first was NP-dominated and the second IFP-dominated. In these two provinces provincial government was not rated very positively as the ANC supporters were less positive compared to those in other provinces. Gauteng and the Eastern Cape were able to improve the economic situation of the province and therefore the populace of these provinces evaluated provincial government increasingly positively irrespective of their political affiliation. In the remaining provinces government was struck by conflicts and crises at various points in time. As a consequence, evaluation of provincial government went up and down depending on the circumstances in the particular province.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Chapter 7

Political participation

Political participation may take two directions. On the one hand it may involve action in support of the political system; on the other hand it may involve protest action challenging the political system. We argue that in a healthy civil society citizens take part in both types of political participation. Indeed, a robust democracy is served best by solid civil support of the political institutions in combination with vibrant political protest. Both civil support and protest presuppose citizens with an active interest in politics. Investigating political participation thus requires a study of (1) interest in politics, (2) participation in support of the system, and (3) participation in protest politics.

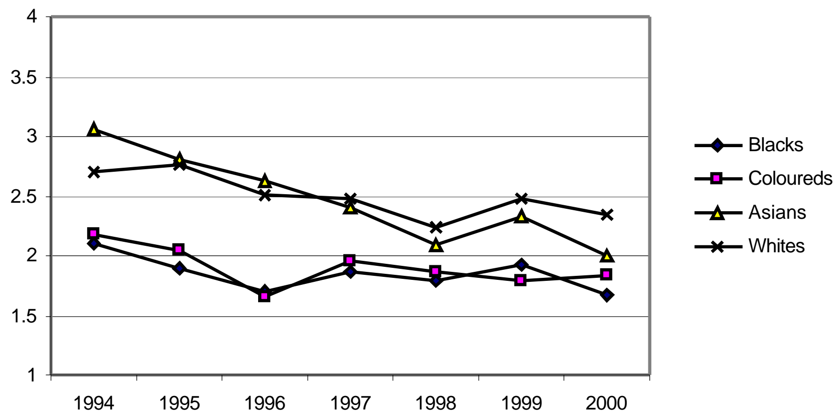
As we mentioned in Chapter 5, it has been argued that in societies where an authoritarian regime transformed into a democratic regime the new regime tends to demobilise the very movements that helped it to come into power (O'Donnell & Schmitter, 1986; Adler & Webster, 1995; Ginsburg, 1996). The argument is largely based on the experiences in Eastern Europe and Latin America and one may wonder whether a similar process of demobilisation took place in South Africa. In terms of our three forms of participation demobilisation would mean a decline in interest in politics and a decrease in participation in both supportive and contentious political action. We will conclude our discussion of the changes in political participation in South Africa with an assessment of the political transition in this respect.

Political interest

From 1994 onwards we asked our respondents to what extent they read about politics in the newspaper, watched politics on television, listened to politics on the radio, and discussed politics with their friends and acquaintances. They could answer these questions on a five-point scale

ranging from "hardly ever" to "one or more times a day". Figures 7.1a - 7.1d presents the results for the four questions.

Figure 7.1a: Reads about politics in newspapers



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Figure 7.1b: Watches politics on television

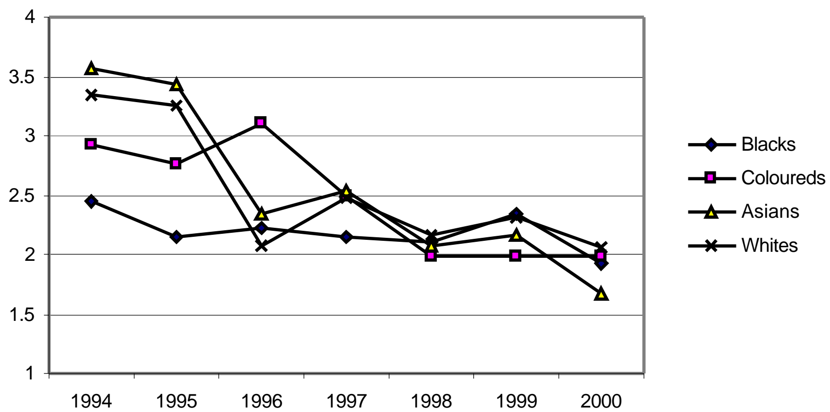


Figure 7.1c: Listens to politics on radio

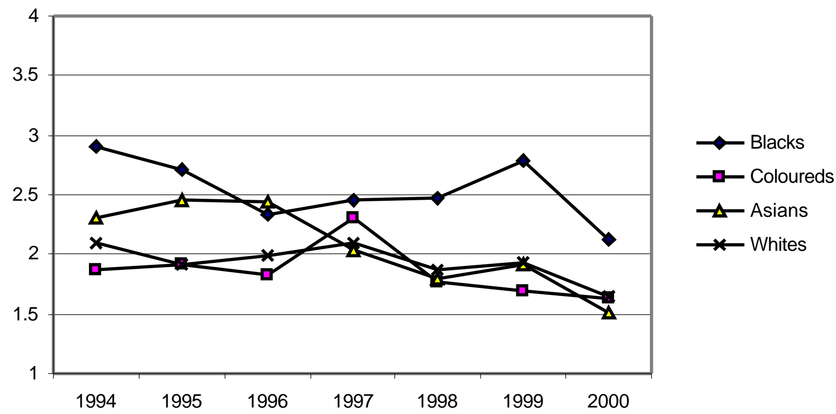
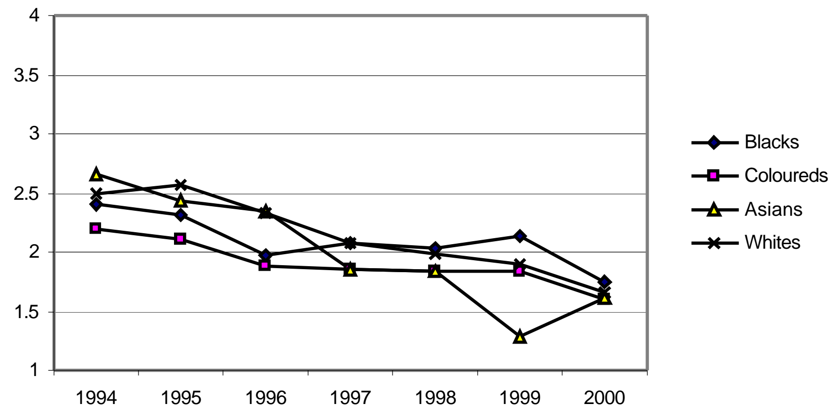


Figure 7.1d: Discusses politics with friends



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

We took the answers as indications of someone's interest in politics. All four indicators of political interest declined over the years. The frequency with which South Africans read about politics in the newspapers, watched politics on television, or listened to politics on the radio declined steadily since 1994. Not surprisingly, they also discussed politics less frequently in

2000 than in 1994. In other words, for quite a few South Africans politics became less part of every day life towards 2000. In a way these results suggest that South Africa is returning to normal political relations. For many years the country was highly politicised, but with the transition to democracy between 1994 and 2000 the political climate seems to have normalised.

The figures reveal interesting differences in media usage between the four population groups. They suggest a racial pattern: Whites and Asians were more inclined than Blacks and Coloureds to use newspapers as source of information. Initially, we observed a similar pattern for television usage but over the years the four racial categories became very much alike in their usage of this medium. Radio, on the other hand, seems to have been a "black" medium. This is not so much a matter of differences in political interest per se, as indicated by the very similar results for the four groups in regard to the frequency with which they discussed politics. They seem to have been similar in terms of political interest, but different in terms of the media they used to satisfy those interests. Further exploration reveals, however, that this was a matter of class rather than race. Once we controlled for living standard, Blacks were consistently using any kind of mass media more often than any other population group. Black South Africans of the highest class were significantly more interested in politics than any other group. Indeed, over the years the gap grew. Thus, what seemed to be typical racial patterns of media usage (Whites and Asians using newspapers more frequently, and Blacks the radio) appeared to be a class-related pattern very much similar to that in Western democracies (Roberts & Bachen, 1981) where newspapers are more typically the medium utilised by the upper class, and television and radio by the lower class.

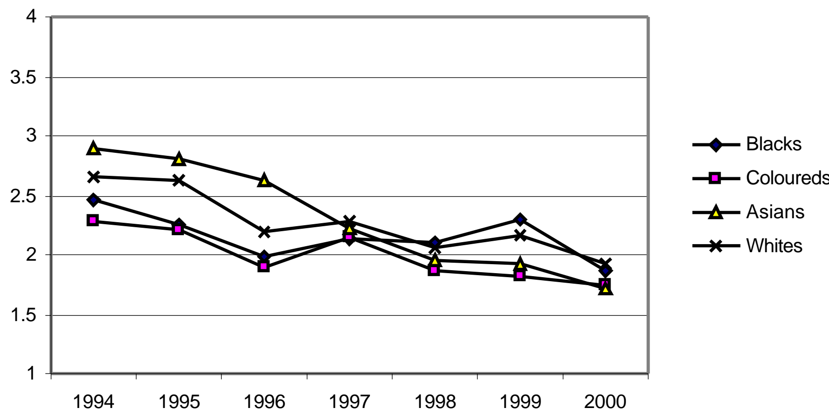
We combined the measures of media usage into a scale that indicated interest in politics (Figure 7.2).[1] The differences in political interest between the four population groups were small, as our findings regarding the discussion of politics already suggested. On the whole, political

[1] The Cronbach's alpha of the scale was .77.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

interest declined among all four racial categories. In 1999—the year of the second election—it increased again, especially among the Blacks and Whites, but in 2000 political interest dropped to the lowest level ever.

Figure 7.2: Interest in politics



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Determinants of political interest

What made people more or less interested in politics? In the following sections we will try to answer this question. We will consequently discuss the impact of five groups of determinants: (1) objective characteristics, (2) feelings of dissatisfaction and expectations of the future, (3) involvement in civil society organisations, (4) feelings of subgroup and national identity, and (5) evaluation of government. Table 7.1 summarises to what extent each group of determinants influenced political interest independently of race.

The figures in the table indicate how much each group of determinants added to the explanation of the observed differences in political interest. As the last row shows, race and the five groups of variables explained almost one-fifth (17% in 1997) to one-third (33% in 1995) of the variance in political interest. Race alone did not make much of a difference, as was already shown in Figure 7.2. The objective

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Ta... 1: Determinants of political interest: R^2 values[1]

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
1.	.01	.02	.02	.00	.01	.01	.00
2. ...ive characteristics	+.21	+.28	+.21	+.14	+.16	+.17	+.21
3. ...isfaction/expectations for the future	+.01	.00	.00	+.01	.00	+.01	.00
4. ...isational involvement	-	+.03	+.02	.00	+.05	+.03	+.01
5. ...dentity	-	-	-	+.01	+.01	+.01	+.01
6. ...tion of government	.00	.00	+.01	+.01	.00	+.01	.00
...	.23	.33	.26	.17	.23	.24	.23

[1] S... hierarchical regression analysis

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

characteristics were the most important determinants. They alone accounted for most of the variance explained. Second in importance was involvement in civil society organisations. Patterns of identification added consistently a small but significant proportion to the explanation of political interest. The assessment of one's societal position and the evaluation of government occasionally added small proportions to the variance explained, although in an unsystematic way. In the paragraphs to come we will discuss each group of determinants separately.

Objective characteristics. In Table 7.2 the results are presented of an analysis that broke down the influence of the objective characteristics on political interest over the years into race and the six other objective characteristics that we employed in previous analyses. Model 1 describes the influence of race alone. Black, coloured and Asian South Africans contrasted with white South Africans. A negative result meant that a group was less interested in politics than the Whites; a positive result that it was more interested. The findings reiterate those depicted in Figure 7.2. During the first three years the Blacks and Coloureds were less interested in politics than the Asians and Whites. During subsequent years the Blacks, Coloureds and Asians were all less interested in politics than the Whites, except for the Blacks who were more interested in politics than every other group in the years 1998 and 1999. Model 2, however, reveals a completely different pattern. This model, which combined the influence of race and the other objective characteristics, shows that once we controlled for the objective characteristics the Whites as a group were the least interested in politics of all four groups. In every Model 2 the negative beta for the Blacks and Coloureds from Model 1 turned into a positive beta. Especially the Blacks were—once we controlled for the objective characteristics—far more interested in politics than any other population group.

These results, of course, allude to the fact that race was confounded by other factors that were important determinants of political interest. The betas for those other factors made it clear that living standard, gender and level of education were the three factors out of the six included in our analysis that were of real influence. The others were far less important. People who had a high living standard had a high level of education, or

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

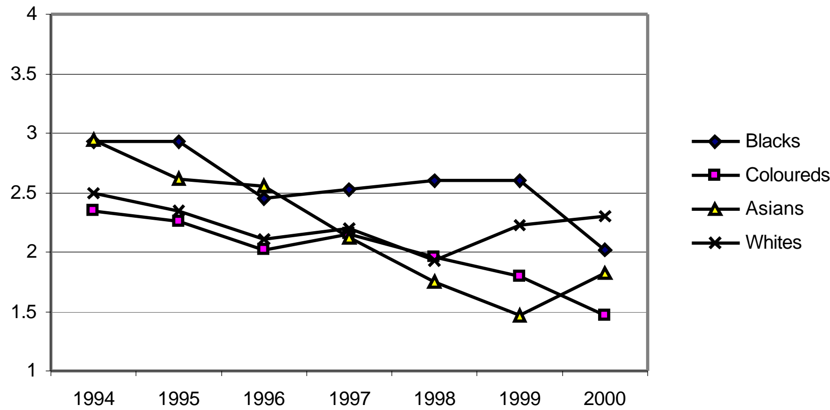
Ta 2: Political interest and objective characteristics: Standardised beta's

Ind nt var	1994		1995		1996		1997		1998		1999		2000	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
Ra														
Bl	-.08	.36	-.16	.43	-.14	.36	-.06	.28	.02	.44	.06	.45	-.02	.30
Cc	-.10	.09	-.11	.14	-.12	.15	-.04	.10	-.05	.10	-.09	.11	-.05	.09
As	.04	-.04	.03	.09	.06	.10	-.01	.03	-.02	.04	-.04	.01	-.03	.00
Ob haracteristics:														
Li ndard		.29		.42		.34		.25		.29		.29		.22
Ge (2)		-.14		-.14		-.16		-.18		-.14		-.08		-.17
Ec		.39		.38		.36		.23		.30		.29		.37
Age		.05		.03		.08		-.01		.01		.09		.10
Unemployed		-.02		-.03		-.03		-.05		.00		-.02		.01
Centre-periphery (periphery=2)		-.01		.06		.06		.04		.00		.01		.04
R^2	.01	.25	.02	.30	.02	.24	.00	.14	.00	.14	.02	.17	.00	.19

were males were more interested in politics than people who did not have any of these characteristics.

