POLITICAL APATHY AMONG SOUTH AFRICAN

AND

NAMIBIAN YOUTH:

A CASE STUDY OF THE 2014 AND 2019 NATIONAL ELECTIONS

BY

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Declaration of originality

I, Mbahare Johannes Kekana, declare that the thesis titled "Political apathy among South African and Namibian youth: a case study of the 2014 and 2019 national elections," put forward for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, was never formally submitted for a degree at this or any other University by me. This is my own blueprint and implementation, and all content encapsulated herein has indeed been properly credited.

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Abstract

This research examines the impact of political apathy on electoral participation in Namibia and South-Africa, focusing on the 2014 and 2019 national election of both countries. The objectives are to ascertain and clarify the causes of political apathy in the electoral participation of youth of Namibia and South-Africa in their 2014 to 2019 general elections, and to examine the effect or influence of political apathy on the electoral process in both countries. The need of this research was presented out of the necessity to address the increasing rate of political apathy especially voter turnout in both democratic nations. The causes of political apathy in the two countries have been attributed to lack of mobilisation of the electorate, political marginalisation, corruption, lack of political accountability, lack of motivation, lack of trust in the electoral process, failed promises by political leaders, lack of civic engagements, political violence, thuggery and militarisation of the electoral process, political deception, powerlessness of votes etc.

This study uses descriptive research design to determine the effect or influence on political apathy between 2014 and 2019 national elections in Namibia and South-Africa. Trends of political apathy in the two countries are ascertained using historical investigation. Data, especially secondary, are obtained from textbooks, journals, newspapers etc. Contents analysis helps in data presentation using statistical tools of classification and tabulation for evaluative purposes. This research recommended that political elite should exercise citizens' mandate with transparency, honesty and responsibility and that dividends of democracy should be visible in the areas of poverty alleviation and employment generation. A free, fair, and credible electoral process devoid of political violence, thuggery and militarisation, would go a long way in revamping young citizens' interests in political and electoral processes in both countries.

Key Concepts: voter apathy, political apathy, voter turnout, disgruntled citizens.

Acknowledgements

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my late grandfather Stephans Madimetja Kekana, my late mother Keko Lizzy Kekana, my late uncle Temanene Mphalane Kekana wherever you are please be with me protect me and give me strength to take this family to the greater level.

To my wife Boitumelo Morare Kekana and my kids Koketso, Temo and Bomolemo, I know I have spent less time with you, and I promise that from now on, I will make it worth your while to spend as much time with you as possible. To my late daughter Dikgakgamotšo Onthatile continue to rest well.

My lovely wife Boitumelo and grandmother Sinki Welhiminah Kekana I know life has shown us flames but all shall be well.

To all my people at the Forum 4 Service Delivery, thank you for always believing in my leadership.

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Definition of concepts

Key Concepts

Defining concepts of this study will assist in assessing and understanding the political apathy among South African and Namibian Youth, a case study of the 2014 and 2019 National Elections.

- **voter apathy**

Glasberg; (2011:102) defines voter apathy in political science, "as a lack of interest among voters in the elections of representative democracies voter unresponsiveness".

- **political apathy**

"Political apathy is a clear feature of authoritarian regimes, where the election process is usually characterized by high turnout. In the case of democratic regimes, public participation in elections is a tool for the legitimacy of power (Prokop, and Hrehorowicz, 2019:110).

- **voter turnout**

"Voter turnout is defined as the ratio between the number of voters to the number of persons with voting rights. The last national election is considered" (OECD, 2009).

- **disgruntled citizens**

"Citizens are disillusioned about and have lost faith in politics and are not willing to engage politically on this account, dissatisfied citizens are considered to pose a serious challenge or threat to the legitimacy and functioning of democratic systems. Thus, there are conflicting opinions on how best to describe and understand the role of dissatisfied citizens in democratic societies" (Metin Özdemir, and Van Zalk, 2015:411).

Abbreviations/Acronyms

ANC	African National Congress
BDP	Botswana Democratic Party
ECN	Electoral Commission of Namibia
EWN	Early Warning Network
ICCS	International Classification of Crime for Statistical Purposes
IEEE	Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers
IPPR,	Institute for Public Policy Research
MPSA	Microsoft Products and Services Agreement
NANSA	Namibia National Students Organisation
NUDIST	Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theorising
PR	Public Relations
SADC	The South African Development Community
SPSS.	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organisation
UN	United Nations
UNTAG	United Nations Transition Assistance Group

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Political apathy can be seen as a general lack of interest and indifference toward politics. High level of political apathy can be a serious problem in democratic systems because it can lead to stagnation in the growth and development of the entire country (Pap, Bilandžić, and Ham, 2019:579). To solve and avoid this situation, an electoral democracy is supposed to be supported by an electoral process within which the voters as members of the state elect politicians to be the agents of state governance (Asamoah, 2018). Electoral democracy for young people means that everyone should be afforded an equal opportunity to vote for the candidates of their choice and freely participate in the electoral process, without any form of intimidation or discrimination. Democracy is a system of government wherein voters fully participate in the affairs of their country by choosing or replacing the officials who rule them (Nwogu,2015). A multi-party constitutional democracy is a political party system in which several political parties run for local, provincial, or national elections to gain access to the institutions of government. A multi-party constitutional democracy works to integrate everyone into the democratic process through the mechanism of elections (Bogaards, 2013). Youth apathy as an electoral democracy is defined as a situation in which the youth show no interest in, or become careless about, registration or voting in a general election (Wehmeier, 2010).

According to du Pisani and Lindeke. (2009), Namibia gained its independence under provisions of the UN Security Council Resolution 435 (1978) and the supervision of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG). Since achieving independence in March 1990, Namibia has become one of Africa's better performing democracies Namibia, along with Botswana and South Africa, presents a paradox in terms of political party systems in Southern Africa. These countries with around forty competitive elections among them have both the most robust, open democracies in Africa and a sustained one-party dominance. SWAPO Party of Namibia, as it has been called since independence (still shortened to SWAPO), the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) and the African

National Congress (ANC) of South Africa thoroughly dominate the political landscape of their respective countries. These dominant parties in each case have constitution-changing super majorities ranging from two-thirds to three-fourths of the electorate and of the seats in their parliaments.

Griffiths, (1994:354), states that, South West Africa was mandated by the League of Nations to South Africa. South West Africa remained under South African control until it attained independence in 1990. Thereafter, during those 75 years, thousands of South Africans settled in the territory and South Africa treated the area as an internal province, imposing apartheid laws in South West Africa as it did in South Africa (Luis (2017:74).

According to Rukambe, (2011), in Namibia, the legal and operational framework of the elections was agreed upon among the stakeholders: the South African government, the United Nations (UN) and the political parties. This framework provided, among other things, that the South African government would administer and conduct the elections while the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) would monitor the process and eventually pronounce on whether it was 'free and fair'. It is thus imperative for Namibia, if it is to foster sustainable, vibrant electoral reform and improvements, to constantly compare its electoral system and practices with those of its neighbours and beyond. It is from this background that the researcher focus on political apathy among South African and Namibian youth.

1.2 Background and outline of the research problem

The 2014 South African national elections were the first in South Africa in which the young South Africans born after 1994 in a democratic country, under the leadership of former president Nelson Mandela, was set to play an integral part (Samie, 2013). During the country's 2014 national and provincial elections, a total of 25 million people registered to vote, out of some 31.4 million eligible voters (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2014). Young people between the ages of 18 and 29 constituted about 10.9 million, or 34% of the eligible voting-age population (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2014). Of these, almost 1.9 million were 18- and 19-year-olds (Smith, 2014). For this reason, it was branded a 'youth' election and it was an important barometer of the issues of concern for those unburdened with the

baggage of the apartheid past in the same way as previous generations had been. The high proportion of young people in South Africa means that their votes could have a greater influence on the country's political landscape, than their older cohorts. Media speculation and academic debates, however, increasingly point to apathy as an obstacle to achieving this (Essa, 2014). The 2014 national elections revealed that only 33% (646 313) of South Africans aged 18 to 19 had registered to vote, based on Statistics South Africa's (Stats SA) 2013 population estimates (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2014). Among the 20 to 29 and 30 to 39 age group, 64% (5 759 236) and 79.8% (6 180 534) respectively of those eligible to vote were registered. This indicates that there is a major shift from the 18- to 19-year-old age group to the 20- to 29-year-old constituency. According to Tracey, (2016), This report confirms a picture of political withdrawal and disgruntled voters:

• Young people are growing increasingly frustrated by the continued socio-economic challenges, such as unemployment, poor infrastructure (e.g., housing) and poor education, they face.
• Corruption is having a detrimental influence on this demographic and affects whether they participate in democratic processes, such as the elections, or not.
• There are low levels of trust among young people in government and alienation over its lack of responsiveness to their demands.
• Young people do not feel competent enough to engage in politics because it is often too complicated. Section 1 2 Do You Want My Vote? Understanding the factors that influence voting among young South Africans
• Young people are showing signs of declining partisan attachment to the ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC), but are also illustrating signs of dissatisfaction with the current available choices in terms of other political parties.