Further analyses revealed that it was especially living standard that was responsible for the observed changes in the effect of race. Once we compared groups of roughly the same living standard, black South Africans were apparently the most interested in politics, rather than the least. This is clearly illustrated in Figures 7.3a and 7.3b where political interest is plotted for two levels of living standard.[2] Obviously, political interest was higher among those South Africans who had a higher living standard, but at the same time the Blacks in the highest living standard category were clearly the most interested in politics when compared with members of other groups in the same category. They also seem to have retained their interest in politics longer than the others, resulting in a growing gap between black South Africans on the one side and the remaining population groups on the other side.

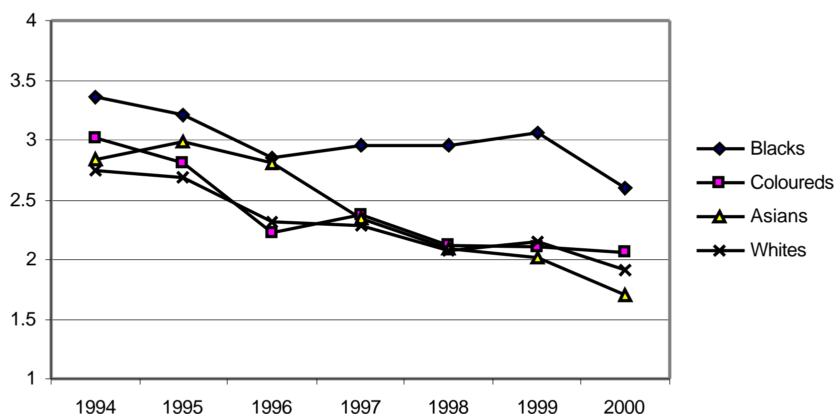
Figure 7.3a: Political interest: Living standard (medium)



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

[2] Based on our living standard measure we split the sample into three sub-samples of approximately equal size. The lowest subsample included very few Whites or Asians. Therefore, we display the medium and highest level only.

Figure 7.3b: Political interest: Living standard (high)



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

A similar dynamic appears to have been at work in regard to level of education, although the impact of education on the link between race and political interest was weaker. Gender, the third factor that had a significant influence on someone's political interest, did not change the link between race and political interest. Women were less interested in politics than men, but this held for each of the population groups.

Thus race did have a significant effect on political interest, opposite to what could have been expected on the basis of a comparison of racial categories alone. If we compare people of the same living standard and level of education—in other words, people of the same social class—black South Africans were *far more* interested in politics than Whites and Asians.

Dissatisfaction and expectations of the future. Feelings of dissatisfaction and expectations of the future added relatively little to the variance explained, and did so in an unsystematic way. If they exerted any influence at all, feelings of dissatisfaction with the current rather than the future situation affected political interest.

Involvement in civil society organisations. Involvement in grassroots organisations increased political interest, as indicated in Chapter 5. As mentioned already, involvement in civil society organisations was the second most important determinant of political interest. Reiterating results

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

already presented in Chapter 5, involvement in organisations that were more oriented toward politics nurtured interest in politics more than involvement in apolitical organisations. The organisations that affected political interest most were political organisations, labour unions, anti-crime organisations, hawker associations and educational organisations. Among the less influential organisations were cultural organisations, churches, burial societies and stokvels.

Patterns of identification. Maintaining a dual identity, that is, a strong subgroup identity in combination with a strong national identity, increased political interest as well. The first four columns of Table 7.3 display political interest for the four patterns of identification we distinguished over the years for which we assessed dual identity. The last four columns of Table 7.3 present the beta-coefficients for the three patterns that implied strong identification of some kind, namely with a subgroup, with South Africa or with both. The analyses suggest that nourishing a dual identity reinforced political interest most, more than any of the other patterns of identification.

Table 7.3: Identity patterns and political interest

Identity	Mean political interest				Standardised beta's [1]			
	1997	1998	1999	2000	1997	1998	1999	2000
No subgroup identity/no national identity	1.94	1.98	1.89	1.61	-	-	-	-
Subgroup identity/no national identity	2.18	2.00	2.18	1.90	.09	-.01	.09	.10
No subgroup identity/national identity	2.28	1.82	1.84	1.85	.06	-.09	-.01	.04
Subgroup identity/national identity	2.31	2.37	2.45	1.93	.11	.06	.17	.10

[1] Contrasting people with one of three identity patterns with people who lack identification in a hierarchical regression analysis; standardized beta's net of race, objective characteristics, assessment of societal situation, and involvement in organisations (cf. Table 7.1).

Interestingly, of the remaining two patterns that implied a strong subgroup identity *or* a strong national identity the former increased political interest more than the latter. In fact, having a national identity but no subgroup identity seems to have actually lowered rather than raised political interest.

Evaluation of government. Political interest was hardly affected by people's evaluation of government. The only factor that had a modest impact was perceived influence on government: The more influence people felt they had on government, the more they were interested in politics. Further exploration of the results revealed, however, that this held among the Blacks and Coloureds only. Among the Asians and Whites we did not find a relation between political interest and perceived influence on government.

In sum, political interest declined over the years of our study. This confirms our findings with regard to political identification and involvement in political organisations. Altogether these findings suggest that politics had become a less central concern in South Africa. This may mean that the country was turning to normal political relations as we suggested, but it may also mean that people were disappointed and turned away from politics. The fact that we did not find any strong relationship with dissatisfaction or concerns about the future or with the evaluation of government suggests that normalisation was the more plausible explanation. This is also suggested by the finding that especially South Africans with a high living standard, with a high level of education and who were males were interested in politics. This is very similar to what one would find in most Western democracies.

The negligible influence of racial background on political interest turned into a strong effect once we controlled for living standard and education. Indeed, the racial comparison was very misleading and could have led to the errant conclusion that the Blacks were less interested in politics than the Asians and Whites. Comparisons between South Africans of the same class position revealed that black South Africans were not only far more interested in politics than any other population group, but that they retained that interest longer than any other group.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

In addition to being influenced by racial background combined with social class (living standard and education) and gender, political interest was determined by involvement in organisations of civil society and dual identity. In a way, involvement in civil society organisations and dual identity both related to the same underlying dimension, namely embeddedness in society. Indeed, political interest is another expression of embeddedness in society. Therefore, it is no surprise to find political interest to be part of that same constellation.

Participation in conventional politics

In 1995 we began to ask people which party they would vote for had there been an election at the time. In 1994 at the time of our first survey the vast majority of South Africans had no experience with elections. Therefore we felt that we could not ask the usual "which party would you vote for" question. Instead we asked people how close they felt to political parties that existed at the time. In the year 1999 the second national election since the transition to democracy was held. In our survey that year we included some questions about participation in the election campaign. Voting and campaigning are the two forms of participation in conventional politics that will occupy us in this section, although most space will be devoted to voting.

Voting intentions

On the eve of the first democratic election in South Africa at least 20 political parties were competing for the people's vote. Many of those parties were not to be taken seriously, but many others were. Our first survey was held approximately one month before the election was to take place. Although a huge effort was underway to teach people how to vote, we were not sure whether a question about voting intentions made sense to respondents who had never voted before and who did not grow up in an electoral democracy. We felt that rather than asking them which party they would vote for, we had better ask how close they felt to each of the more

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Ta[illegible]4: Closeness to a political party in 1994 (%)

	PAC	Azapo	ANC	IFP	SACP	NP	CP	AWB	DP	AVP	FA
Bl[illegible]	12.0	6.9	75.3	10.3	41.7	7.6	1.4	.5	2.7	.3	1.3
Co[illegible]	1.7	.2	17.4	.6	2.4	45.4	.6	.2	3.4	-	.5
As[illegible]	.1	.7	24.9	5.2	3.9	57.3	-	-	8.3	-	.7
W[illegible]	.1	-	1.2	26.7	.2	52.8	25.8	17.8	16.0	28.3	23.9

No[illegible]

PA[illegible]n African Congress

Azapo = Azanian People's Party

AN[illegible]frican National Congress

IFP = Inkatha Freedom Party

SA[illegible]outh African Communist Party

NP = National Party

CP[illegible]servative Party

AWB = Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (Resistance Movement)

DP[illegible]ocratic Party

AVP = Afrikaner Volksparty (People's Party)

FA = Freedom Alliance

serious political parties. Table 7.4 displays the proportions of the four population groups that felt "close" or "very close" to a party.

The pattern we found was very similar to what future party preferences would be like. Most Blacks felt close to the ANC. The two-fifths who felt close to the SACP completely overlapped with those who felt close to the ANC. The vast majority of the Blacks who felt close to the IFP were Zulus from KwaZulu-Natal. Most Whites felt close to one of the "white" parties. Interestingly, there was very little overlap between closeness to the NP and closeness to the other "white" parties. We found a strong negative correlation for the "white right" (the CP, AWB, AVP and FA) and a small positive correlation for the DP. Indeed, very few people who felt close to the NP felt close to any of these other "white" parties as well. On the other hand, we found very strong correlations within the "white right" cluster. Basically, people felt close to all or none of these parties. In the run-up to the election there was a short flirtation of Whites with the IFP, but this never materialised into real votes. Ironically, most Coloureds and Asians felt close to the NP, the party of the former oppressor. Surprisingly small proportions felt close to the ANC. Obviously, the ANC had not been able to win the confidence of the Coloureds and Asians. These two groups were literally torn between black and white politics and as one of the ironies of history they appeared to trust the party of the former oppressor more than the party that fought against apartheid. At the same time, both groups also counted the largest proportion of "politically homeless" people, that is, people who did not feel close to any political party.

Despite the different form we chose for the 1994 survey to tap party preferences, the pattern we found foreshadowed voting intentions in the years to come quite well, as can be seen in Table 7.5. This table presents the voting intentions as they were distributed among the four population groups between 1995 and 2000. The ANC and the SACP entered the election as a coalition, while the NP changed its name to the "New National Party" (NNP) in 1998. At the time of our last survey the merger of the NNP and DP into the Democratic Alliance (DA) had not taken place yet.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Ta[illegible]5: Voting intention (%)

Party	Black						Coloured					
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
ANC/SACP	73.0	75.4	72.2	59.3	67.4	70.4	28.8	25.7	35.9	28.3	33.3	37.4
IFP	11.0	9.2	5.5	3.3	6.1	6.1	.5	-	1.5	-	.4	.5
DP	.1	.1	.4	.3	1.0	1.1	2.8	2.9	1.5	4.9	4.4	14.9
(N)NP	.7	1.3	2.5	3.0	1.8	1.6	44.7	43.8	37.9	34.1	26.4	17.2
FF/CP	.1	.2	-	-	.1	.1	-	-	-	-	-	-
None	13.4	12.5	16.6	23.0	18.8	18.0	22.8	27.1	20.4	25.8	33.4	26.4

Party	Asian						White					
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
ANC/SACP	21.5	27.3	13.8	4.7	3.2	18.9	2.1	2.1	1.6	.5	1.8	3.9
IFP	-	1.5	1.5	-	1.1	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.3	1.6
DP	1.5	3.0	1.5	1.6	7.5	20.7	3.3	4.2	8.1	17.8	32.0	42.4
(N)NP	41.5	34.8	63.1	62.5	26.6	19.3	46.5	40.2	42.9	24.9	21.1	15.6
FF/CP	-	-	-	-	-	-	7.2	8.9	8.9	15.2	8.4	7.2
None	35.4	31.8	18.5	29.7	56.7	38.3	37.5	41.8	35.9	36.1	31.5	26.3

The two "white right" parties of significance were taken together in our analyses.[3]

In terms of "black" and "white" parties the pattern of voting intentions remained very much the same over the years: Blacks would vote for a "black" party, Whites would vote for a "white" party, and the Coloureds and Asians were divided between the two. Voting in South Africa continued to take place along racial lines.

The major electoral realignment in the years of our study came with the decline of the NP in favour of the DP. Whereas in 1995 the NP enjoyed the support of 40% to 50% of the Coloureds, Asians and Whites, and the DP only 1% to 3%, the NP was down to 15% to 20% in 2000, while the DP went up to 15% among the Coloureds, 20% among the Asians and no less than 40% among the Whites. Paradoxically, the former party of apartheid—the NP—had a majority of non-white supporters in 2000, while the DP took over from the NP as the leading party among the Whites.

Other than that very little changed. The ANC lost some support in 1998—the year of dissatisfaction—but recovered. The IFP lost support but continued to be the party of the Zulus from KwaZulu-Natal. In fact, 82% of the party's electorate were Zulus from KwaZulu-Natal. "White right" parties continued to have a small but fairly stable constituency among the Whites.

[3] We limited the table to those parties that drew substantial proportions of intentions to vote for at least one population group. Of the remaining parties, the PAC drew 1% to 2% of the intended votes among the Blacks; the ACDP (the newly formed African Christian Democratic Party) drew 1% to 3% among all population groups; support for Azapo was negligible all along; the UDM (United Democratic Movement, a party newly formed by former officials from the ANC and NP) drew 5% in 1998, 2.3% in 1999 and 1% in 2000, approximately equally distributed over the population groups.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Equally important are the proportions of the respondents who did not express a voting intention.[4] These proportions reflected the uncertainties and concerns of the electorate. They increased when established preferences became questionable, as was obviously the case with the Whites and Blacks in 1998. The proportions were higher among the Coloureds and Asians, the two groups that were torn between the black and white parties. The proportions were also higher in periods of political realignment, as was the case with the growth of the DP at the expense of the NP. Indeed, the figures suggest that an increase in "no votes" preceded electoral realignment.

In the next few sections we will explore the determinants of voting intentions. We will try to find an answer to two separate questions: (1) Why did some people intend to vote, while others did not? (2) Why did people prefer one party to another? It is not uncommon to break the voting process down into these two issues and to assume that different dynamics were at work in each.

Voting. Although the majority of South Africans intended to vote had there been an election, one-fifth to one-quarter of the electorate, depending on the year, did not intend to vote. In this section we will try to understand why. Why did some people intend to refrain from voting, despite the fact that many of them only recently acquired the right to vote?

The figures in Table 7.5 suggest that the intention to vote was at least partially racially determined, that is, the Blacks were always at the lower extreme (relatively few abstentions) and the Whites and Asians alternately at the higher end of the scale (relatively many abstentions). Multivariate analyses, however, showed a more complex picture. Once we controlled for other factors—objective characteristics such as social class and gender, dissatisfaction with one's situation and future expectations, involvement in

---

4 This category encompassed people who did not intend to vote, did not know what party to vote for, or did not answer the question. Unfortunately, due to different coding procedures used for this question in the various surveys we were unable to distinguish between these reasons for not expressing a voting intention. Comparisons for those years when we could make the distinction suggest, however, that the groups were very much similar.

societal organisations, patterns of identity, evaluation of government, and political interest—race was apparently no longer important. In fact, its influence in the last two years seemed the reverse of that in the first four years: In 1999 and 2000 the Whites appeared to be more prepared to vote than the others, whereas in the years before that they were the least prepared. Race, then, did not have the impact on people's preparedness to vote, as suggested by univariate analyses. In fact, other factors related to race accounted for the differences.

In an attempt to understand which factors, we conducted the same sequence of analyses we did in the previous section in regard to political interest. We added political interest to the list of potential determinants, as the intention to vote is presumably related to someone's interest in politics. Independently of race, the factors that were included in the analysis (objective characteristics, dissatisfaction and expectations of the future, involvement in societal organisations, patterns of identity, evaluation of government, and political interest) accounted for 7% to 10% of the variance in the intention to vote. Adding race to the equation did not change the variance explained, with the exception of the year 1996.

On the basis of these analyses we concluded that some factors were *not* important as independent determinants of voting intentions, namely the two socio-economic indicators (living standard and being unemployed), dissatisfaction, identity and perceived influence on government. The remaining factors accounted for almost all the variance in voting intentions (Table 7.6). For those who were high or low on these factors, the table presents the proportions of the respondents who said that they would not vote or did not know what party to vote for.

With the exception of the election year (1999) younger people were more inclined to vote. This is surprising because the reverse pattern is common in most developed democracies. It could mean that the older generation had more difficulty to adapt to the new political reality, or that the younger generation was more enthused by the transition to democracy. On the basis of our surveys we cannot decide which of the two explanations was more likely. However, the figures for the last two years

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

suggest that the country was gradually moving toward a pattern more common to most Western democracies.

Initially, females were more inclined to abstain from voting than males, but during the last few years gender stopped to be a factor of importance. Indeed, in 2000 the pattern was reversed although the differences were too small to warrant further comment.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Table 7.6: No intention to vote (%)

Variables		1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Age:							
	young	16.8	18.0	17.3	23.3	24.0	19.8
	old	23.4	22.1	25.5	30.9	21.6	21.2
Gender:							
	male	17.5	17.3	16.8	25.0	21.8	21.9
	female	20.6	21.6	23.9	26.9	24.0	19.2
Education:							
	low	16.3	15.9	17.5	23.8	20.9	16.7
	high	23.8	25.5	25.1	29.6	25.0	23.1
Living in							
	centre	25.4	25.6	25.8	24.9	27.4	28.1
	periphery	16.2	16.7	18.2	26.4	20.8	16.7
Future expectations:							
	optimistic	14.0	13.4	14.9	19.2	18.0	17.5
	pessimistic	27.2	27.6	27.6	32.9	29.1	24.4
Involvement in organisations:							
	low	24.0	21.0	21.3	31.9	25.2	24.5
	high	13.7	17.5	19.6	22.6	21.5	17.3
Trust in government:							
	low	24.8	23.1	22.7	28.5	26.3	25.2
	high	10.1	12.6	13.8	19.6	16.8	9.8
Political interest:							
	low	19.6	19.9	25.1	30.3	27.9	20.3
	high	18.7	19.0	16.6	21.6	19.4	20.4

Note: All factors are dichotomised by means of a median split.

Education had a solid but unexpected influence on voting intentions: Higher educated people were less inclined to vote than lower educated people. Further exploration of the data revealed that interaction between education and racial background was responsible for this pattern: If education made a difference among the Blacks at all, it was the lower educated people who were less prepared to vote. Among the Coloureds, Asians and Whites, however, people with higher levels of education were less inclined to vote, more so because they did not know what party to vote for than because they did not want to vote. This finding, obviously, points to the confusion and uncertainty that occupied the minds of these population groups.

People who lived in the centre (Gauteng and Western Cape) were less prepared to vote than people who lived in the periphery. This pattern is common in most democracies. Turnout at elections is usually smaller in urban than in rural areas.

Pessimism about the future made people less willing to vote, while optimism made them more willing to do so. This was apparently a consistent pattern over the years. It suggests that voting in itself was an act in support of the system. In Hirschman's (1970) frame of reference voting could be interpreted as an expression of loyalty. Within that same framework abstention could be interpreted as "voice", that is protest or opposition, or "exit", that is withdrawal. This is also what other findings suggest. People who were not involved in civil society organisations were less prepared to vote and so were people who did not trust government. Lack of trust was a particularly strong determinant of voting abstinence. Finally, people who were less interested in politics were less inclined to vote as well. The cluster of pessimism about the future, no involvement in civil society, little trust in government and little interest in politics accounted for most of the variance in willingness to vote. Apparently, the readiness to vote was to a large extent determined by factors that indicate embeddedness in society and confidence that government would take care of the situation.

Party preference. The preference people expressed for one of the political parties was apparently largely determined by race. Therefore,

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

depending on the population group they belonged to, people saw themselves faced with particular choices. The choice of the Blacks was mostly restricted to the ANC and IFP. In fact, the options were even more limited, as only Blacks in KwaZulu-Natal were really faced with this choice. In the other provinces very few Blacks intended to vote for the IFP. In the whole of the country only negligible proportions of the Blacks intended to vote for the PAC or Azapo. The Coloureds and Asians made their choice between the ANC and the NP (later also DP). The Whites restricted their choice to the NP, DP and the white right (CP, AVP or FF). This pattern was also observed in 1994: Hardly any Black felt close to a white party, hardly any White felt close to a black party, and the Coloureds and Asians were torn between the main white and main black party. We will discuss party preferences for the four population groups separately, restricting ourselves to the choices they were actually faced with.

We will first try to determine why Blacks in KwaZulu-Natal preferred the ANC or alternatively the IFP. As mentioned, the choice between the ANC and IFP was in practice restricted to that province. Over the years the proportion of Blacks in that province who intended to vote for the ANC remained fairly stable (48% in 1995 and 53% in 2000), while the support for the IFP declined (52% in 1995 to 36% in 2000). The set of explanatory variables we employed before we were able to explain proportions of the variance in party preferences of the Blacks in KwaZulu-Natal ranged from 20% to almost 50%.[5] This was predominantly due to the variables listed in Table 7.7.

---

[5] In this analysis of the party preferences of the Blacks in KwaZulu-Natal and in the subsequent analyses for the three other population groups we employed the following strategy: First we conducted regression analyses with the complete set of dependent variables both for the years separately and collapsed. On the basis of these analyses we selected those independent variables that contributed significantly to the explanation of party preference in this specific case. With this smaller set of independent variables we ran the regression analyses anew in order to check whether they could account for roughly the same proportion of variance as the full range of independent variables. Finally, we compared respondents who preferred the one party with those who preferred the other on the selected independent variables. These comparisons are discussed in the text.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Preference for the IFP over the ANC appeared objectively to be a matter of age and living standard. Blacks in KwaZulu-Natal who intended to vote for the IFP rather than the ANC were older and had a lower living standard. Subjectively, the evaluation of someone's personal situation and of government played a role.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Table 7.7: Correlates of party preference among Blacks in KwaZulu-Natal

Variables	ANC	IFP
Age	35	40
Living standard	4.4	3.2
Dissatisfaction	4.3	4.6
Trust in government	3.1	2.3
Ethnic identity	3.4	3.5
Strong subgroup/strong national identity	20%	11%
Strong subgroup/no national identity	61%	73%

Blacks in KwaZulu-Natal who had a preference for the IFP were more dissatisfied with their personal situation and trusted government less. Distrust of government appeared to be a factor of particular significance. Preference for the IFP over the ANC included an identity component as well. IFP supporters had a stronger ethnic identity than ANC supporters, although the difference was small and certainly not as large as one would perhaps expect in view of the ethnic orientation of the IFP. As discussed in our chapter on identity, most inhabitants of KwaZulu-Natal combined a strong subgroup identity (predominantly ethnic identity) with a weak national identity. Indeed, KwaZulu-Natal apparently had the highest proportion of people with this identity pattern. At the same time, of all the provinces it had the lowest proportion of people with both a strong subgroup identity and a strong national identity. Both supporters of the ANC and IFP exhibited this general identity pattern, but the IFP supporters did so more distinctly than the ANC supporters. Over 80% of each group displayed a strong subgroup identity, but only one out of eight IFP

supporters combined that with a strong national identity, against two out of eight ANC supporters.

In practice, coloured and Asian South Africans faced a choice between the ANC and the NP. In the course of the years the NP lost much of its appeal to the DP. During the first few years, however, support for the DP was still negligible. Ironically, the Coloureds and Asians remained much longer loyal to the NP than the white population. In 2000, however, coloured and Asian support for the DP and the NP equalised. We will first discuss our findings for the coloured population and then for the Asian population. For both groups we will start with the choice between the "black" party (ANC) and the two "white" parties (NP and DP). Next we will explore the dynamics of the choice between the NP and the DP.

In 1995, 37% of the Coloureds who expressed a voting intention said that they would vote for the ANC; 58% preferred the NP and 4% the DP. In 2000 this pattern changed significantly in that 51% intended to vote for the ANC, 23% for the NP and 20% for the DP. We treated this division of voting intentions for practical and substantial reasons as two choices: between the ANC and the NP/DP, and between the NP and the DP. The latter choice we will only investigate for the last year of our study, as this was the only year that showed large enough numbers for further analysis. The practical reason for collapsing the NP and DP was that in the first five years the support for the DP was too small for separate analyses. One could, however, also argue that the choice between the ANC and NP/DP was fundamentally different from the choice between the NP and DP. In any event, we conducted the same sequence of analyses as we did for the Blacks in KwaZulu-Natal for each of the two choices.

We were able to explain between 12% and 40% of the variance in preference for the ANC or the NP/DP among the coloured population. Eventually, the eight variables in Table 7.8, panel a, turned out to be the most important. Coloured South Africans who intended to vote for the NP/DP appeared to be lower educated, to live more often in the periphery, and were more often females. They were slightly more dissatisfied with their personal situation although the differences were small, and they trusted government less. In terms of their identity, they displayed a

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

stronger ethnic and class identity. Among NP/DP supporters this was more often combined with a lack of national identity.

Table 7.8: Correlates of party preference among coloured South Africans

a. ANC versus NP/DP			b. NP versus DP		
	ANC	NP/DP		NP	DP
Gender (female)	53%	58%	Dissatisfaction	3.6	3.5
Education	7.7	7.0	Pessimism about future	4.0	3.4
Living in centre	49%	64%	Trust in government	2.5	2.4
Dissatisfaction	3.9	4.0	Class identity	3.0	3.1
Trust in government	3.0	2.5	Ethnic identity	3.2	3.5
Class identity	3.0	3.2	Strong national identity	34%	53%
Ethnic identity	3.3	3.4			
Strong subgroup/no national identity	41%	50%			

Our set of independent variables could explain 30% of the choice between the NP and DP in the year 2000. This time the objective characteristics did not make much of a difference, but the evaluation and identity variables did (Table 7.8, panel b). People who said that they would vote for the DP were more satisfied with their personal situation and less concerned about their future. They also trusted government more. In regard to their identity, Coloureds who intended to vote for the DP displayed a stronger ethnic identity and a stronger class identity. They also more often had a strong national identity.

Of the Asian population who said they were prepared to vote, 33% intended in 1995 to vote for the ANC, 64% for the NP and 2% for the DP. In 2000 the Asian constituencies of the three parties were of almost equal size: 31% for the ANC, 31% for the NP, and 34% for the DP. We followed the same method of data analysis, which resulted in the findings presented in Table 7.9. We were able to explain around 30% of the variance in voting intentions for both the choice between the ANC and NP/DP, and the choice between the NP and DP.

Asians who said they would vote for the NP or DP rather than the ANC were more often females, were lower educated and lived more often

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

in the periphery (provinces other than Gauteng and the Western Cape). They were obviously more dissatisfied with their personal situation and more concerned about their future. Their evaluation of govern ment was far less positive. They trusted government less and they felt less that they could influence government. As far as identity was concerned, more than half of both groups displayed a strong subgroup identity, but only one-quarter of those among the NP/DP supporters combined a strong subgroup identity with a strong national identity, whereas half of the ANC supporters with a strong subgroup identity also had a strong national identity.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Table 7.9: Correlates of party preference among Asian South Africans

a. ANC versus NP/DP			b. NP versus DP		
Variables	ANC	NP/DP	Variables	NP	DP
Gender (female)	48%	59%	Age	36	37
Education	9.9	9.1	Living standard	7.0	7.5
Living in centre	49%	64%	Education	9.0	10.5
Dissatisfaction	3.7	4.0	Living in centre	22%	17%
Pessimism about own future	3.7	4.0	Unemployed	8%	14%
Trust in government	2.8	2.3			
Influence on government	4.1	3.5			
Strong subgroup/strong national identity	24%	13%			
Strong subgroup/no national identity	29%	43%			

The choice between the NP and DP was hardly a matter of subjective feelings or identity among the Asians. As mentioned, we compared Asians who in the year 2000 intended to vote for the NP with those who intended to vote for the DP. Asians who said they would vote for the DP had a higher living standard, were more often unemployed, lived more often in the periphery, were higher educated, or were older. The latter relationship was especially true for people with lower levels of education.