With Namibia, an important context of the 2014 poll was that the country had just made changes to both the constitution and the electoral legislation (Electoral Commission of Namibia Assessment and Post Electoral Report 27 November 2015). The changes not only created uncertainty over the influence on the electoral outcome. Questions were also raised on how they could impact voting pattern and demography. The demography

in question was the youth, in Namibia's population. Youth turnout in past elections has been far lower than any other group (Electoral Commission of Namibia Assessment and Post Electoral Report 27 November 2015). Months before the 2014 elections, various political stakeholders including youth organisations, political parties and the Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN), raised concerns over low turnout from young voters. The ECN specifically highlighted that apathy among the youth had to be addressed to avoid the credibility of the election outcome being undermined **(**Election Namibian Performance and Election Report November 27, 2014). Namibia like the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa, has a large youth population. The number of Namibian youth aged 18-35, eligible to vote, is around 600,00 out of a total population of 2.2 million (Namibia to be Africa's first to use e-voting" 2014). ECN recorded 508,459 young voters in 2014, which is 44% of the overall number of registered voters. When calculated against the total youth population of around 600,000. It translates to 85%of Namibian youth who registered to vote in 2014. The youth therefore represent the largest age grouping eligible to register and vote in Namibia. They are an important political constituency. Namibia does not fare well in terms of the participation of young people in politics compared to other countries in the sub-Saharan . While the desire for change and improvement is strong, youth political participation is uneven across the electoral cycle (12) Namibian youth are generally disillusioned with electoral politics. Many factors drive youth apathy in Namibia. These include perceptions that political activism and engagement does not yield results; the distrust of political parties; and the lack of access to political leadership (Wendell Roelf, 2014).

In Namibia, activist has been rife in the political and social arena, especially around the issues of land distribution, income inequality, and human rights, since, given current social inequalities and inequities in the distribution of public resources, young people feel disenfranchised (Keulder, Nord and Emminghaus, 2010). Activism takes very different forms, which can range from civil disobedience, rioting, strikes organised by unions, and governmental or institutional lobbying to verbal or physical confrontation, various forms of terrorism (Chadwick, 2011; Bakardjieva, Svensson, and Skortic, 2012, and the use of political games, videos, and other digital media. But the use of new media is emerging as a dominant form of activism among youths who wish to draw the attention of political,

regional, and local authority leaders to issues in the public sphere that are directly relevant to their interests. Given the paucity of studies on the nature of activism in Namibia, especially at the local and regional level.

The 2014 national elections were the first in which young South Africans, primarily those born after 1994 (the so-called 'born-free'), were eligible to vote. Malila (2014) contends that youth participation in the 2014 election was extremely crucial for two main reasons. First, it remained an official and legalistic way for people who had reached political maturity to have their views heard. Second, it was the first chance for this generation of South Africans to forge their political identity as active and engaged citizens, to fulfil their constitutional obligations, and to practice their democratic and civic rights. However, the low voter turnout in both national elections of 2014 and 2019, particularly among youth, was a wake-up call for South Africa. Mattes (2012) suggests that vote casting on polling day is only a part of a bigger and broader democratisation process. The point is that political participation cannot be reduced to vote casting alone.

Back and Westholm (2011) state that there are many ways to participate in political and electoral processes, including the following:

- voting where people use their votes to choose what candidate or party they want to make decisions in the Parliament.
- campaigning, which involves many different types of activities:
- demonstrating, sending letters and emails, media campaigns, visiting MSPs, and sending petitions.
- signing petitions, where people sign petitions to show how strongly they feel about an issue and to try to influence decision-makers.
- participating in a political party, where political parties seek to become the government; and,
- becoming involved in a pressure group, which wants to change policy but does not want to become the government, focuses on a particular area or areas of concern, and seeks to influence decision makers.

According to the Report of the Commonwealth Expert Team (2014), the youth in Namibia appeared to be proactively immersed in political and electoral issues both during the campaign period and on Election Day. For instance, the leader of the South-West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) Youth League facilitated an illegal land repossession campaign outside the city of Windhoek, highlighting corrupt practices associated with land allocation, which affected the opportunities for the distribution of land to the youth who constitute most of the voting population in Namibia. Even though the authorities acted quickly to halt the campaign, the youth activity succeeded in bringing the land problem to the forefront of the agenda. Stakeholders consulted said that the intentions of the SWAPO Youth League leader reflected a growing dissatisfaction among the young working class; thus, it resonates well with young people. Consequently, the land issue had a significant impact on how young people perceived elections.

1.3 Preliminary literature review

Inhabitants of many African countries stubbornly continue to vote even when an election's outcome does not promise any significant change to their position. According to Melber (2014), in Namibia and South Africa, this statement has an additional dimension. These are comparatively robust democracies with generally free and fair elections.

Section 165(6) of the Constitution of South Africa states that the Superior Courts Act of 2013 provides support to the judiciary to ensure that it remains independent so that it continues to be effective in promoting accountability and fighting corruption. Article 78 (2-3) of the Namibian Constitution makes specific reference to the independence of the courts, stating that no member of the executive or legislature should interfere with the functions of the judicial branch of the state.

- The right to associate with political organisations (such as political parties, candidate support organisations, or groups favouring or opposing referenda propositions)
- The right to peacefully assemble for meetings and rallies, and to otherwise demonstrate support for electoral competitors.
- The right to move freely to build electoral support.

- The right to be free of the threat of violence or other coercion, while making political choices or exercising political expression.
- The right to hold political opinions without interference; and
- The right to freedom of political expression, including the freedom to seek, review and impart information and ideas to develop informed choices required for the free expression of the will of the electors.

In Namibia, according to Shanghala (2013), the following is also required: compliance to law and policies; peace and order should always prevail during elections; and refraining from instigating, participating, and being involved in any conduct that may infringe upon any other voter's right to participate in elections, without fear or favour.

Some authors such as Wass (2007); Mayer, 2011), have argued that low political participation is beneficial to democratic stability whereas others argue that abstinence is not inherently dangerous because voters and non-voters have similar interests (Lutz and Marsh 2007), or because individuals who partake in elections seem to be better informed (Rosema 2007; Callander and Hörner, 2009; Krishna and Morgan, 2011). A crucial question in determining the implications of low voter turnout seems to be whether economic circumstances that may influence citizens' political viewpoints determine the rate at which they take part. The latest research on voter participation has shifted to focus on the young electorate.

The decline in political participation over the past few years is usually explained by the displacement of high-voting older cohorts by low-voting younger ones (Blais et al. 2004; Franklin, Lyons and Marsh 2004). Gallego (2009) states that contrary to age or life cycle effects, which naturally fade away over time, generational effects are persistent and leave a "footprint" of low turnout in the electorate (Franklin et al. 2004). Considering this debate, the key question is whether financial conditions, which affect a significant part of both nations' political inclinations, are affecting the rate at which the youth take an interest in elections. The outcomes and quality of low cooperation and the social synthesis of the new cohorts provide edifying data on the future development of voter turnout as most

youthful voters insert a financial element, which in future will be transferred to the electorate in general.

Voting is an act of democracy; the beauty of democracy is the power to vote, which people know is their right. For Mugunthan and Parameswari (2013:146), voting is a mechanism that presents citizens with an opportunity to make their feelings known. Some citizens believe that their votes are crucial to influence the outcome of the polls, while others believe that casting one's vote does not make any difference. Krishna and Morgan (2010) argue that people vote if the cost of gathering information about the right kind of political party and candidate, and the time it takes to vote, are outweighed by the benefits of casting a vote potentially for the winning candidate and the rewards (or avoided costs) of it. Tembhekar (2014), adopting an economic argument, states that voting occurs for the "development delivered or promised" in the public interest. There is also a sociological notion about political parties following a fixed agency clientele model of catching "vote banks", or concentrating on poor, middle-class or rich people, or on disadvantaged regions (Breeding 2011:71).

Social media has dramatically changed the way in which modern political campaigns are run (Enli, Gunn (2017:50). With more digital native citizens coming into the voting population, social media have become important platforms on which politicians establish themselves and engage with the voters (Daniel (2016). In the digital age, evidence across the world has showcased the increasing importance of social media in electoral politics (Wei, Ran; Xu, Larry Zhiming 2019).

1.3.1 Voter turnout across the world

Globally, there has long been a substantial concern that younger generations are not going to the polls in the manner and numbers that older generations do. Circumstantial evidence indicates that young people vote more frequently in youth-related elections than in local and general elections. The Electoral Commission (2005) reported the following:

> Younger age groups are much less likely to see voting as a civic duty than older age groups, suggesting the beginning of a cohort effect, i.e., a generation apparently carrying forward their non-voting as they get older.

According to the British Social Attitudes Report (2005), young people are not only less likely to vote than older groups, but they are also less likely to vote than people of the same age 20 years ago (Franklin and Hobolt 2011). In the survey by the Electoral Commission (2005), 55 percent (i.e., over half) of 18- to 29-year-olds who were questioned reported having been treated with prejudice, compared with about a quarter (24%) of 30- to 39-year-olds. The 18- to 29-year-olds are predominantly excluded from the high decision-making structures of government.

Further evidence suggests that the turnout of young people to vote in general elections is lower than the average turnout for the population. For national elections, figures based on the British 2010 elections (Ipsos Mori 2010) show that there was a seven percent increase in the numbers of 18- to 24-year-olds voting in the general elections (i.e. 44%).

Finally, neither age nor generation may be the cause of the declining turnout. A third variable, unrelated to age and generation, could vary across time – that is, a period effect. Several studies have tried to disentangle the effects of youth, generations, and period on the turnout for national elections. Blais et al. (2004) found the effects of age, as well as generation, on changes in voter turnout in Canadian elections. However, as the age composition was relatively constant over time, lower turnout among the post-Baby Boomer generation was found to be the main reason behind the decline in turnout. Comparable results have been found in Finland (Wass 2007b) as well as in Sweden, Norway, and Germany (Gallego 2009).

1.4 Reasons for choosing this topic.

This research intended to contribute to national and international debates pertaining to the low turnout of youth during the 2014 and 2019 national elections in South Africa and Namibia. Several studies on youth participation during elections globally have been conducted by, among others, Blais et al. (2004), Goerres (2009) and Walczak et al. (2012). In Africa, particularly South Africa, Lebeau and Dima (2005), Wise (2011), and the IEC (2002, 2009, 2014 and 2019) have undertaken studies. However, there is still a lack of comparative studies that have organised and grouped the participation of youth in elections in the countries newest to democracy (Robertson 2009:40).

This study explored voter apathy among the youth in an African context, with special reference to South Africa and Namibia, as studies on these two countries are lacking in current literature. A comparative study also highlighted nuances in political thought, attitudes, and patterns towards electoral processes; hence, highlighting that voter apathy or support within the African context cannot be homogenised or essentialised. It will provide new perspectives on the way we understand, perceive, and educate the youth in terms of voter education, thereby strengthening youth engagement in African democracies. In addition, South Africa and Namibia are two of the youngest democratic countries; hence, they were selected for this study.

In South Africa, the youth is adversely affected by several socio-economic deprivations, including labour market inaccessibility and a lack of representation in the policymaking space. The unemployment rate for those between 15-24 years of age stood at 63.3%, and 41.3% for those aged 25-34 in the first quarter of 2021 (Statistics South Africa [Stats SA], 2021). If this situation does not improve before 2024, apathy among young voters cannot be justified.

After the emergence of new political parties in the 2019, National election in Namibia, the observation was that there was ineffective service-delivery, corruption- ethical and moral standing of candidate and the land are some of the issues that influenced voter preference. This trend in issue-based politics is markedly different from the party loyalty politics during previous elections in 2014, in which voter preferences were influenced by the voters' loyalties to the party irrespective whether the party has delivered its promises or not (Venditto, Kamwanyah, and Nekare, 2020). Should this not change its landscape youth will not be interested in the 2024 National election.

1.5 Research problem and objectives: key questions to be asked.

1.5.1 Statement of the problem

Countries can have a dramatic impact on the development of the economy. The government-enforced policies and administrative norms known as political factors can influence economic development, which is the process that increases standard of living by moving away from traditional farming cultures to industrialized societies (Erlina,

(2017:135), Economic stagnation is strongly correlated to the political stability of a country, and because of it, economists regard low political stability to be harmful to economic performance. Due to low political stability, countries may turn to often changing the different economic policies, thus negatively affecting economic performance (Aisen, and Francisco, 2011).

The systematic exclusion of the youth in political affairs and the participation behaviour of the young people in contemporary Africa has serious consequences, which may have resulted in youth activism today (Enaifoghe 2019).The engagement and their empowerment in state politics, for socio-economic development is imperative in building a sense of responsiveness and accountability in government. The failure to include the youth in politics or afford them the right platform to participate in political affairs because of deprivation may result in consequence of engaging in political issues. Motsamai (2014 states that opportunities for youth to engage in political processes in Namibia largely depend on the country's political, socioeconomic, and cultural contexts. While Namibia is an upper middle-income country, inequality, poverty and unemployment are still disturbingly high. These negatively affect young people. The issue of youth political engagement therefore needs to be viewed in conjunction with problems of social, political, and economic exclusion.

International IDEA, (2012) describes distribution of financial resources as a factor that can affect young people's representation within political parties and the electoral process. High and often escalating costs often limit opportunities for young people with relatively less influence or financial means, regardless of how eager they are to run for office. In some countries, state and government resources are systematically used during campaign periods for the advantage of incumbents. This weakens the position of opposition candidates and young people who are not associated with incumbent governments or candidates. Recognizing that political activities often require (considerable) financing, many countries have introduced state subsidies to level the playing field and encourage political pluralism. Earmarking state subsidies for specific activities and/or target groups is not new and has been used in several countries to promote the representation of underrepresented groups in political institutions.

International IDEA, (2012) further states that, to increase meaningful participation from young people and marginalised groups with which the youth population intersects (such as, women, indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities and persons with disabilities), proper regulation of donations and campaign expenditure is needed to ensure all individuals in parties have equal access to funding. Although several countries have made laws in an effort to enhance youth representation, many lack mechanisms to enforce legislation by collecting, scrutinising, and disclosing financial reports or to address violations. In the absence of mechanisms to investigate political parties' donations and expenditures and hold political parties accountable, it is unlikely that political parties will be penalised for not complying with the rules.

Statistics from the Electoral Commission of Namibia (2019) states that voters apathy remains a growing concern amongst young people in Namibia. The 2014 Presidential and National Assembly Elections, the youth vote constituted 45% of the votes cast. This is despite the fact that the youth constitutes 65% of Namibia's registered voters. While in South Africa youth of ages 28-29 in 2014 was 45% and ages 18-19 was 34%. These issues are reported and questioned.

Figure 1.1 Distrust and indifference among voters [adapted from *Mail and Guardian* (2019) and Mbanyele (2021)]

Mbanyele (2021) indicates that the low percentage of these categories of youth voting forced the government to be mindful and to attempt to improve social and political commitments nationally. If this situation is not urgently addressed, it will result in youth continuing to neglect voting, especially at the local government level.

Distrust and indifference among voters

SA's level of trust in institutions is low ...
By age group, 2018*

Overall | Ages 18 to 25 | Ages 26 to 35

Opposition parties
Local council
Parliament
Police
Traditional leaders
President
Ruling party
IEC
Average
Religious leaders
Courts of law
Army

Latest available figures

% 0 10 20 30 40 50 60

... and voter registration is in decline
Percentage of eligible population registered to vote in elections, 2009 to 2021 by age group

National elections | Local government elections

Overall: 72%, 70%, 71%, 71%, 69%, 65%
Ages 20 to 29: 56%, 52%, 47%, 54%, 51%, 44%
Ages 18 to 19: 32%, 19%, 34%, 27%, 18%, 9%

2009 2011 2014 2016 2019 2021

Graphic: JOHN McCANN Data source: GGA (PRANISH DESAI — AFROBAROMETER, STATS SA)

1.5.2 Research questions

The research questions to be addressed are as follows:

- Does the feeling of exclusion from access to the land affect turnout among young voters in South Africa and Namibia?