Among the white population the electoral realignment was the most dramatic. Whereas the extreme right parties (FF and CP) enjoyed stable support among white South Africans of approximately 10%, the positions for the NP and DP changed almost completely. In 1995, three-quarters of the Whites intended to vote for the NP; in 2000 this was down to one-fifth, whereas intended votes for the DP went from 5% of the potential votes to 58%. What happened? Why did the white population defect the NP in favour of the DP? In an attempt to understand we conducted the same sequence of analyses we did before (Table 7.10). Our set of independent variables could account for 12% to 22% of the variance in preference for the NP or DP. The analyses suggested a number of possible reasons. Potential supporters of the DP had a higher living standard and a higher education than potential supporters of the NP. They were also less involved in civil society organisations.

Table 7.10: Correlates of party preference among white South Africans

a. NP versus DP			b. NP/DP versus FF/CP		
Variables	NP	DP	Variables	NP/DP	FF/CP
Living standard	7.3	7.6	Age	46	45
Education	11.4	12.2	Education	12.0	11.0
Pessimism about own future	4.4	4.1	Living in centre	52%	40%
Pessimism about group's future	4.5	4.1	Pessimism about group's future	4.4	5.0
Involvement in organisations	1.0	0.8	Class identity*	2.9	2.9
Ethnic identity	3.5	3.3	Ethnic identity	3.4	3.8
Strong national identity	39%	22%	Trust in government	2.2	1.8
			Influence on government	3.3	2.8

* Controlled for ethnic identity class identity did make a difference. If ethnic identity is strong class identity of NP/DP supporters is 2.6 and of FF/CP supporters 2.5; if ethnic identity is weak class identity of NP/DP supporters is 3.1 and of FF/CP supporters 3.0.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

More importantly, however, DP supporters were less concerned about their own future and the future of their group. Moreover, NP supporters displayed a stronger ethnic identity, which they combined more frequently with a strong national identity. This suggests that the transition from NP to DP was a modernisation process in which the more enlightened part of the white population moved from the NP to the DP.

A move in the other direction resulted in a choice for the white right—the conservative parties to the right of the NP. With the exception of the survey in 2000 we could explain between 13% and 25% of the variation in that direction.[6] Expressing a preference for the white right resulted from a mixture of objective and subjective factors. Objectively, white South Africans who supported the FF or the CP were in comparison to those who supported the NP or the DP younger, less educated, and more frequently living in the periphery. Subjectively, they were far more concerned about the future of the group they identified with. It was not a surprise that compared to the supporters of the NP and the DP they displayed a strong ethnic identity. Nor was it a surprise that they had little trust in government and did not feel that they had much influence on government.

Party preference appeared to be determined by objective characteristics (such as living standard, age, gender, education, and living in the centre or the periphery); subjective feelings (such as dissatisfaction or concerns about the future, and evaluation of government, especially trust in government); and identity (especially ethnic identity and national identity). A preference for the ANC vis-à-vis the IFP among the Blacks or the NP/DP among the Coloureds and Asians was related to higher living standard, higher education, living in the centre, being younger, and being more satisfied, having more confidence in the future, showing less ethnic identification but stronger national cum subgroup identity. A preference for the DP versus the NP among the Coloureds was predominantly related to subjective factors, such as being more satisfied, less concerned about the future, trusting government and having a stronger ethnic, class and

6 In 2000 we could explain only 6% of the variance in preference between the NP/DP and the FF/CP.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

national identity. Among the Asians, on the other hand, objective factors predominantly fostered preference for the DP. Among the Whites some of the objective factors were influential: A higher living standard and a higher level of education made people more likely to vote for the DP. At the same time, some of the subjective factors were influential as well: Being less concerned about the future made the Whites more prepared to vote for the DP. However, weak ethnic and weak national identification were related to preference for the DP among the Whites. Finally, preference for the white right vis-à-vis the NP/DP among the Whites was similarly a matter of objective and subjective factors: Being less educated, more concerned about the future, having a strong ethnic identity and a negative evaluation of government made Whites more prepared to vote for the white right.

In sum, education, living standard, satisfaction or dissatisfaction, concerns about the future, ethnic and national identity, and trust in government were the main parameters that controlled the choice between the ANC and the IFP among the Blacks, the choice between the ANC and the NP and DP among the Coloureds and Asians, and the choice between the NP, DP and extreme right among the Whites.

Campaigning

In 1999 the second national election took place in the free South Africa. In the course of the election campaign people could take part in all kinds of campaign activities. We asked our respondents whether they would attend rallies of the various political parties and would work for an election campaign. Table 7.11 shows what proportions of the four population groups would take part in these forms of conventional political participation. Obviously, the black population was much more inclined to participate in campaign activities than any other population group. The Coloureds and Asians were less inclined to do so, but were at the same level, and the Whites were the least prepared to take part in campaign politics.

Table 7.11: Taking part in election campaigns (%)

Race	Would attend rally	Would work in election campaign
Black	61.2	49.4
Coloured	33.3	28.3
Asian	24.1	26.7
White	15.2	10.4

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

The responses to the questions on the two activities correlated strongly (Pearson r = .71). Thus, we combined the two into a single indicator of preparedness to take part in election campaigns. Subsequently we conducted the same sequence of analyses as we employed in the previous sections. These analyses led to the conclusion that people who were ready to take part in campaign activities were younger, more often males, and more often unemployed (Table 7.12). As far as gender was concerned further analyses revealed that this was largely a matter of differences in political interest. Females were less interested in politics than males and therefore they participated less in election campaigns. On the other hand, the findings also suggested that taking part in campaign politics was a matter of "biographical availability" (McAdam, 1986). Youth, males[7] and the unemployed had more discretionary time and were therefore more likely to participate in electoral campaigns. Moreover, people were more willing to participate the more they were involved in civil society organisations. Indeed, civil society organisations acted as a link between citizens and politics. People who were prepared to take part in electoral campaigns had a stronger national identity. Identification with the nation apparently fostered this form of political participation. Finally, for obvious reasons people's readiness to participate in electoral campaigns was strongly related to their political attitudes. South Africans who said they would participate in campaign politics trusted the government more and felt more often that they could influence government and were also more interested

[7] In a society with traditional relations between the sexes, on the one hand, and a large proportion of the females working, on the other hand, females had less discretionary time to spend.

in politics. Together these variables could explain 21% of the variance in campaign participation.

Table 7.12: Correlates of campaign activities

Variables	Would not take part	Would take part
Age	44	38
Gender	58%	53%
Unemployed	20%	32%
Involvement in organisations	1.0	1.4
Strong subgroup/strong national identity	31%	40%
Trust in government	2.6	3.3
Influence on government	3.6	4.3
Political interest	2.0	2.4

Participation in contentious politics

Between 15% and 20% of the South African population took part in contentious politics during the past seven years. Most of the time they participated in peaceful action but small proportions (3-5%) participated also in forceful or even violent action. Compared to other liberal democracies these were substantial figures. Contentious politics continued to be an important part of political life in South Africa.

Our figures resulted from answers to the question of how many times people had taken part in protest actions during the past twelve months. We made a distinction between *peaceful* protest actions like signing petitions, displaying posters, attending rallies, taking part in marches, demonstrating, painting slogans on walls, stay-aways and so on; more *forceful* protest actions, like occupying buildings, blocking traffic, and all kinds of boycotts, such as rent, school and consumer boycotts; and *violent* protest actions that implied the use of violence against people and property. Table

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

7.13 shows which proportions of the four population groups took part in peaceful action.[8]

Table 7.13: Participation in peaceful protests (%)

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Blacks	19.4	15.2	14.7	17.0	17.9	23.6	19.2
Coloureds	5.9	13.1	6.7	10.3	11.8	18.2	18.3
Asians	9.3	7.2	9.4	10.9	4.6	2.4	9.6
Whites	4.2	3.3	3.9	5.6	15.7	4.9	5.9

Obviously, most protest activity in South Africa stemmed from its black citizens. Throughout the period of our study some 15% to 25% of the black population took part in peaceful protest. For the other population groups the percentages were much smaller, except for the Coloureds in the last two years of our study. In absolute numbers it was even more obvious that contentious politics in South Africa in these years was to a large extent black politics. After all, 15% to 25% of the Blacks were in absolute numbers more people than the other three population groups altogether. Nevertheless, substantial proportions of each population group did take part in political protest.

What were these people protesting about? We asked respondents who reported that they had taken part in political protest for which issues they were protesting. We divided the issues into work-related issues, issues related to the provision of public goods and the cost of living, rights issues, issues related to the values people held, and more general political issues (Table 7.14). Naturally, most protest issues were related to the provision of public goods like housing, education, health care, safety, and public services such as running water, electricity, public transportation and

8 The figures for forceful and violent action were too small for further analyses. The racial patterns for these two forms of protest were, however, similar to that for peaceful action: Very little protest participation was reported by the Asians and Whites; the Blacks were initially responsible for most protest; and the Coloureds were at the same low level as the Asians and Whites, but in the last few years the Blacks and Coloureds showed the same level of protest participation.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

roads. Governments are supposed to deliver these goods to citizens and if they fail to do so people may react with protest.

Table 7.14: Issues people protested for in the past year

Issues	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Work related issues:							
Job opportunities	.6	5.2	7.2	8.7	11.3	11.8	9.3
Working conditions	.6	1.6	1.9	.8	2.4	9.3	7.9
Wages	-	-	-	-	-	21.5	21.8
Equality at work	.3	.3	1.6	3.0	.2	1.9	1.7
Affirmative action	.3	.3	.3	1.1	-	.2	.2
Provision of public goods:							
Housing	3.3	19.5	19.7	23.8	26.2	16.4	12.7
Education	3.3	15.3	13.4	14.8	19.0	14.6	12.4
Health care	.3	2.3	1.3	5.2	4.3	2.3	2.5
Safety	11.9	20.5	7.8	7.7	20.2	24.8	19.5
Public services	-	2.9	-	1.4	2.2	15.5	12.9
Costs of living	10.0	22.5	20.9	30.3	29.1	13.9	10.8
Rights issues:							
Human rights	1.9	6.5	2.8	7.9	5.3	7.9	8.1
Women's rights	-	.3	.3	7.7	1.7	.9	1.9
Children's rights	-	2.3	2.5	4.1	7.9	5.8	4.1
Values:							
Culture/religion	1.1	2.9	2.5	1.1	1.9	.5	.6
Conservative values	-	.3	1.3	4.9	4.3	.2	.8
Animals/nature	-	-	1.9	-	1.0	.5	1.0
Government/political issues	1.4	5.5	1.3	4.6	2.9	5.8	5.0

Interestingly, we registered two different patterns over time. Housing, education and health care issues peaked in the years 1997 and 1998. These years also stood out in the previous chapters on dissatisfaction and evaluation of government. The findings regarding protest issues confirmed our earlier conclusion that 1997 and 1998 were years of frustration and discontent. This is also illustrated by the figures in regard to the cost of living, which showed a peak in 1997 and 1998 as well. However, for both

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

the cost of living and for housing, education and health care the situation improved, as is evidenced by the decline in protest for these issues. On the other hand, the provision of two other public goods—safety and public services—appears to have deteriorated when one considers the protest figures. Both issues brought substantially increased proportions of protesters on the streets. In view of socio-economic development in South Africa this should not come as a surprise. The problems regarding safety and public services became so pervasive and such a major concern for every single citizen that an increase in protest was to be expected.

Work-related issues more frequently became the subject of political protest as well, especially working conditions, wages, and job opportunities. With the high unemployment rate in South Africa job opportunities would obviously be a protest issue. Interestingly, however, equality issues or affirmative action programmes did not generate much protest.

Rights issues sparked a small but certainly not negligible proportion of protest during the years of our study. Most protest activity concerned human rights issues in general, but increasingly children's rights became a matter of concern as well. Women's rights issues only played a marginal role in the generation of protest.

Values—be they cultural or religious, conservative or post-material (animal rights or nature conservation)—did not play a central role in staging protest either. Finally, some protest was triggered by government or politics itself.

Determinants of participation. Black South Africans participated more frequently in contentious politics than coloured, Asian or white South Africans. Obviously, however, not every black South African participated. We investigated which factors influenced participation independently of race.[9] Participants in peaceful and/or forceful protest appeared to be younger, more often males than females, more involved in

[9] We conducted regression analyses with the same set of independent variables as we included in the previous analyses. On average these variables added 9 % to the variance in protest participation explained by race. Age, gender, involvement in grassroots organisations and political interest accounted for almost all variance explained. The remaining variables hardly added independently to the variance explained.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

civil society organisations and more interested in politics than non-partici-pants (Table 7.15).

Table 7.15: Correlates of protest participation

Variables	Did participate	Did not participate
Age	36	41
Gender (female)	50%	59%
Involvement in organisations	1.8	1.0
Interest in politics	2.7	2.2

Participants did not differ from non-participants in dissatisfaction, patterns of identification, or evaluation of government. Our findings thus fully supported the tenet of resource mobilisation theory, namely that it is not so much grievances, discontent or identity itself that makes aggrieved people participate in political protest. Biographical availability, on the one hand, and involvement in civil society organisations, which serve as recruitment networks, on the other hand, are needed for the final step toward protest action.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Action preparedness

We also asked whether respondents thought that they would take part in protest actions in the future. They could choose one of four possible answers: definitely not, probably not, probably, definitely. Figure 7.4 displays what percentages of the South African population chose "probably" or "definitely".