- What factors shape and define voter apathy and voter support in South Africa and Namibia respectively?

- How does the South African government respond to youth apathy during elections?

- What are the new theoretical perspectives in the context of youth political participation within electoral processes within the African continent and its impact on democracy?

1.5.3 Research objectives

The objectives of this comparative study are:

- To assess the feeling of exclusion from access to the land affect turnout among young voters in South Africa and Namibia.
- To identify and describe factors that shaped and defined voter apathy and voter support in South Africa and Namibia respectively.
- To identify and discuss the South African government's response to youth apathy during elections.
- To identify new theoretical perspectives in the context of youth political participation within electoral processes within the African continent and its impact on democracy.

1.5.4 Scope of the study

The study is limited to two countries – Namibia and South Africa. These countries have each conducted five national elections since the inception of their democracies. The focus was on youth aged between 18 and 29 years, comparing their interests during the national elections in 2014 and 2019. The researcher opted to compare South Africa and Namibia on the basis that these two countries are the newest democratic countries in Southern Africa.

1.6 Principal theories of the study

Voting procedure is one of the methods followed so that people in a country can express their choice of government. Comprehensive methods and theories uncovered by a survey of elections conducted globally in various autonomous nations. The purpose of using these theories is to indicate the behaviour of young voters in two African countries, namely South Africa and Namibia.

1.6.1 The Civic Mobilisation Model

Finkel (2000:36) posits that to transform the mobilisation appeals included in civic education into solid political achievement, adequate political resources and adequate opportunity should be afforded to individuals. Finkel (2000) further states that side lined and formerly dormant citizens are often brought into the civic education actions of a group

by advocacy groups. Civic education must emphasise pedagogies that sustain mobilisation rather than misunderstandings of certainty, expediency, union, and rule (Green 2008:7). For a deeper democracy, civic education must employ diversely suitable viewpoints.

An added wide-ranging, exploratory, and more enlightened public education extends opportunities for meaningful experiences of democratic life. The most cost-effective and meaningful technique studied has been the use of peer-to-peer contact. Electoral campaigns have found great success in youth voter mobilisation techniques that involve a peer-to-peer element, which provides a social network opportunity. Campaigns that focus on social networks seek to capitalise on the bonds of friendship; the basic premise is that it is difficult to say no to someone you are familiar with or someone with who you have something in common (Wells and Dudash 2007). A further determinant of voting patterns is the importance of the media in notifying the public and making judgments. According to Ball and Peters (2005:180), the influence of the broadcast media, especially television, is becoming increasingly important in determining voting results. Youth depend on mass media to learn about politicians along with their actions (Ladd 2010). Conversely, the news media plays a significant role in democratic governance by influencing political viewpoints and voter aspirations, among other things (Ladd 2010). Social media and the Internet have made mass mobilisation easier to organise and to disseminate ideas. The Internet has grown in political importance, and it has played a significant role in many mass mobilisation efforts (Best, Samuel, Krueger, and Brian 2005).

Political socialisation influences political attitudes, ideology, and participation. In the instance of the youth voter, parental attitudes on participation might heavily influence the decision to participate. In terms of demographic factors, the likelihood of voting is directly influenced by socioeconomic status, age, and the location of residence.

Moreover, young people need to be incorporated into the political process to enable their sustainable and effective participation in elections (Olaleye 2004:25). It is, therefore, important for them to be knowledgeable about government and willing to participate in the electoral process. Additionally, the civic movements in South Africa have been unable to sufficiently mobilise and educate the youth to be more patriotic and politically aware when compared to the youth of Namibia, who meaningfully participate in the development of their country.

1.6.2 The Public Choice Theory

To find out what informs the public to make their own choices, Buchanan and Tullock emerged with a theory called Public Choice. For Niskanen (2008:405), the Public Choice Theory comprises of communication between the voting public, the politicians, the bureaucracy, and the political action committees. Niskanen (2008:405) further states that Public Choice means "the use of economic tools to deal with traditional problems of political science". According to Andreadis and Chadjipadelis (2005:12), the field of political behaviour forms part of the Public Choice Theory. Rofé (2015:722) explains that in political science, it is the subset of positive political theory that "studies self-interested agents (voters, politicians, bureaucrats) and their interactions, which can be represented in a number of ways using (for example) standard constrained utility maximisation, game theory, or decision theory".

Public choice analysis has its roots in positive analysis, but is often used for normative purposes in order to identify a problem or to suggest improvements to constitutional rules. Prospects for young people to take part in governance and political and decision-making mechanisms are heavily influenced by political, socio-economic, and cultural contexts, where social standards in so many regions of the world lead to various types of prejudice against the youth.

Hence, it is essential to take note that these models and effects ought not to be viewed in seclusion, because in many regards they can be interrelated. Moreover, one can likewise distinguish a specific manner by which the democratic way of behaving of citizens "sequentially advances" in the long run. First comes youth and early socialisation, during which people mingle. From there on, they begin to relate to specific ideological groups.

Votes are projected considering the long haul and transient impacts to which they have been exposed to in the course of their lives (Wolf 2010).

1.7 Ethical issues

The researcher obtained consent letters from the University of KwaZulu-Natal and both the IECs of Namibia and South Africa that confirmed the purpose of the study. These documents were used to communicate with all the respective institutions and are attached to each questionnaire. The study was based on the principle of voluntary participation. The respondents were told that they were not under any obligation to participate or to divulge confidential information. To safeguard the respondents, confidential information was not disseminated, due to fact that the topic was sensitive. During the interview sessions, the respondents were allowed to withdraw if they felt uncomfortable with the whole process. If any incident of withdrawal happened during the data gathering process, the researcher did not register it. Furthermore, during the answering of the questions, the researcher provided assurances regarding research confidentiality and the privacy of the respondents.

1.8 Structure of the research

- **Chapter One: Introduction to the study**. This chapter primarily introduced the research and outlined the problem that was investigated. It included a short background to the study, the statement of the problem, a provisional theoretical review, the aim and objectives, the research design and methodology, the importance of the research, the scope of the research, as well as the study's structure.
- **Chapter Two: Literature review.** This chapter focused on providing the literature's understanding of facts concerning the low turnout of youth, as well as comparing several countries, such as older and newer democracies.
- **Chapter Three: Theoretical review.** This chapter clearly outlined theories relating to the low participation of youth in elections.

- **Chapter Four: Comparison of elections in the Republic of South Africa and Namibia in 2014 and 2019.** This chapter outlined and compared the youth issues surrounding elections in South Africa and Namibia, both during the apartheid era and since the advent of democracy.

- **Chapter Five; Chapter Four: Research design and methodology**. The role of this chapter is to outline the different techniques and methods of collecting and analysing data.

- **Chapter Six: Data presentation analysis and findings**. The information gathered from the interviews and questionnaires, which were distributed to South African and Namibian government officials, youth formation leaders, and IEC officials, was illustrated by means of tables and graphs, and analysed.

- **Chapter Seven: Summary of findings, recommendations, and conclusion**. In this chapter, the researcher summarised the study, presented the findings, provided recommendations, and concluded the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focused on the low turnout of youth and a comparison with several countries, such as older and newer democracies, Developments in young people's politics, congressional voting trends by race and age in the United States, 1966-2010. This included, voting patterns of youth in Namibia and South Africa, through registration, and factors affecting the turnout of youth in election systems. This is followed by Media influence and trust in the system and how the media is linked to election management to public trust in elections.

Voter turnout is one of the crucial indicators of how citizens participate in the governance of their country. Higher voter turnout is in most cases a sign of the vitality of democracy, while lower turnout is usually associated with voter apathy and mistrust of the political process. Because of its importance, media, and civil society actors, as well as the democracy support community and many other stakeholders are concerned when citizens to do not turn out to vote. They are also keen to understand the reasons behind low turnouts. Collecting comprehensive data on voter turnout from across the globe and trying to understand what affects people's decisions to vote or not to vote is therefore important (Solijonov, 2016).

2.2 Elections in developed countries

Hanschitz*,* (2017), describes developed countries such as Estonia, Canada, Sweden, Latvia, and Switzerland, and other states changed to i-voting using the public network for their voting system. The Estonian system allows voters to "cast their ballots from any Internet-connected computer, anywhere in the world." "Unrelated to the electronic voting systems used elsewhere, which involve costly and problematic machinery, the Estonian solution is simple, elegant, and secure. During a designated pre-voting period, the voter logs onto the system using an ID card or Mobile ID and casts a ballot. The voter's identity is removed from the ballot before it reaches the National Electoral Commission for counting, thereby ensuring anonymity. With any method of remote voting, including

traditional mail-in ballots, the possibility of votes being forced or bought is a concern. Estonia's solution was to allow voters to log on and vote as many times as they want during the pre-voting period. Since each vote cancels the last, a voter always has the option of changing his Digitalisation of Politics and Elections.

In Sweden, as in most established democracies, voter registration and the VAP statistics are very close to each other. This is the way it should be because those who are eligible to vote should be registered on the voters' list. In Egypt, by contrast, there was a significant divergence between voter registration and the VAP statistics in the period 1976–2012. This can be explained by the fact that many voters were denied a political voice during this period, which resulted in much lower voter registration (Carayannis, 2017).

2.3 Elections in developing and Southern Africa countries

Southern African states have taken a deliberate effort to adopt an electoral system of their own choice involving popular internal consultations. Those that have include South Africa, Namibia and, recently, Lesotho. The rest of the SADC member states operate electoral systems that are part of the legacy of the inherited political and constitutional arrangements left behind by the departing colonialists in the 1960s (Asmal, and De Ville, 1994).

According to Bauer (2001), election could be regarded as a continuation of the democratic process in South Africa and as such, the election campaigns conducted by the various parties would differ from that of the 1994 elections. Most electoral systems draft a set of political rules in connection with the following: (1) the method of voting; (2) elections and political parties (3) candidates and (4) election results. Concerning the election of 27April 1994 all aspects referred to in (1-4) were addressed and covered by the Electoral Act No. 202 of 1993 and for the election of 2 June 1999, by the Electoral Act, No. 73 of 1998.

2.4 Comparison in Voter turnout in developed countries.

How U.S. Voter Turnout Measures Up

Share of voting age population that voted in the most recent national election

Country	Turnout
Belgium 2014*	87.2%
Sweden 2014	82.6%
South Korea 2017	77.9%
Israel 2015	76.1%
New Zealand 2017	75.7%
Germany 2017	69.1%
France 2017	67.9%
United Kingdom 2017	63.2%
Canada 2015	62.1%
Spain 2016	61.2%
United States 2016	55.7%
Switzerland 2015*	38.6%
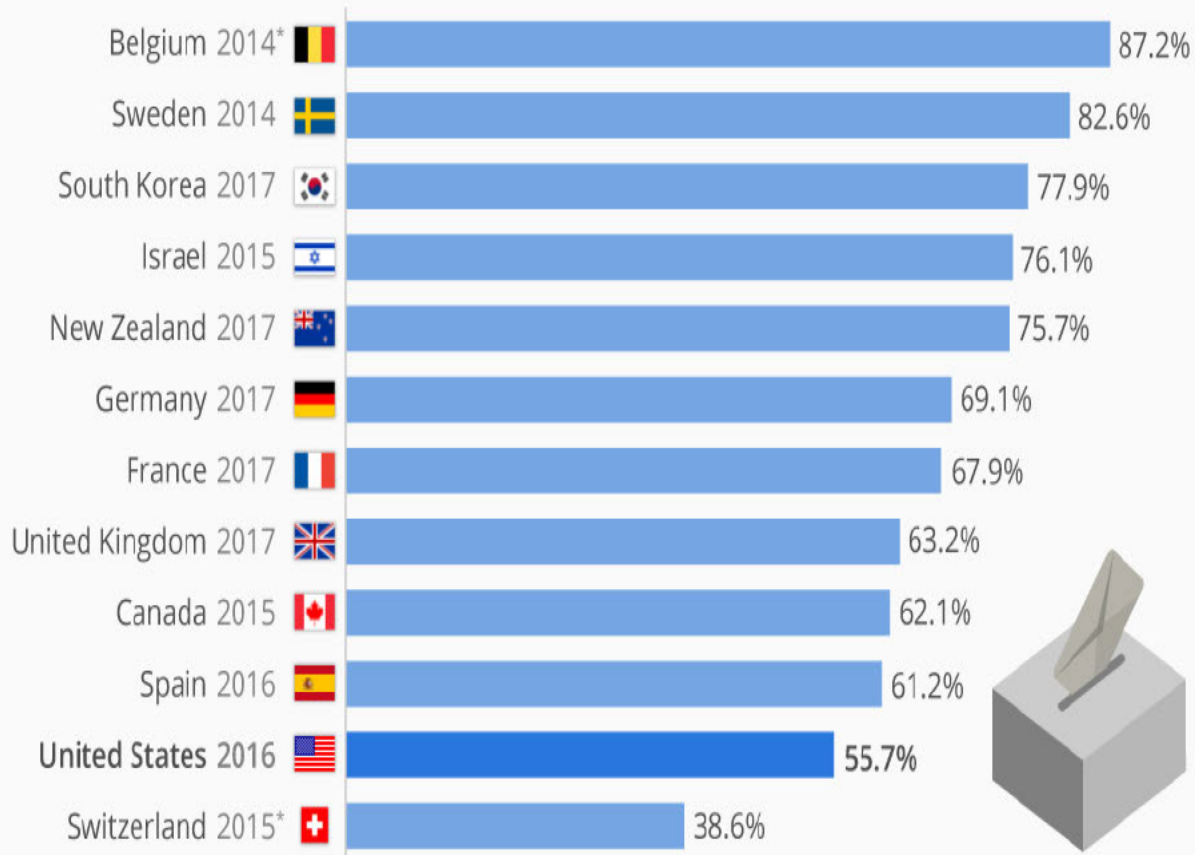
* National law makes voting compulsory, though not necessarily enforced. In addition, one Swiss canton has compulsory voting.

@StatistaCharts   Source: Pew Research Center

statista

Belgium had a turnout of 87.2% in its 2014 election (although law requires all eligible citizens to vote, the rules are not necessarily enforced). In 2016, Australia – which doesn't appear on the chart – experienced the lowest recorded turnout since the introduction of compulsory voting in the 1920s Many countries that don't have a compulsory voting system get strong turnouts. For example, Sweden (82.6% in 2014), South Korea (77.9% in 2017), Israel (76.1% in 2015 and New Zealand (75.7% in 2017.

A literature review is viewed as a fundamental cycle in a scholarly task since it empowers the researcher to find what is contained in the wealth of information available - in this instance, comparing the democratic ways of youth in South Africa to those in Namibia. Moreover, a review of the literature entails identifying discrepancies and deficiencies in our understanding about the phenomenon under investigation (Badenhorst 2008:117).

Voting behaviour alludes to human action with regards to elections. It is characterised as a group of related individual and election activities, which might include involvement in electoral campaigns, voter turnout, and picking whom to decide in favour of (Bratton 2013). Hence, it envelops both the activities and inactions of individuals with respect to discretionary cooperation, as well as who to help on the off chance that one chooses to participate in the democratic cycle (Rule 2014).

Research on voting, concentrating on discretionary ways of behaving, has shown that casting a ballot depends on an individual's educational encounters. Citizens' decisions are reasonable impacted by a variety of variables. For instance, research has shown that the electorate might make their decisions based on at least one of the following factors: (1) the presentation of the public authority in power, (2) the character of upcoming politicians, (3) the citizens' position on unambiguous issues, (4) partisanship or party association, (5) the state of the economy, and additionally (6) the personality or ethics of the competitor (Kuotsu 2016). According to Hazarika (2015), such contingencies are influenced by both short-term and long-term factors. The short-term influences are election-specific and subject to significant changes from one election to the next. Examples include the state of the economy, the performance of the government, and the personality of the candidate. Other factors, such as party loyalty, are more stable over time.

A voting age has been identified in most countries around the world. Most governments believe that those under the age of the desired limit lack the capacity to vote. The voting age is frequently so important that it is set by a constitutional provision. People use the terms youth and young people synonymously in everyday conversations, with no major disagreements. This is also true in a couple of other contexts where the term is used. For example, there is broad consensus that the term "youth" refers to "many various subsets

instead of a specific demographic entity" (WDR 2007:27). There is also concurrence that the term is used to refer to a "special phase of life between childhood and adulthood" when "young people (male and female) through a process of intense physiological, psychological, social, and economic change, gradually come to be recognised and to recognise themselves as adults" (WDR 2007:27).