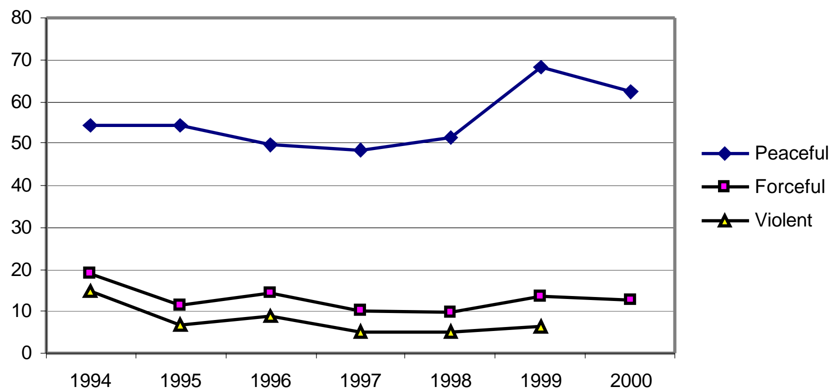
After 1994—the year when the new democratic dispensation was born—preparedness to participate in forceful protest dropped from 19% to approximately 10%, and preparedness to participate in violent action from 15% to approximately 5%. These low levels were retained in the remaining years.[10] Participation in peaceful protest, however, continued to be an option for many South Africans. In fact, the proportion of South African

[10] Because preparedness to participate in violent action continued to be very low we stopped asking about it after 1999.

citizens who were prepared to take part in peaceful action grew. Indeed, 62% of South Africans were prepared to take part in peaceful action in 2000 as compared to 54% in 1994. In 1999, the year of the second national election, preparedness for peaceful action reached the even higher level of 68%. Thus, the transition to democracy did not erase preparedness to take part in contentious politics, but rendered contentious politics more peaceful.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Figure 7.4: Action preparedness



The patterns of forceful and violent actions were very similar for the four population groups. Black South Africans displayed a somewhat higher preparedness for forceful and violent actions than the other groups, but the differences were small (Figures 7.5a-c), smaller at least than they were for peaceful action. The most interesting finding in regard to peaceful action was that preparedness for it increased among the Coloureds, Asians and Whites, and declined initially among the Blacks, though between 1997 and 1999 it increased again. In 2000 the preparedness to participate in peaceful action among black South Africans dropped again, but retained a level higher than in 1997. The net result of these trends was an increase in preparedness to take part in peaceful action, as is shown in Figure 7.4.

Figure 7.5a: Peaceful protest

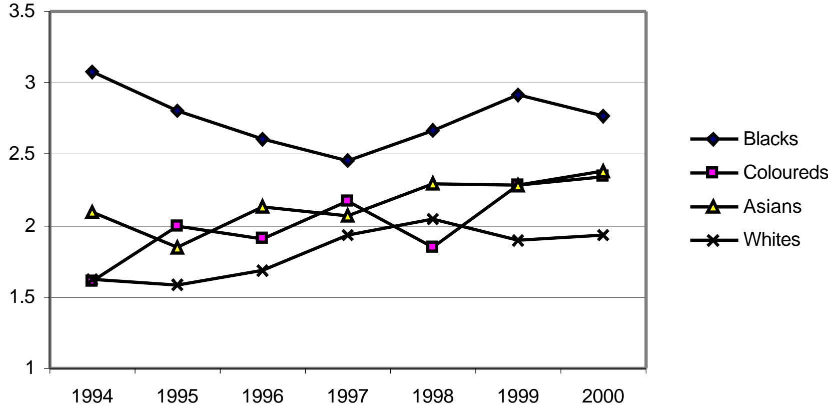
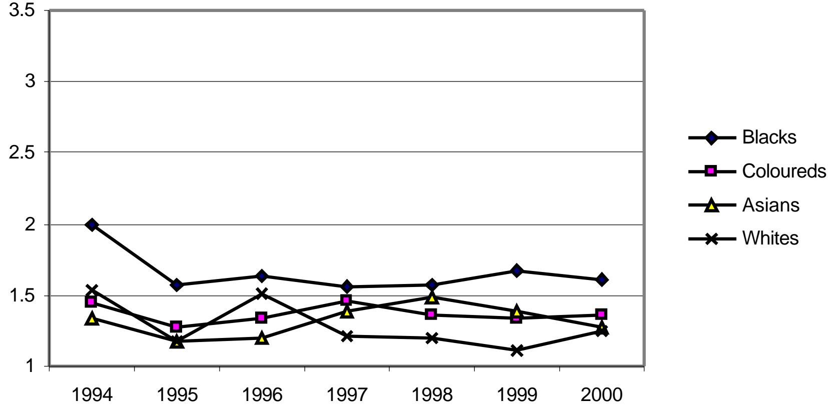
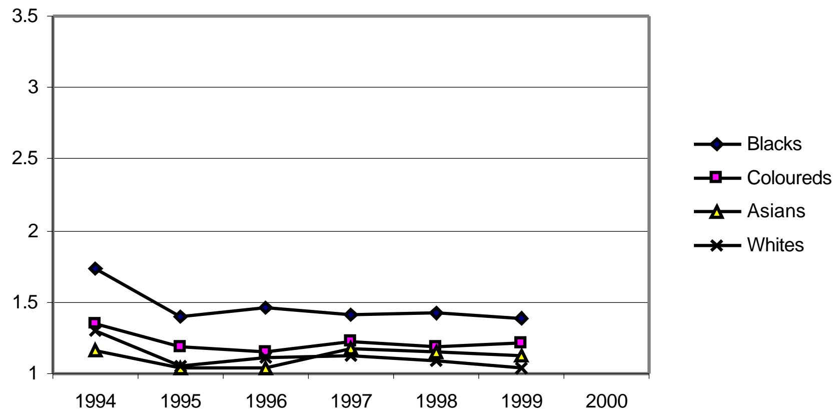


Figure 7.5b: Forceful protest



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Figure 7.5c: Violent protest



Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

What issues would people protest for? We asked our respondents to mention at most three issues over which they would probably participate in protest action in the future. The first thing that catches the eye was the tremendous increase in respect of the issues mentioned. In 1994, 29% of the population mentioned at least one issue; in 2000 this percentage was 61%; and in 1999 it was even higher: 65%. Moreover, not only did more people mention issues, people also mentioned many more issues—615 in 1994 and 3 256 in 2000, with the years in between showing a steady increase. This finding confirmed our observation that action preparedness did not decline. On the contrary, protest seems to have become an integral part of South African politics. To a substantial degree, the issues people would probably protest for were very similar to the issues they reportedly protested for, including the differential frequencies for the various issues. To be sure, eventually less people participated in protest than were prepared to do so, but that was to be expected on the basis of the literature (Oegema & Klandermans, 1994).

Job opportunities became the second most important protest issue in 2000 (Table 7.16). In a country with unemployment rates between 30% and 40% this was to be expected. The most important issue in 2000 was safety, which in view of the country's crime rate was not a surprise either.

Both job opportunities and safety were issues that became of increasing concern. Other issues such as housing, education and cost of living peaked in 1997 and 1998, but became less important during the last two years of our study. In the election year 1999, public services were salient as a protest issue, obviously triggered by the increased attention to government's performance. Some other issues like education, health care and rights issues continued to be a matter of concern throughout the years of our study.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Table 7.16: Issues people may protest for in the future (%)

Issues	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Work related issues							
Job opportunities	5.9	17.6	19.1	19.5	30.3	25.3	29.9
Working conditions	.2	1.6	1.4	1.9	1.4	4.8	4.8
Wages	-	-	-	-	-	11.1	10.2
Equality at work	.1	1.0	.7	1.6	1.5	1.2	1.9
Affirmative action	-	.5	.4	.6	1.0	.4	.5
Provision of public goods							
Housing	5.1	24.6	35.9	30.3	37.6	30.0	22.9
Education	4.4	13.8	15.3	10.7	26.1	14.2	13.7
Health care	.4	3.5	7.3	4.1	8.9	7.5	4.9
Safety	4.3	3.4	1.9	15.5	33.5	26.5	32.6
Public services	-	1.6	1.2	2.0	1.5	20.6	12.3
Costs of living	6.3	16.7	16.4	26.9	22.0	13.7	12.9
Rights issues							
Human rights	5.6	8.7	8.9	11.9	6.0	7.3	10.6
Women's rights	.1	.8	2.4	1.6	3.2	3.6	6.1
Children's rights	-	3.3	5.4	9.5	9.8	8.4	9.7
Values							
Culture/religion	1.4	2.5	3.1	3.9	3.5	1.1	2.1
Conservative values	-	.5	.8	3.9	2.2	1.1	.9
Animals/nature	-	.5	.9	.6	1.2	.8	.6
Government/political issues	1.6	2.6	1.4	3.4	3.2	3.5	2.9

Determinants of action preparedness. In order to understand the dynamics of action preparedness we conducted a series of regression analyses. In

addition to the variables included in the previous analyses, we entered in the equation three factors that presumably were specifically relevant for the explanation of action preparedness: attitude toward protest action, estimated success of protest action, and participation in protest action in the past. As action preparedness predominantly referred to readiness to take part in peaceful action we limited our report to that form of contentious action.[11] Over the seven years the pattern of the determinants was very much the same. Therefore we collapsed the seven years into a single analysis, which highlighted the variables in Table 7.17 as significant correlates. Each variable contributed uniquely to the explanation of action preparedness and together with race they were able to explain 36% of the variance.

Table 7.17: Correlates of the preparedness to take part in peaceful action

Variables	Would participate in peaceful action			
	Definitely not	Probably not	Probably	Definitely
Age	44	40	38	36
Gender	60%	58%	56%	54%
Dissatisfaction	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.1
Pessimism about own future	3.9	3.7	3.5	3.3
Would vote for the ANC	30%	41%	52%	58%
Involvement in organisations	0.8	1.1	1.2	1.5
Trust in government	2.6	2.6	2.8	3.1
Attitude toward peaceful action	3.5	4.1	4.8	5.4
Estimated success of peaceful action	3.5	4.1	4.7	5.2
Past participation in peaceful action	5%	10%	32%	76%

[11] We conducted similar analyses for preparedness to take part in forceful action. On the whole, the correlations were the same, be they more modest because of the skewed distribution of willingness to take part in this form of collective action.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

The younger people were, the more likely their willingness to take part in peaceful action. Women were less prepared to participate although the difference was small. People who were prepared to participate in peaceful action were more dissatisfied with their personal situation than people who were not prepared to participate but, interestingly, they were less concerned about their future. People who would vote for the ANC were more willing to participate in peaceful action, and so were people who were involved in civil society organisations. People who were prepared to take part in peaceful action trusted government more. The more positive people's attitude toward peaceful action, and the more optimistic they were about its chances of success, the more ready they were to participate in such action. Finally, people who participated in peaceful protest in the past were more willing to take part in peaceful protest in the future.[12]

In sum, protest continued to be part and parcel of South African politics, although it was more peaceful and more proliferated among the population groups. The issues people protested for reflected the socio-political course of the country. Most protest concerned work-related issues and the delivery of public goods. Job opportunities, safety and public services became major protest issues in the course of the years. Other issues such as housing, safety and health care peaked in 1998 and 1999 but subsequently came to be less salient, although the AIDS crisis and the controversy over the government's AIDS policy should have brought health care back to centre stage in the course of 2000.

Participation in collective action seemed to be more a matter of involvement in civil society organisations than a matter of discontent. The same seems to have held for action preparedness. In addition, the expected

---

[12] This effect of previous participation is understandable in view of the participants' positive evaluation of their past participation. We asked people who participated in peaceful protest whether this was a pleasant or unpleasant experience. Three-quarters of the participants said that it was a pleasant experience; 9% evaluated it as neither pleasant nor unpleasant; and a further 9% indicated that it was sometimes unpleasant. A very small proportion (on average 7.5%) indicated that it was mostly or always an unpleasant experience.

success of protest played an important role. This is exactly what resource mobilisation theory would have predicted, which is not to say that protesters were not moved by discontent. On the contrary, the findings in regard to protest issues showed the opposite, and in fact we found that dissatisfaction had a modest effect on action preparedness. The point of the matter is, however, that discontent was not sufficient for people to become involved in political protest. Expectations of success, which boosted action preparedness, and involvement in civil society organisations, which served as recruitment networks, were needed to transform discontent into action.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Conclusion

In the seven years since the change of regime in 1994 the political landscape in South Africa altered dramatically. Our indicators of political participation gave testimony of the profound transitions the country and its populace experienced. At the same time, they showed remarkable stability in other respects.

Active *interest in politics* declined, as indicated by the reading of newspapers, listening to the radio, watching television and discussing news events with friends. In view of the fact that political interest was not related to feelings of dissatisfaction and relative deprivation or lack of trust in government, we are inclined to interpret this finding as a sign of normalisation. Levels of political interest were turning into values that are common in other democracies. Unlike that which simple racial comparison suggests, once we controlled for living standard and education, black South Africans appeared to be the most interested in politics of the four population groups. A high living standard and level of education increased political interest considerably. That is why we found racial differences, but when we compared people who were alike in that respect, the Blacks emerged as the most interested in politics.

In the South African context *party preference* appeared to be largely ethnically determined: Blacks preferred black parties, Whites preferred white parties, and the Coloureds and Asians were torn between the two (see also Rule, 2000). Whereas preference for black parties remained very much the same, a major realignment took place in respect of the white

parties. Among the Whites the DP virtually replaced the NP. As one of the ironies of history the former champion of apartheid became a party with a majority of coloured and Asian supporters, while the Whites deserted the party en masse. In the course of 2000 the NP and DP merged. However, the merger occurred after we finished our last survey. Substantial proportions (one-fifth to one-quarter) of the electorate said that they would not vote or did not know what party to vote. These proportions reflected the uncertainties of the electorate. Every time that the obvious choice for a population category became less appealing the proportions of abstention increased among this category. Indeed, an increase in abstention seemed to precede a realignment.

Protest continued to be an important part of South African politics. More than half of the populace were willing to take part in some sort of protest action and around one-fifth did actually participate in some protest action. In fact, preparedness to take part in peaceful action increased from one-half to two-thirds of the population. Interestingly, this increase was due to the fact that the Coloureds, Asians and Whites became more willing to take part in peaceful protest. At the same time, however, preparedness to take part in forceful and violent protest action declined, a development that certainly will contribute to the political stability of the country. Work-related issues and issues related to the delivery of public goods were the main issues people protested for. Job opportunities, safety and public services became the issues that were highest on the protesters' agenda in the last two years of our study. That job opportunities and safety were major protest issues was not a surprise given the high unemployment and crime rates in South Africa. Public services such as water, electricity, public transportation and roads were matters that affected every citizen. A government, be it national, provincial or local, that had difficulties in delivering these services may have expected a proliferation of protest. Some issues—housing, education, cost of living and health care—became less prominent as protest issues. The relevant figures reflected people's appreciation of what government had accomplished at the time.