According to Foucher (2007:10) and Kagwanja (2005:51), many countries, including South Africa and Namibia, whittled down the voting age from 21 to 18 during periods of democratic revolution. Africa's youth are becoming a more valuable constituency as demographic trends skew their numerical weight, particularly in urban areas. High fertility rates and low life expectancy rates both contribute to Africa's "youth bulge". As a result, the median age of Africans is 18 years, compared to 42 years for Europeans (UN-DESA 2010), and youth now account for 70% of the region's population.

2.5 The low turnout of youth and a comparison with several countries, such as older and newer democracies

In evaluating the participation of youth in the political world, careful consideration is needed due to specific norms that differ and because they are influenced by external factors when making life decisions. This includes matters related to politics (Esa and Hashim 2017). The European Social Survey found that youths in the United Kingdom continue being as keen on political issues as their counterparts elsewhere in Europe, regardless of the downturn in youth voter numbers after the mid-1990s (Sloam 2016). The aforementioned implies that the problem is mostly about a general lack of political commitment among the youths instead of a disconnect among all youths as well as the political structure.

Young Millennials have a larger number of opportunities than previous generations yet face more serious challenges than their forebearers (Furlong and Cartmel 2007). Fundamental transformations in the job market indicate that, at present, there is not any genuine possibility of a job for life (Goodwin, Furlong, O'Connor, Hadfield, Corridor, Lowden and Plugor 2017), while the classification of conventional social customs has bred personalities that are formed by fluid classifications of class, local area, nationality

and culture (Bessant 2018). These developments have prompted the individualisation of values and ways of life and the development of character politics. Hence, young people continually revamp their economic and social dimensions, from their CVs to their Facebook profiles, inside an interaction group (Castells 2015). At the point when young people do connect, they progressively take part in significant foundations directed by their own way of life and in informal organisations (Bennett and Segerberg 2013). The adjustments are financial, social, cultural, and political in nature, and remain interconnected (see Figure 1 below).

Youth political participation

* Identity - Politics, Post-materialism

*Everyday Politics, Stand by Citizens

* Digitally Networked Action

* Young Cosmopolitan, Leftward Drift

Political change

* Weakening Partisanship * Politics to Policy (Managerialism, good governance)

* Outsourcing of Policy (by national governments)

* New Forms of Political Communication

Economic and Social Change \" Increased Economic Prosperity (1960s to financial crisis)

* Individualisation of values and lifestyles

* Economic and Cultural Globalisation

* Emergence of Social Networks and Network Society

* Rise of Web 2,0 & social media* Economic Hardships (2008)

Figure 2.1 Development in young people

[Source: Sloam and Henn (2016)]

Between the 1960s and the 2000s, post-modern majority rules systems encountered a delay in economic development, expanding scholastic fulfilment, a reinvigoration of the job market, and the release of customary standards with respect to religion and everyday life. Subsequently, the progress from youth to old age has become delayed and staggered. (Flanagan 2013), states that young people stay in education and training

longer, enter the regular job market later, and wed and have kids at a more established age than was the situation in earlier years. In the European Union, 15-to 24-year-olds are still in schooling and rose from 49% in 1987, to 58% in 1995, to 68% in 2007, and the middle age of a young person entering the labour force rose from 18% to 20% throughout a similar period (European Commission 2008). In the US, the extent of 20-year-olds who got married dropped from 79% to 22% between 1967 and 2014, while the number of young people who held a job at this age fell significantly (Dalton 2017:92). Smets (2012) states that the changes mentioned above had significant ramifications for political involvement. Nations with more diverse populations have bigger differences in the voting patterns of their youth.

Physical location stays significant for young people's political involvement, in encouraging a feeling of personality, in presenting a room for them to exercise their democratic abilities, and giving them representational places (for example, city squares and college grounds) for political activity (Hopkins and Todd 2015). Moreover, the diversity of Millennials, combined with the growth in new interactive technology, has prompted the building of communities across conventional territorial boundaries; hence, political activity has become progressively directed through social networks across "hybrid public spaces" (Castells 2015). In this regard, Amnå and Ekman (2014), put forward a few significant viewpoints about the idea of issue-based involvement. In their investigation of young people in Sweden, they distinguished the "four faces of political involvement": an "active" group with high levels of interest and involvement (6% of the example); "reserve" residents with high levels of normal support (45%); an "unengaged" group with low degrees of interest and normal involvement (27%); and "disappointed" residents with low involvement and minimal interest (22%) (Amnå and Ekman 2014:274). A portion of youthful Swedes can be portrayed as "reserve residents", who "remain alert, keep themselves informed about governmental issues by raising policy centred issues in regular day-to-day settings, and are willing and ready to take part if necessary" (Amnå and Ekman 2014:262). These findings hold suggestions for understanding the reason the youth end up voting. It suggests that many young people will cast a vote if they can relate

to the issues put forward by an upcoming party or a party that supports their views with evidence (Henn and Foard 2017).

According to Van Biezen (2012), European democracies have evolved in both character and relevance, and this is especially applicable to younger people. Deelan (2015) reaffirms that, when it relates to voting, those most likely to be excluded from party membership are young people who also identify with another vulnerable population, namely young women, and young members of national or ethnic minorities. According to Hilderman and Anderson (2017), young people's active participation in organisational politics will significantly rise if the aforementioned individuals and organisational conditions are met to the greatest extent possible:

- They feel an obligation to participate.
- They feel social pressure from their family, peers, or others,
- They believe something is at stake.
- They have already participated in the past.
- The barriers to participation have been eliminated; and
- They have been reached out to.

Political campaigns ought to be made alongside youngsters and have clear messages communicated using their language, as opposed to corporate-style campaigns authored by PR experts and spin doctors, which can be disconcerting for youngsters. Effective instances of this include the UK Work Party's mission, which contained youth-focused content (Labour 2018), the Scottish National Party's crusade, which spoke to young people in a straightforward way, and the missions of different Green coalitions (Weber 2017).

The figure below illustrates the election turnout of youth in the US:
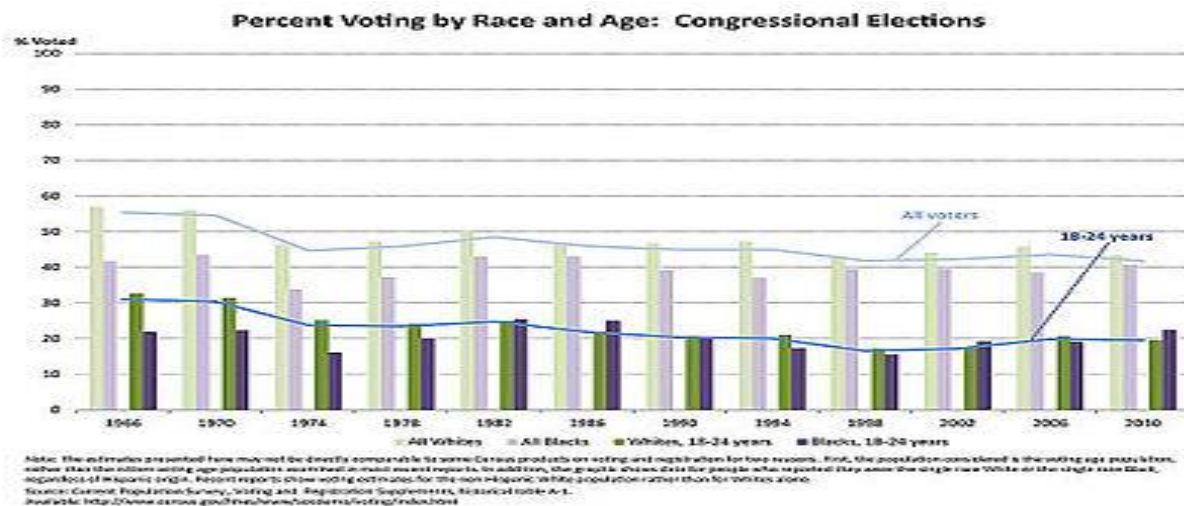
Figure 3 United States voting according to race and age

 [*Source: Grinspan and Jon (2016)*]

2.5.1 Congressional voting trends by race and age in the United States, 1966-2010

As a voting demographic, the youth vote is comprised of those between the ages of 18 and 24 (Iyengar 2003). There are many policy areas that have specific implications for youth in the United States, including education issues and the juvenile justice system (Spring 2004). In general, voter turnout has been declining for all age groups in American elections, but the biggest slump has been among young people (Spring 2006).

There is a generational trend of low youth turnout in voting. It is the young who are least likely to vote, but as individuals age, turnout significantly increases until they reach the age of 50 and then drops again (William 1971). Youth have been underrepresented in the polls since 1972, when 18-year-olds were given the right to vote. A large proportion of the eligible voters of the cohort of 18- to 24-year-olds voted in 1976, however, only 13 percent voted, which represented a third under-representation (Spring 2004). A 50 percent underrepresentation of youth occurred in the next election in 1978. "Seven out of ten young people... did not vote in the 1996 presidential election, which was 20% lower than the general turnout" (Spring 1998). In 1998, out of the 13% of qualified youth citizens in America, just five percent cast a ballot (Spring 2004). During the cutthroat official race of 2000, 36 percent of youth ended up voting, and in 2004, the "really successful season

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throughout the entire existence of youth casting a ballot", 47 percent of American youth cast a ballot (Spring 2004). In 2008, the numbery of youth citizens significantly increased and, surprisingly, quadrupled in certain states contrasted with the 2004 races (Chris 2008). In 2008, President Barack Obama talked about the commitments of youngsters to his political race, beyond elector turnout. This showed a developing participation in politics in general from young people (Rankin 2013).

However, young people generally show low degrees of electoral turnout, an absence of confidence in democratic establishments, and indications of suspicion and negativity with respect to politicians and political parties (Dalton 2008). Nonetheless, while activities related to conventional politics have declined, young people have become interested in political issues (Henn and Foard 2012) and different types of political involvement (O'Toole 2003).

However, the traditional picture that wins is that young people are politically "uninvolved" or even "unresponsive" in contrast to older people (Dalton 2013). In her study on the differences in political involvement between the youth and older individuals, Quintelier (2007) identified three factors behind these characterisations of youth and the apparent political gap between the youth and older individuals. Firstly, the gap is caused because of life cycle and generational impacts; furthermore, more engaging types of participation have made more young people redirect their energies away from conventional types of political support, as preferred by older people; and thirdly, that there is a difference in the way young people embrace politically related organisations in contrast to older people.

2.5.2 Mechanisms of affective influence on voting

The differential impact of explicit emotions on voting behaviour includes the following:

Surprise - Research suggests that the feeling of shock might amplify the impact of feelings on casting a ballot (Miller 2011).

Anger – The Affective Theory would predict that anger expands the use of general knowledge and reliance upon generalizations and different heuristics. Students at the University of Massachusetts Amherst showed that the individuals who had been primed with an anger condition depended less upon issue-concordance when choosing between

candidates than those who had been primed with dread (Parker and Isbell 2010). In a different study, subjects primed with anger were less inclined to seek for information about a candidate and invested less energy checking on a candidate's strategy positions on the web (Valentino, Hutchings, Banks and Davis 2008).

Anxiety – Anxiety, according to the Affective Intelligence Theory, is a feeling that enhances political focus while lowering dependence on party affiliation when choosing among candidates, thereby improving decision-making abilities. Voters who report election anxiety are more likely to vote for candidates who support their policies, while party members who report election anxiety are two times more likely to deviate and vote for the opposing candidate (Weghorst and Lindberg 2011). Others have argued that anxiety's indirect impact on voting behaviour has been proven to the exclusion of alternative explanations (Brader 2011).

Fear – According to research, people who experience anxiety rely more on detailed processing when making decisions. One research reveals that subjects who were primed with fear spent more time on the internet seeking out information before a voting exercise than those who were primed with anger (Groenendyk 2011).

Pride – According to the findings of the American National Elections Survey, pride, along with trust and fear, accounted for a large portion of the variation in people's democratic decisions in 2008 (Goldsmith 2014).

Some potential voters may not care about politics, so they admit they have no compelling reason to become involved (Adriaansen, Van Praag and De Vreese 2010). Some may simply opt out because they do not believe the government will listen to them (Nickerson and Rogers 2010). Nevertheless, news content has the potential to decrease political cynicism. Other studies have found that political cynicism may increase a respondent's likelihood to vote because cynicism leads to rational reflection about politics rather than apathy (Fu, Jalette, Miller and Mou 2011).

Neuroticism – This is defined as emotional instability characterised by extreme and maladaptive responses to stressors and a higher likelihood of negative emotions (e.g., anxiety, anger, and fear).[This has become a big influencer in elections and referendums,

which were run from a populist standpoint, where they played upon voters' fears. This conception of neuroticism as a lowered threshold for detecting and responding to stimuli as threatening suggests that individuals high on this trait will be more receptive to campaigns, such as populism, which specifically prey on fears of looming threats and dangers. Research shows that once these fears have been activated, they can affect decisions of all kinds, including voting behaviour (Williams, McKuen and Neuman 2011).

Elections are meant to be a peaceful means for groups to contend for political power, occasionally directly substituting violent alternatives. Even so, if political parties are yet to accept the guidelines of the game, conflict is hypothesised to be an elective tool for influencing election results (Machado et al. 2011). Besides that, the clear dividing lines drawn by political parties, particularly when founded by already controversial groups, can create conditions conducive to violence, which is a topic of interest in and of itself (Collier and Vicente 2012).

2.5.3 Methods of voting

One method of voting considered is whereby a government could intercede to reduce the youth's withdrawal from voting is to enforce compulsory voting for first-time voters. Thus, young people of voting age would be obliged to cast their vote, no matter what the electoral level. As a once-off compulsory framework, it is viewed as that this would "launch a long-lasting habit of voting" (Birch, Gottfried and Hotel 2013:21). Nevertheless, there are critical democratic values and civil rights aspects to this issue, and it has been the subject of a recent ongoing and unresolved debate (Saunders 2010).

A critical debate on the side of compulsory voting in favour of young people is that it will fundamentally expand this age's participation at the voting stations by up to 30% or more (Slope 2011). Furthermore, evidence suggests that compulsory voting may reduce generational differences in electoral involvement rates (Singh 2014); specifically, it will assist in guaranteeing that socio-economically disadvantaged groups are neither under-represented at the polling stations nor under-estimated in the minds of politicians and policymakers (Fischer 2011). In this manner, in bringing about higher youth turnout rates, compulsory voting could force politicians to treat young people and their policy concerns on a par with those of their older counterparts (Birch, Gottfried and Hotel 2013).

Whiteley (2012) suggests that if only a few people vote in elections, then the state will lose its authenticity and it will not be able to convince its citizens to participate in the affairs of governing. A further challenge will be that any generational dissimilarity in voting involvement rates will in general lead to the policy concerns of young people being given little importance by politicians (Mycock and Tonge 2012). Hence, when chosen for office, politicians in government will more often than not seek arrangements that favour more established and older voters to the detriment of more youthful and non-voting people (Berry 2012). There is evidence that this cycle exists in England and it has facilitated the gaps between young residents and the state. For example, Furlong and Cartmel (2012) state that in the 2010 UK General Elections, the discussion concerning college expenses would in general focus on the implications for more established tax-paying people as opposed to considering the issue from the perspective of young students. The worldwide financial slump and related government strategies have put an unfair weight on the youth (Sloam 2014).

2.6 Voting patterns of youth in Namibia and South Africa

Franklin (2004:9) emphasises the importance of youth turnout, stating that the origin of non-voting implies that poor early-life voter turnout has significant consequences for long-term voter turnout trends. Franklin's (2004:9) explicitly contests the traditional understanding of youth voting apathy, stating that young people vote less because they are not as socially connected and have less at stake in society, which were assumed to change with time as they aged and their political concerns matured. Franklin (2004:9) asserts that early non-voting perceptions shape voting behaviours throughout one's life, leading to new cohorts who are even less inclined to vote. Vowles (2006:7) backed up this assertion by presenting evidence that subsequent cohorts of young voters are becoming less and less likely to form life-long voting habits. As a result, youth non-voting today may have a negative long-term impact on voter turnout and democratic health, and it certainly merits further investigation.