On the whole, our explanatory models worked reasonably well. We were able to explain fair proportions of the variance in the various

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

indicators of political participation. However, we found theoretically meaningful differences in the configuration of explanatory variables for the individual indicators. Objective characteristics such as race, living standard, gender and education were the most important correlates of *political interest*. This suggests that political interest was not so much driven by ideology, but rather controlled by someone's place in society.

In the case of *intention to vote* subjective feelings such as dissatisfaction and trust in government were important. Apparently, abstaining from voting was an expression of discontent with one's personal situation and with the government. As such it indicated political estrangement. *Party preference* was also strongly influenced by dissatisfaction and trust in government. Dissatisfaction and lack of trust in government made the Blacks, Coloureds and Asians prefer other parties than the ANC, and made Whites prefer the white right to the NP or DP. *Taking part in an election campaign* depended on a combination of objective characteristics that indicate some biographical availability (age, gender and being unemployed), and political variables that indicate involvement in politics (trust in government, perceived influence on government, and political interest). In this respect, taking part in campaign politics reflected the opposite of abstaining from voting.

Participation in protest action was determined by age and gender, on the one hand, and involvement in civil society organisations and interest in politics, on the other hand. Interestingly, none of the subjective factors such as dissatisfaction, identity or the evaluation of government mattered. Actual participation was seemingly a matter of availability and involvement in networks that facilitate recruitment. *Action preparedness*, finally, was determined by age and gender, by involvement in organisations and proximate factors such as the attitude toward peaceful action, the expected success of peaceful action and participation in peaceful action in the past. However, the latter three (attitude to, expected success of, and past participation in peaceful action) seemed to largely determine preparedness to take part in contentious politics.

As for the individual factors a few observations are worth summarising. *Gender* was linked to political participation in a non-surprising way:

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Males were more actively involved in politics than females, no matter whether it concerned political interest, voting, campaigning or contentious politics. We interpreted this finding in terms of differential availability. Sex roles were still very traditional in South Africa. At the same time the proportions of the economically active men and women were not that different. As a consequence, women had to combine their work role with their housewife role and thus had less time available for politics.

Age was not related to political interest, but younger people were more likely to vote, to participate in election campaigns and in protest activities. The latter two were hardly different from what one would find elsewhere. However, the result in regard to voting was an interesting diversion from the usual pattern. In most Western democracies younger people are *less* likely to vote. The greater likelihood of young South Africans to vote may indicate the recency of South Africa's democracy and a greater enthusiasm about the transition among the younger generation. It may also mean that the older generation has not yet internalised the new circumstances.

Education played a paradoxical role in South African politics. On the one hand it stimulated political interest, and on the other hand it discouraged voting. Because we measured political interest in terms of political information processing it is understandable that we observed this role of education. Higher levels of education generally stimulated information processing. Why education discouraged voting was more difficult to understand. Usually, one would find the opposite correlation. Further analysis suggested an interaction with race. Among the black population we found the usual negative correlation between education and voting (although weak), but among the other three population groups higher education increased voting abstention. We interpreted this finding as an expression of the political uncertainties and confusion these population groups were confronted with. Finally, in regard to party preference education encouraged the Blacks, Coloureds and Asians to vote for the ANC.

Dissatisfaction was primarily related to electoral politics—both voting and party preferences—but hardly to any other indicator of political

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

participation. People who were dissatisfied were less inclined to vote. The Blacks, Coloureds or Asians who were dissatisfied (or concerned about the future) were less inclined to vote for the ANC; Whites who were pessimistic about their future preferred the white right rather than the other white parties, and if they had to choose between the NP and DP they preferred the NP to the DP.

A *dual identity* made people more interested in politics and more likely to take part in campaign politics. Identity patterns also had a significant impact on party preferences. A strong national identity made people prefer the ANC to the other parties (except if the people were Whites). A strong ethnic identity made the Zulus in KwaZulu-Natal prefer the IFP to the ANC; similarly a strong ethnic identity made the Coloureds and Asians prefer the DP or NP to the ANC; and the Whites prefer the white right to the NP or DP or alternatively the NP to the DP.

Involvement in civil society organisations made people more interested in politics, made voting more likely, and stimulated participation in both election campaigning and contentious politics. In other words, the organisations people were involved in served as recruitment networks. This was especially clear with regard to action participation. Involvement in organisations appeared to be the most important determinant in this context.

Evaluation of government (especially trust in government) appeared to be important for conventional politics, that is, voting, party preference and campaigning. People who did not trust government were less likely to vote, and if they voted they were more likely to vote for another party than the ANC if they were Black, Coloured or Asian, and the white right if they were White.

Political interest affected voting, campaigning and action participation. It is interesting that voting per se rather than party preference, and actual participation rather than action preparedness were influenced by political interest. It suggests that political interest, at least the way we assessed it in our study, was more relevant for actual behaviour than for preferences or intentions. The *assessment of protest action*, finally, was the overpowering determinant of action preparedness. Of the variables we

investigated, the experience with contentious politics was apparently the most important determinant of preparedness to engage in such politics.

Has the South African society demobilised? There does not seem to be a simple answer to this question. Political interest declined in the years of our study, but we interpreted this finding as a sign of normalisation of political relations. Our results with regard to party preferences reflected the political realignment that took place in the country but this did not signal demobilisation. In the course of the seven-year period one-fifth to one-quarter of the electorate said that they would not vote or did not know what party to vote for. Part of this proportion comprised people who were not interested in politics, but part of it comprised people who were confused and people who were turning away from the party they voted for but did not know yet what other party to vote for. Abstention from voting, our findings told us, reflected estrangement from politics at least for some citizens. But is one-fifth to one-quarter of abstention a matter of concern? Our figures appeared to be a slight overestimation of the number that in fact cast their vote in 1999. In that year 70% of the eligible adult population cast their vote (87% of those registered). This was considerably less than the turn-out in 1994 which was an estimated 91% (Rule, 1999). Yet it was not easy to interpret this decline. A founding election for a democracy usually generates unusually high percentages of voters. Moreover, in 1994 no registration was required; everybody who was living in South Africa was eligible to vote. This is not to deny that the proportion of the electorate that eventually cast their vote declined. Obviously it did, but it could also be a sign of normalisation as we suggested with regard to the observed decline in political interest. Stephen Rule (1999) in his analysis of the outcomes of the election leaned toward a similar interpretation.

What about the participation in contentious politics? Again there seems to be no simple answer. Participation in collective action remained fairly stable over the years. If anything we witnessed a modest increase in protest participation from 14% in the years immediately after the change of regime to 20% in the last two years. This was exclusively due to increased participation in peaceful protest. Action preparedness increased as well, again exclusively because the preparedness to participate in peace-

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

ful action increased (54% of the population were prepared to take part in peaceful action in 1994 and 68% and 62% respectively in 1999 and 2000). Forceful and violent forms of protest, on the other hand, declined. The 10% who were prepared to take part in forceful action and the 5% who were prepared to take part in violent action could still be fairly disruptive, but on the whole the potential for more militant forms of protest declined in favour of more moderate forms of protest. Yet, it is difficult to interpret this as demobilisation. In fact, in the years 1999 and 2000 more people participated in protest action and more people were prepared to take part in such action than ever before in the seven years of our study. Moreover, the potential protesters were much better spread over the various population categories than they were before.

Altogether there were very few signs of a process of demobilisation in the years since the change of regime. To be sure, interest in politics declined and so did the turn-out in the 1999 election, but these trends could very well be interpreted as a turn to normal political relations. On the other hand, protest potential in South Africa seems to have grown, be it for moderate forms of protest only, although we can hardly interpret this as a matter of demobilisation. Repression rather than mobilisation made protest more militant. The observed changes in mobilisation potential suggest that the new South African government has become more responsive to protest, rather than that the people have demobilised.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Chapter 8

The state of the people

What has become of the state and the people of South Africa since the change of power in 1994? The liberation movement took office and for the first time in history citizenship rights were granted to all South Africans. A state that was designed to separate, control and suppress the majority in the interest of the white minority came to serve the interests of Blacks, Coloureds, Asians and Whites alike. The former apartheid state became the state of all the people. But did the people experience it as a state of all the people, and did this state make a difference to their lives? Did it make them happier than before? Did it turn South Africa into a country they could identify with? Did it create a civil society they were prepared to get actively involved in? How did they evaluate government and to what extent did they attempt to influence the new state by active political participation? Between 1994 and 2000 we approached samples of South Africans with these questions. Seven times during those six years on average 2 200 people told us about their state. Chapters 2 to 7 have given testimony to their answers. Here, in Chapter 8, we will summarise our findings and try to draw some conclusions. The conclusions will necessarily be tentative, as the transition is still in swing. However, six years is long enough a period for taking stock of the state of the people.

It is virtually impossible to give an exhaustive account of the social, economic and political changes that took place during these years. Tom Lodge highlighted some of the more significant structural changes in these spheres, which changes affected people's opinions and evaluations as we have seen. Very little seems to have changed in the economic sphere, though. At first sight, wealth distribution is still racially defined and the black and the coloured populations are still subject to insufficient education and high levels of unemployment. However, these findings are misleading. Underneath the surface fundamental change seems to be underway. Whereas in the beginning of our study wealth distribution was

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

determined by race in the first place and education in the second place, education has become more important than race at the closure of our study. In addition, living in the centre or periphery and gender grew in importance as determinants of inequality. These factors vary within the racial categories as well, and it is this variation that has increasingly influenced wealth distribution. Lodge observed growing inequality among the black population, and our data seem to confirm that observation.

A first important social psychological consequence of this state of affairs was that, towards the end of our study, grievances were no longer determined by race but by class. Put simply, people were aggrieved about what they had rather than about who they were. Wealth distribution and not membership of one of apartheid's four population categories came to determine satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Of course, class and race overlapped considerably, but our findings indicate that wealth distribution *within* racial categories became more important as determinants of dissatisfaction than wealth distribution *between* racial categories.

A second important observation is that more South Africans were satisfied with their situation and that of their group in 2000 than in 1994. How did this shift in satisfaction and dissatisfaction occur? In our study we focussed on the role of social comparison. Social comparison, that is, comparison of someone's personal situation with that of others, or comparison of the situation of someone's group with that of other groups, appeared to be of crucial importance. A comparison can also be made between someone's situation in the past and present, or in the case of group comparisons between the situation of someone's group in the past and the present. In our study, comparisons with others in particular appeared to determine whether people were aggrieved. The more people felt that they were doing worse than others the more they were aggrieved. Interestingly, individual comparison and group comparison generated different outcomes for different groups, especially the Blacks and the Whites. Blacks seem to have reasoned that their personal situation continued to be worse than that of others, but that the situation of their group improved. Whites, on the other hand, seem to have perceived a deterioration in the situation of their group, but still regarded their personal

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

situation as better than that of others. How can this intriguing finding be interpreted? Apparently, the assessment of the situation of the group someone identifies with is only loosely connected to the assessment of someone's personal situation.

These are important findings for political psychology. They suggest that the evaluation of the situation of one's group is to a large extent socially constructed. The outcome of a comparison with others is obviously determined by the choice of a comparison group. Such choices can be influenced by political entrepreneurs who encourage comparisons that suit their political goals. By shifting the comparative focus to class, ethnicity, gender or region they may try to make political clout and turn inequality into an issue of class, race, gender or regional differences. Over the years, more and more people made comparisons at the individual level in terms of class while comparisons in terms of ethnicity decreased. At the group level class and ethnicity were equally important. This helps to understand why class rather than race increasingly determined grievances. This is interesting because it suggests that at the individual level class comparisons are more informative than ethnic comparisons. At the group level these two comparisons appear to be equally informative.

The experience of inequality may not generate resentment if at the same time people feel that their situation will improve in the future. This is exactly what we found. Indeed, we observed high hopes for the future among the Blacks, but also among the Coloureds and the Asians. Although optimism about the future faded somewhat on average, the three groups remained hopeful. However, the Whites were pessimistic about the future. Towards the end of our study they became more optimistic, but continued to be the most concerned population group. Social psychologists have suggested that optimism and pessimism about the future are related to trust in government. Trust in government implies that people expect that government will continue to do what is right for their people and this expectation makes them more optimistic about the future.

Most South Africans identify with their country, although not always equally strongly. In the course of time national identity weakened significantly, but recovered in the last few years. In 1998 levels of national

identity decreased amongst all four population categories but especially among the Coloureds, the Asians and the Whites. In 1999, the election year, national identity increased again—a tendency that continued in our last survey in 2000. This suggests that the observed strengthening of national identity was more than just an election year effect. We were especially interested in the question of whether strong subgroup identities such as ethnic, class or gender identity would be compatible with strong national identity. We felt that this was an important question, because political agents involved in nation building frequently convey the opinion that the two are mutually exclusive. If these agents have political power they may for that reason engage in the oppression of subgroup identities. We argue that such a policy usually backfires. Historical examples abound of how oppression in fact strengthened subgroup identification. In any case, our data demonstrate that a strong national identity and a strong subgroup identity go very well together. Indeed, a so-called dual identity reinforces people's trust in government and involvement in politics, a finding that suggests, in line with recent social psychological research, that dual identity should be considered politically healthy rather than detrimental.

As far as patterns of identification are concerned a few developments are worth mentioning. Over the years identity seems to have become individualised or personalised. This was corroborated by the growing complexity of people's social identity. Increasingly, people displayed so-called multiple identities, that is, strong identification with more than one category. We witnessed strong fluctuations in identity among all but the white population groups. We believe that these fluctuations reflected renewed identity formation. During the apartheid era everybody's place in society was strictly defined. The end of apartheid meant that people had to redefine their place in society and vis-à-vis each other. Our findings with regard to patterns of identification—especially the strong fluctuations among Blacks, Coloureds and Asians, and the lack of such fluctuations among Whites—suggest that the transition uprooted the first three population groups much more than the latter. The former, as the disadvantaged and excluded population groups, had to redefine themselves

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

as members of the South African society; the Whites, who had always been in that position, needed much less reorientation. Our data on social identity seem to confirm this. Despite the fluctuations in identity, ethnic identification remained strong in all four groups. In fact, we witnessed some revival of ethnic identification amongst all four groups. On the African continent—but not only there—ethnic identity has a bad reputation. It has been at the root of many a violent conflict. Yet it is our conviction that this has been more a consequence of the oppression than the expression of ethnic identity. With the backing of recent social psychological research we believe that giving ethnic minorities the opportunity to cherish their identity—be it Zulu, Muslim or Afrikaner—is a better guarantee for a peaceful future than attempts to control or suppress their identity.

Involvement in civil society organisations declined initially. After the founding election in 1994 civil society had to reorient itself. Not only did thousands of organisational officials take positions in government, semi-governmental or private companies, but also, with the ANC in office, civil society had to redefine its position vis-à-vis government. Especially black civil society had to find a new role. Instead of mobilising against the state as it did before, it had to mediate between citizens and the state. At the same time it had to develop some independence from its former allies in the struggle. Our findings give testimony to the difficulties civil society organisations initially had with this reorientation. This was reflected in declining levels of popular participation across the board. Lodge describes, as an example, the difficulties civic organisations had in this respect. Our findings suggest that civil society recuperated, but in a different form—less centrally orchestrated, and focussing more on local or provincial authorities and issues in the people's immediate environment. Community-based organisations retained their position, because they were able to redefine their roles, as Lodge described.

The configuration of civil society changed as well. Some organisations lost significance, for example political parties; others gained significance, for example unions and women's organisations. The changing configuration partly reflected changes in identification.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Participation in civil society organisations was influenced by people's sense of identity. To mention a few examples, women with a strong gender identity were more likely to participate in women's organisations; lower class South Africans with a strong class identity were more likely to participate in a labour union; and people who identified strongly with their neighbourhood were more likely to participate in neighbourhood organisations. Interestingly, participation in civil society reinforces participation in protest politics more than participation in electoral politics. This suggests that grassroots organisations, rather than being a continuation of political parties and party politics, have become an alternative route for people to influence government. This is in line with social movement literature that suggests that social movements are increasingly replacing political parties as intermediaries between citizens and the state.

Local, provincial and national government were evaluated differently. This is important, because it underlines that people differentiated between levels of government and did not automatically approve of all or none of the different governments. On the whole national government was evaluated more positively than provincial and local government. South Africa seems to on par with most other democracies in this respect. For obvious reasons the change of power in 1994 clearly shows in the evaluation of government. In 1995, immediately after the start of the transition, trust in government was higher than ever and higher than it would ever be. However, this was predominantly due to a substantial increase in trust among the black population group. All three minority groups displayed a decline in trust. A decline among the Whites was to be expected, but a decline among the Coloureds and the Asians may have come as a surprise to many an observer. The decline confirmed our findings about closeness to political parties in 1994. Among the Coloureds and the Asians substantial proportions did not trust the ANC and therefore did not trust a government dominated by the ANC. The election results merely underscored these findings. From 1995 onwards trust in government declined amongst all four population groups and reached its lowest point in 1998, almost as low as it was in 1994. But in the run-up to

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

the 1999 election it increased again and reached in 2000 a level higher than that in 1998. This and especially the fact that the level of trust was retained also among the minority groups made us conclude that a genuine recovery of trust in government had occurred. Similar patterns were found for the perceived influence on government and for the evaluation of its performance.

Grievances, concerns about the future and party affiliation clearly influenced the evaluation of government. People who were aggrieved, who were pessimistic about the future and who did not support the ANC were the most negative about government. Obviously, government was assessed on the basis of its ability to deliver both in the past and the future. On the whole ANC supporters were the most positive about government, but this did not imply that they had no concerns about delivery. In addition to people's position with regard to the ANC, grievances and future expectations influenced the evaluation as well, making some ANC supporters (and for that matter non-supporters) more negative than others. This held for all three levels of government, although the relative weight of the three levels varied. Grievances were more important at the provincial and the local level, and ANC support was more important at the national level. Concerns about the future were more similar at the three levels. Apparently, provincial and local governments were mostly evaluated in terms of their ability to deliver on their promises. This makes sense, as many of the daily matters people were confronted with were the responsibility of either of those governments.

A comparison of the evaluations of provincial governments revealed significant differences between provinces. These differences were, of course, related to differences in performance of the various governments as well as to the political colour of the provincial government and that of the interviewees. On the whole ANC supporters were more positive than non-supporters about ANC governments. However, in most cases the trends over time were the same. That is to say, both groups saw either an improvement or a decline in performance. Similarity in these trends obviously underscored the reliability and validity of our observations. In the two provinces without an ANC government, supporters and non-

supporters were more similar in their evaluation. This was not so much because non-supporters of the ANC were so much more positive, but because the supporters of the ANC were more negative.

The decline in political identification and involvement in political organisations coincided with declining interest in politics, lower turn-out at elections and stronger intentions to abstain from voting. Altogether these findings evidence disengagement from politics. Whether this is something to worry about remains to be seen. It may well be that, with the transition to democracy, the electorate has returned to normal patterns after several decades of high levels of politicisation. However, voting abstention indicated more than just normalisation of political relations in the country. Obviously, to abstain from voting is a sign of uncertainty and lack of trust in government. It is important to notice that such depoliticisation was restricted to electoral politics. No decline was observed with regard to participation in contentious politics. On the contrary, not only did the preparedness to participate and reported participation in peaceful protest increase but involvement in peaceful protest also spread gradually more evenly among the four population groups. Moreover, the number and variety of issues people protested for, and could imagine protesting for, increased considerably over the years. The only decline concerned preparedness to participate and actual participation in militant and violent action, but we believe that this signifies moderation of action potential rather than a decline.

Party preferences in South Africa continued to follow ethnic delineations. Whites preferred a white party, the (N)NP, the DP or the FF. Blacks preferred a black party, the ANC, the IFP or the PAC. The Coloureds and the Asians were divided between the (N)NP/DP and the ANC. As a consequence, each of the four population groups faced a qualitatively different choice. In fact, only the Coloureds and the Asians were confronted with the same options, but these options differed from those for the Blacks and the Whites. Except for the demise of the (N)NP and the emergence of the DP, very little changed in terms of patterns of party preference. Our findings show that to a large extent the DP did

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

replace the NNP. Hence the merger of the two parties towards the end of 2000 was a logical conclusion of the trend.

On the whole, we could predict political interest and the various forms of political participation reasonably well with our set of predictors. Interestingly, however, each form of participation required its specific combination of predictors. Political interest was predominantly determined by living standard, gender and level of education. A high living standard, being male and a high level of education made people more interested in politics. Voting abstention was strongly influenced by trust in government and expectations of the future, but also by involvement in civil society organisations, level of education and living in the centre or periphery. Low trust in government, pessimism about the future, low involvement in civil society, low levels of education and living in the centre made abstention more likely. A choice for the IFP rather than the ANC among the Blacks was mainly a matter of a low living standard, a high level of dissatisfaction and little trust in government. Lack of trust in government was also an important reason for the Coloureds and the Asians to choose the (N)NP or DP rather than the ANC. Living in the periphery increased the preference for the (N)NP/DP as well. Living in the periphery, pessimism about the future and a strong ethnic identity made white South Africans prefer the FF to the (N)NP/DP. Among the coloured and the white population a more optimistic view on the future made people prefer the DP to the (N)NP. Taking part in election campaigns was more likely among people who were younger, unemployed, involved in organisations, trusted government, believed that they could influence government, and were interested in politics. People who were younger, male, involved in civil society organisations and interested in politics participated more often in protest. And, finally, people who were younger, more pessimistic about the future, participated more in grassroots organisations and trusted government more were more likely to be prepared to take part in peaceful protest. But the two most important factors were the expectation that such action would make a difference and participation in peaceful action in the past.

How shall we interpret these findings? It is obviously too early for any final conclusion. All the indicators we have employed are still in flux.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Yet, there are a few trends worth mentioning. The first that comes to mind is the cyclical development of grievances, relative deprivation, and the evaluation of government and national identity. Grievances and relative deprivation gradually increased, whereas trust in government and national identity gradually declined. In 1998 each of these variables reached its extreme—grievances and relative deprivation their highest point, and trust and identity their lowest point. The year 1998 was the year that government's failure to deliver became obvious to many a South African. The honeymoon was over and not only the people but also the government began to become more realistic about South Africa's future and their own future. It was the year after the NP had left the GNU. It was the year that the TRC published its final report after having elicited for two years the most horrible testimonies about the country's past. The RDP was replaced by GEAR though the latter did not seem to be effective either. At the same time 1998 was a turning point. Grievances, relative deprivation, trust and identity began to improve and continued to do so until the last year of our study. Interestingly, two other of our indicators reached their turning points in the years before. In 1997, strength of subgroup identification and people displaying dual identity reached their turning point, and in 1996 the same occurred with involvement in civil society organisations. We believe that this sequence is not accidental. It suggests that people had to redefine their place and involvement in civil society first. Only then were they able to redefine their collective identity. When their new collective identities had been formed, grievances and relative deprivation could be reformulated. In turn, grievances and relative deprivation influenced the evaluations of government and the strength of national identity. Obviously, our surveys are not really suited to draw any firm conclusion about causality, but the lagged fashion in which these factors progressed at least made such causal patterns plausible.

From the previous paragraph it is clear that we did not observe any general or dominant downward tendency in satisfaction, evaluation of government or national identity. Indeed, after some years of decline a recuperating trend emerged in 1998, and in 2000 more South Africans than before were satisfied with their situation, evaluated government positively

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

and identified with their nation. As expected, the four population groups differed in this regard. Yet the pattern was not always as obvious as one would expect in view of the country's history. To be sure, after the change of power in 1994 the Blacks were on the whole the most positive, but not as far as their personal situation was concerned; the Whites were the most negative, but again not as far as their personal situation was concerned either. The Coloureds and the Asians occupied an intermediate position. However, all four groups became more positive in the last two years. This suggests that despite the many problems that remained unsolved the people of South Africa felt that the country was moving in the right direction. Obviously, we observed important variation within and between the population groups, but on average each population group displayed improved ratings.

Based on the literature on democratic transitions the demobilisation of the South African society is not surprising. Indeed, as far as politics is concerned our findings seem to confirm the literature. Interest in politics, political identification, involvement in political organisations and election turn-out all point to political disengagement. Yet involvement in civil society and involvement in protest politics have not declined. After a period of reorientation that brought lower levels of participation in civil society organisations, involvement in most organisations stabilised or even grew. Involvement in protest basically increased and became more evenly spread over the various population groups. In addition, more issues and a wider variety of issues became the subjects of protest activity. But the issues became more local, underscoring Lodge's argument that political protest became decentralised. As such our findings confirm social science literature, which suggests that periods of transition come with heightened levels of protest. Some are inclined to see this as a paradox. While the changes people fought for are taking place, protest increases rather than decreases. But note that the protest was peaceful rather than militant or violent, and that it was staged in a climate of trust rather than distrust in government.

Did the transition to democracy improve the state of the people? We believe so. More people are satisfied, more people trust government, and

more people identify with the nation than before. And although fewer people take part in electoral politics, involvement in civil society and peaceful contentious politics have increased. This is not to say that there is nothing to worry about. On the contrary. Inequality in South Africa remains enormous. Unemployment, especially among the younger generation, continues to be a threat to the stability of society, and so does crime. Both class and ethnicity have served as frames of reference for people to interpret grievances. In the future gender and living in the centre or periphery could do the same. In a country where ethnicity continues to be the dominant source of identity, inequality can easily be turned into ethnic conflict, if political entrepreneurs were to redefine inequality as ethnic discrimination. One need not look far abroad to appreciate the dangers of such a strategy. At the same time, it is hopefully clear that we are not advocating the suppression of ethnic identity. On the contrary, we argue that a policy of openness to any display of ethnic identity would do well politically. All this would be in vain, however, if a more equal distribution of wealth is not achieved both within and between social categories within the foreseeable future.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

REFERENCES

Adler, G. & Webster, E. 1995. Challenging transition theory: The labour movement, radical reform and the transition in South Africa. *Politics and Society*, 23.

Barnes, S.H. & Kaase, M. 1979. *Political action: Mass participa tion in five western democracies*. London: Sage.

Baskin, J. 2000. The facts behind the figures. *Mail & Guardian. (* Analysis of Statistics South Africa PO317, July 2000). 24 November.

Bernstein, A. 1999. *Policy-making in a new democracy.* Johannesburg: Centre for Development Ente rprise.

Berry, J.W. 1984. Cultural relations in plural societies: Alternatives to segregation and their sociopsychological implications. Pp. 11 -27. In: Miller, N. & Brewer, M. (eds). *Groups in contact.* San Diego: Academic Press.

Bond, P. 2000. *Elite transition: From apartheid to Neo -Liberalism in South Africa.* London: Pluto Press.

Brown, R. 2000. Social identity theory: Past achievements, current problems and future challenges. *European Journal of Social Psychology* , 30:745-778.

Camerer, L. 1992. Civil socie ty and democracy: The South African debate. Paper delivered at the Bi-annual Colloquium of the South African Political Science Association. Broederstroom, South Africa.

Cherry, J. 2000. *The politics of transition in South Africa: An Eastern Cape case study.* Ph.D. dissertation. Rhodes University.

Cherry, J. 2000. *The Politics of Transition in South Africa: An Eastern Cape Case Study.* Ph.D. dissertation, Rhodes University.

Davies, J. 1962. Towards a theory of revolution. *American Sociological Review* , 27:5-19.

Foweraker, J. & Landman, T. 2000. *Citizenship rights and social movements. A comparative and statistical analysis.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Frankel, P., Louw, S. & Stacey, S. 1997. *Govermental performance and capacity: Local authorities in Mpumala nga*. Johannesburg and Pretoria Department of Political Studies, University of the Witwatersrand and HSRC External Projects Programme.

Gamson, W.A. 1968. *Power and discontent.* Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey Press.

Ginsburg, D. 1996. Transition theory and the labour movement. Paper presented at the conference Social Movements in South Africa, Durban, 24 -26 February.

Gonzalez, R. & Brown, R.1999. Reducing intergroup conflict by varying the salience of subgroup and superordinate group identifications. Paper presented

at the 12th General Meeting of the European Association of Experimental Social Psychology, Oxford, 6-11 July.

Gurr, T.R. 1970. *Why men rebel*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Habib, A. & Naidu, S. 1999. "Election '99: Was there a 'coloured' or 'indian' vote?", *Politikon*, 26(2): 189-199.

Hegtvedt, K.A. & Markovsky, B. 1995. Justice and injustice. Pp. 257-280. In: Cook, K.S., Fine, G.A. & House, J.S. (eds). *Sociological perspectives in social psychology.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Hirschman, A.O. 1970. *Exit, voice and loyalty: Responses to decline in firms, organizations and states*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hirschowitz, R. 2000. *Measuring poverty in South Africa*. Pretoria: Statistics South Africa.

Hornsey, M.J. & Hogg, M.A. 2000. Subgroup relations: A comparison of mutual intergroup differentiation and common ingroup identity models of prejudice reduction. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin,* 26:242-256.

Human Sciences Research Council. 1995. *Markdata omnibus survey on local government.* September. Report held in the Department of Political Studies, University of the Witwatersrand.

Huo, Y.J., Smith, H., Tyler, T.R. & Lind, E.A. 1996. Superordinate identification, subgroup identification, and justice concerns: Is separatism the problem; is assimilation the answer? *Psychological Science*, 7:40-45.

Jenkins, J.C. & Klandermans, B. 1995. *The politics of social protest: Comparative perspectives on states and social movements*. Minneapolis/London: University of Minnesota Press/UCL Press.

Johnston, H. 1991. *Tales of nationalism. Catalonia. 1939-1979*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Klandermans, B. 1997. *The Social Psychology of Protest*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Klandermans, B., Roefs, M. & Olivier, J. 1997. A movement takes office. Pp. 173-194. In: Meyer, D. & Tarrow, S. (eds). *The social movement society: Contentious politics for a new century*. Oxford: Rowland and Littlefield.

Klandermans, B., Roefs, M. & Olivier, J. 2001. Grievance formation in a country in transition: South Africa 1994-1998. *Social Psychology Quarterly.*

Klandermans, B., Sabucedo, J.M. & Rodriguez, M. 2000. Multiple identities and protest: Super- and subordinated identity among farmers in the Netherlands and Spain. Paper submitted for publication.

Koopmans, R. 1996. Explaining the rise of racist and extreme right violence in Western Europe: Grievances and opportunities? *European Journal of Political Research*, 30:185-216.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Lanegran, K. 1996. Civic associations in transitional local government structures in South Africa: Death of a social movement. *Critical Sociology,* 22(3).

Lodge, T. 1994. The African National Congress and its allies. Pp. 27 -38. In: Reynolds, A. (ed.). *Election'94: South Africa.* Cape Town: David Philip.

Lodge, T. 1999. *Consolidating democracy, South Africa's second popular election.* Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand Press.

Lodge, T. 1999. Policy processes within the African National Congress and the Tripartite Alliance. *Politikon*, 26:5-32.

Lodge, T. 2001. The South African Local Government Elections, *Politikon*, 28.

Marais, H. 1998. *South Africa limits to change. The political economy of transition.* Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

Marx, A.W. 1998. *Making race and nation a comparison of the United States, South Africa, and Brazil*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McAdam, D. 1986. Recruitment to high -risk activism: The case of freedom summer. *American Journal of Sociology*, 92:64-90.

McAdam, D., McCarthy, J.D. & Zald, M.N. (eds). 1996. *Comparative perspectives on social movements.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McCarthy, J. & Zald, M. 1973. *The trend of social movements in America.* Morristown, N.J.: General Learning Press.

Meyer, D. & Tarrow, S. 1998. *The social movement society: Contentious politics for a new century*. Boulder, Colo: Rowman and Littlefield.

Muthien, Y.G. & Olivier, J. 1999. The state and civil society: Implications for democracy in South Africa. *SA Review,* no. 8, Johannesburg: Ravan Press.

Muthien, Y.G., Khosa, M.M. & Magubane, B.M. 2000. *Democracy and governance review: Mandela's legacy 1994-1999.* Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.

O'Donnell, G. & Schmitter, P.C. 1986. *Transitions from authoritarian rule: Tentative conclusions about uncertain democracies*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

Oegema, D. & Klandermans, B. 1994. Non-conversion and erosion: The unwanted effects of action mobilization. *American Sociological Review,* 59:703-722.

Olzak, S. 1992. *The dynamics of ethnic competition and conflict*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Piven, F.F. & Cloward, R.A. 1979. *Poor people's movements: Why they succeed, how they fail.* New York: Vintage Books.

Ray, M. 2000. Johannesburg's urban renewal of apartheid. *Sunday Independent*, 2 April.

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Roberts, D.F. & Bachen, C.M. 1981. Mass communication effects. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 32:307-356.

Roefs, M., Klandermans, B. & Olivier, J. 1998. Protest intentions on the eve of South Africa's first non-racial elections: Optimists look beyond injustice. *Mobilization*, 3:51-68.

Rule, S. 1999. Outcome of the election. In: Muthien, Y.G. (ed.). *Democracy South Africa: Evaluating the 1999 election.* Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.

Rule, S. 2000. Profile of political party support. Pp. 317-335. In: Muthien, Y.G. Khosa, M.M. & Magubane, B.M. (eds). *Democracy and governance review: Mandela's legacy 1994-1999.* Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.

Sangoco. 1999. *The state of civil society in South Africa*.

Scammell, M. 1995. *Designer politics: How elections are won.* Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Seekings, J. 1997. SANCO: Strategic dilemmas in a democratic South Africa. *Transformation,* 34.

Simon, B. & Klandermans, B. 2001. Towards a social psychological analysis of politicized collective identity: Conceptualization, antecedents, and consequences. *American Psychologist.*

Smith, H.J. & Tyler, T.R. 1996. Justice and power. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 26:171-200.

South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR). 1999. *South African Survey, 1999/2000.* Millennium Edition, Johannesburg.

Statistics South Africa. 2000. *South Africa in 2000.* Pretoria.

Stouffer, S.A., Suchman, E.A., De Vinney, L.C., Star, S.A. & Williams, R.M. Jr. 1949. *The American soldier.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Turner, J.C., Oakes, P.J., Haslam, A. & McGarty, C. 1994. Self and collective: Cognition and social context. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 20:454-463.

Tyler, T.R. & Smith, H. 1998. Social justice and social movements. Pp. 595-626. In: Gilbert, D., Fiske, S.T. & Lindzey, G. (eds). *Handbook of social Psychology,* (4th edition) New York: McGraw-Hill.

Tyler, T.R., Boeckmann, R.R., Smith, H.J. & Huo, Y.J. 1997. *Social justice in a diverse society*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Zegeye, A., Liebenberg, I. & Houston, G. n.d. *Resisting ethnicity from above: Social identities and the deepening of democracy in South Africa*. Unpublished paper. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.

Index

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

ACDP, 201
Action preparedness, 219, 220, 228, 231
African Christian Democratic Party, 201
African National Congress, 198
Afrikaner community, 94
Afrikaner conservatives, 21
Afrikaner identity, 92
Afrikaner nationalism, 24, 92
Afrikaner Volksparty, 198
Age, 35, 42, 43, 72, 74, 75, 79, 149, 170, 192, 204, 207, 210, 211, 215, 218, 219, 224, 229
Age and unemployment, 35
AIDS crisis, 225
AIDS policy, 225
ANC, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 18, 22, 23, 24, 91, 137, 138, 139, 14 0, 141, 149, 151, 152, 159, 160, 161, 163, 170, 171, 173, 174, 175, 179, 180, 182, 183, 184, 198, 199, 200, 201, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 212, 213, 224, 225, 228, 229, 230, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241
ANC government, 180, 181, 239
ANC supporters, 141, 161, 180, 184, 207, 210, 239
Apartheid, 91, 101
AVP, 198, 199, 206
AWB, 198, 199
Biographical availability, 219
Brakpan, 9, 10
Burial society, 116, 126, 131
Cathcart, 9
Centre-periphery, 42, 43, 149, 170, 192
Church organisations, 118, 121, 125
Ciskei, 173, 182

Civil society, 111, 112, 126, 129, 132, 133
Class, 59, 72, 75, 79, 80, 209, 211
Class comparison, 80
Community-based organisations, 134, 237
Comparison dimension, 75
Comparison with others, 70, 88
Conservative Party, 24, 198
Contentious politics, 215
COSATU, 18, 19
CP, 198, 199, 200, 206, 211, 212
Democratic Party, 21, 24, 198
Dissatisfaction, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 58, 69, 79, 85, 190, 194, 207, 209, 210, 224, 228, 229
Dissatisfaction with one's job, 53
DP, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 206, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 227, 228, 230, 240, 241
Dual identity, 106, 107, 190
East London, 9
Eastern Cape, 2, 7, 9, 13, 91, 173, 180, 182, 184
Edendale, 10
Education, 42, 43, 123, 192, 204, 205, 209, 210, 211, 217, 223, 229
Ethnic comparison, 80, 81
Ethnic identification, 94, 135
Ethnicity, 72, 75, 79
Evaluation of government, 190, 196, 230
Ezibeleni township, 9
FA, 198, 199
FF, 159, 200, 206, 211, 212, 240, 241
Freedom Alliance, 198
Freedom Front, 24, 159
Gauteng, 2, 5, 10, 20, 37, 91, 95, 179, 180, 184, 205, 210
Gazankulu, 24, 174
GEAR, 20, 21, 104, 242

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Gender, 33, 42, 43, 72, 75, 79, 93, 99, 120, 122, 149, 170, 192, 194, 204, 209, 210, 215, 219, 224, 228
Gender and unemployment, 33
GNU, 19, 21, 139, 152, 242
Government of National Unity, 18, 104, 139, 140, 152
Grievances, 47, 59, 60, 70, 79, 80, 149, 152, 153, 170, 172, 182, 239, 242
Group comparison, 72, 77
Group identification, 74, 75
Hammanskraal, 6
Health care, 217, 223
Heath Investigative Unit, 182
Housing, 217, 223
Human rights, 217, 223
Identity formation, 92
IFP, 91, 151, 183, 184, 198, 199, 200, 201, 206, 207, 212, 213, 230, 240, 241
Immigrants, 77, 80, 81
Income, 29, 40, 41, 43
Independent Electoral Commission, 7
Individual comparison, 72
Inequality, 86, 244
Inkatha Freedom Party, 18, 151, 198
Intention to vote, 126
Intrapersonal comparison, 83
Involvement in grassroots organisations, 149, 170, 171
J-curve hypothesis, 61
Jeremy Seekings, 8
Job opportunities, 217, 222, 223, 225, 227
Johannesburg, 4, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 169
Johannesburg City Council, 14
Kagiso, 10
KaNgwane, 174
KwaZulu-Natal, 7, 13, 139, 151, 164, 174, 179, 183, 184, 199, 201, 206, 207, 208, 230

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Language, 93
Latin America, 112, 185
Lebowa, 174
Level of education, 27, 122
Living standard, 30, 31, 33, 37, 39, 43, 60, 86, 120, 149, 170, 192, 19 3, 194, 207, 210, 211
Local government, 165, 170
Machadodorp, 14
Mandela, 21, 22, 137
Mbeki, 21, 137, 169
Mdantsane, 9
MPNC, 139
Mpumalanga, 4, 13, 24, 174, 179, 180
Municipal reform, 13
National identification, 103
National Party, 18, 21, 104, 139, 198
Neighbourhood, 52, 72
New National Party, 24, 199
NNP, 199, 241
Northern Province, 4, 5, 24, 173
NP, 21, 139, 140, 184, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 206, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 227, 228, 230, 240, 241, 242
Ogies, 13
PAC, 159, 198, 201, 206, 240
PAGAD, 12
Pan African Congress, 198
Party preference, 205, 212, 228, 240
Patterns of identification, 94, 96, 97, 98, 191, 195
Peaceful protest, 221
Perceived influence on government, 167
Personal situation, 62
Pessimism about the future, 205
Political affiliation, 148, 158
Political identification, 94

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Political parties, 119, 127, 130
Political party demobilisation, 23
Population growth, 2
Port Elizabeth, 6
Presidential Lead Projects, 19
Protest, 227
Province, 14
Provincial government, 164, 170, 184
Provincial politics, 23
Public services, 217, 223, 227
Race, 4, 42, 43, 88, 119, 149, 150, 189, 190, 192, 198, 203, 214
RDP, 18, 19, 20, 21, 104, 242
RDP forums, 19
Reconstruction, 18
Reconstruction and Development Programme, 18
Relative deprivation, 60
Religion, 71, 72, 75, 79
Rights issues, 217, 218, 223
SACP, 198, 199, 200
Safety, 217, 223
SANCO, 8, 9, 10, 14, 16, 18
Sandton, 15
SASOL, 11
Sex roles, 229
Social class, 120
Social comparison, 68, 83, 234
Social mobility, 4
Social movement, 8
Socio-political values, 72, 79
Sotho, 24, 103
South African Communist Party, 198
Soweto, 10, 14, 16
State, 2, 16, 181
Sterkstroom, 14

Subgroup identification, 93
Subgroup identity, 100, 195
Superordinate identity, 109
TEC, 139
Tembisa, 9
Transkei, 23, 173, 182
TRC, 22, 242
Trust in local government, 166
Trust in provincial government, 175
Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 21
UDM, 91, 201
Umrabulo, 10
Unemployment, 3, 29, 34, 36, 39, 42, 121, 244
United Democratic Movement, 24, 201
Urbanisation rate, 2
Venda, 24, 173
Voting intentions, 197
Wattville, 10
Western Cape, 2, 5, 13, 37, 95, 139, 164, 174, 179, 184, 205, 210
Witbank, 9, 13
Xhosas, 31, 77, 91, 94, 151
Youth organisations, 130
Zulus, 31, 77, 82, 91, 94, 151, 152, 183, 199, 201, 230

Free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za