Voter turnout has been steadily decreasing over the past decade along a broad spectrum of advanced democracies. Until the 1980s, the average voter turnout in national legislative elections was around 80%; it is now only slightly higher than 70% (Blais 2010:165; Dalton 2006). Even though the percentage and starting point of this decline vary, the declining trend is consistent, even among nations with clearly distinct electoral systems and other political and social institutions. Thus, the question is, "What is causing this steady decline in turnout?". Several scholars have observed that much of the decline in turnout is centred around young people (Blais, Gidengil, Nevitte and Nadeau 2004:221; Johnston, Matthews and Bittner 2006:735; Was 2007:648). As a result, one reasonable explanation is that the decrease in turnout is due to generational replacement. More recent cohorts are less likely to vote. This begs the question of why younger generations are less likely to vote. Observing youth voting participation is one method of illuminating the degree to which youth choose to engage with society and the national values embedded in the political system (Scott, Vawda, Swartz and Bhana 2012:19).

2.6.1 Registration among young people in South Africa

According to Tracey (2014:1), South African youth are frequently viewed as a "lost generation"; one devoid of causes or political purpose, an apathetic generation. Some have opted out of democratic processes such as elections due to the ruling elite's absence of interest in reacting to their concerns. Promises of a bright future must be balanced against the lived realities of high unemployment, poverty, and inequality. Because young people make up such a substantial percentage of South African voters, acknowledging their voting thoughts and emotions could provide perspective into how they perceive their democratic representation. This, in turn, would provide indicators of how much power they presume they must affect the nation's vision.

South Africa's rapid population growth has altered the demographic breakdown of the eligible electorate in recent elections. Turnout levels can be expected to fall as generational substitution takes place and younger voters enter the electorate in greater numbers. According to international studies, young voters are preconditioned to vote less than their older counterparts.

South Africa's 2013 population estimates indicated 10.9 million qualified voters between the age of 18 and 29, comprising 34% of the democratic age population. However, just 6.4 million are registered, representing a fifth of the qualified voters, or a fourth of registered citizens. Among 18- and 19-year-olds, only 33% of eligible voters are registered. Additionally, registration levels among 18-to 29-year-olds are lower, at 59%, than those of older voters. Moreover, many eligible young voters between 18- and 29-years-old remain unregistered, which reduces the registration rate and the voter turnout among eligible voters (Herzenberg 2014:2).

The turnout of registered voters in the 2014 elections, according to Herzenberg (2014:2), was 73%. This represented a decline of 4% on the previous two elections' turnout of 77%. When turnout is examined as a proportion of the eligible voting-age population turnout over 20 years, there has been a decline in participation from 86% in 1994, to 72% in 1999, and 58% in 2004. In 2009 was there a slight increase to 60%, but this was followed by a drop to 57% in the 2014 elections.

2.6.1.1 Young registered voters

The first of the peculiarities to arise is that in every one of the last three elections, young South Africans comprised the two largest groups of registered people. Moreover, a year-on-year increase in registered 30-to 39-year-olds, which is a 8.3% increase from 5,4 million in 2006 to 5,85 million in 2011, mirroring the decline in registration figures seen across most age groups. The 20- to 29-group also took this route and in 2011 there were 9% more registered South Africans in that age group (5,53 million) than in 2006 (5,08 million) (Herzenberg 2014:2).

The IEC (2006, 2009, 2011) emphasised that notwithstanding this decline in citizen registration numbers among the youths, an examination of the mid-year 2011 population figures (StatsSA 2011) uncovered another peculiarity, to be specific that the 2011 voters' roll for 20-to 29-year-olds stood at 58% (1% higher than in 2006) of the country's 20-to 29-year-olds. Hence, a comparison with mid-year population figures in 2011 shows that 76,6% (4% lower than in 2006) participated in the 2006 municipal elections, the 2009 general elections, and the 2011 municipal decisions.

Moreover, voters aged 30 to 39 signed up to vote in South Africa. In comparison, the 40- to 49-year-old age group registered at a rate of more than 90% in 2006, 2009, and 2011. In summary, electoral data from the three most recently held national elections exhibit that, while voters' rolls continued to increase from 2006 to 2011, the percentage of South African youth who sign up to vote shifted little in real terms (IEC 2006, 2009, 2011).

This considerably lower level of young people's electoral participation is highlighted when looking at voter turnout in the 2011 municipal elections as a percentage of the country's total population - only 28% of the country's total 20- to 29-year-old population participated in these elections. In 2011, only 37% of the 30- to 39-year-old age group voted. The third fact to emerge is that the 20 to 29 and 30- to 39-age groups, which include South Africa's young contingent, demonstrated the least amount of real participation in proportion to the total population estimate for each group over the past three nationwide elections (Scott, Vawda, Swartz and Bhana 2012:19).

2.6.2 Registration among young people in Namibia

In Namibia, young people between the ages of 18 and 32 (45.50%) dominated the voters' roll prepared for the 2014 elections. After the elections, which occurred from 8 to 20 September 2014, the number of enrolled citizens remained at 1 277 578, of which 36 384 were scrapped because they were duplications or had died since they first enrolled. This brought the number of registered voters to 1 241 194. The Khomas district, which includes the capital city of Windhoek, had the biggest number of registered voters, with 231 516 (19% of the entire population). The Samora Machel district in Windhoek registered the largest number of voters, with 40 268, trailed by the Moses Garoeb district, with 36 444. The remaining districts registered more than ten thousand voters, with the 10 889 registered voters in Windhoek rural being the most least (Election Watch 2014:1).

The Omusati district registered the second largest number of voters at 135 693. The Outapi and Etayi districts registered the largest number of voters at 21 459 and 15 460 respectively. The Otamanzi district registered lower numbers, with 6901 voters. The scarcely populated districts of Zambezi and Omaheke registered a smaller number of voters. The largest number of registered voters in the Zambezi district was 12 262 in the Katima Mulilo Metropolitan area, while in the Omaheke district the largest number of

registered voters was recorded at 12 991 in the Gobabis voting district. The districts additionally recorded the most reduced voter registration results with 3466 voters registered in the Kabbe voting district of the Zambezi area and 3534 voters in the Epukiro district of the Omaheke area.

2.7 The factors affecting the turnout of youth in election systems.

Education has been shown to significantly affect youth voter turnout (Howe 2006:137). Individuals who are more educated might be more able to deal with politically significant information and have a more developed sense of community involvement (Dalton 2008:2; Anderson 2007:271). Notwithstanding, some studies suggest that educations has a more noteworthy effect in certain nations than in others (Goldstone 2010:31).

Youth are particularly sensitive to the hardships of marginalisation, and this is not a new phenomenon; historical unfairness and a lack of options have inspired generations of young people to work for social change. Youth involvement in anti-colonial struggles was critical to the revolutionary movements of many African countries. In many ways, previous generations' mandates for youth were easier to define. With most states' political independence, legislated equality in many nations, and lip service to justice, identifying and addressing the problem has become increasingly challenging. With the serious challenges tending to range from economic hardship to environmental destruction to violations of human rights, young people bear a heavy burden if they are to create a better future for themselves and their communities.

In this manner, the undertaking for youth today is to figure out a plan for the 21st century; a plan that goes beyond just raising issues to challenging current models and building platforms to create the change they want to see. Developing past articulations of dissatisfaction, which is a basic and significant initial phase in achieving social change, to articulating clear targets and methodologies, is required if youth activism is to occur across public, economic, and generational divides.

Disillusionment with the political framework and additionally party politics can prompt voters to avoid elections. As indicated by Clarke, Sanders, Stewart, and Whiteley (2004:260), the two perspectives with the best effect on the likelihood of casting a ballot are "system benefits", which is a civic duty, and "impact and advantages", which is outside political viability.

On the other hand, satisfaction with the way the nation is being run may prompt a feeling of lack of interest in the importance of casting a ballot (Fowler and Kam 2007:811). An anticipated outcome could be that most voters end up voting for the dominant party, who most would consider winning, while supporters of other parties see little point in taking part (Gill and Gainous 2002:383).

Incorrect and obsolete voter registration information could also prompt voters to not cast their vote. One more factor is the apparent significance of an election; for instance, a local or regional election may not be viewed as significant as a general one (Pammett and LeDuc 2007:511). Socio-economic factors also play a part, for example, poor people are excluded from political decision-making, and other factors, for example, residents being at work during voting hours. Protests in the run up to an election can likewise frighten off voters (Adele 2012:205). Moreover, if there is excessive mudslinging and little conversation of grassroots issues in the run-up to the elections it can also dissuade citizens from voting (Malafaia, Cicognani and Menezes 2012:434).

2.7.1 Factors contributing to youth voting turnout.
The political behaviour traditions focus on drivers such as party identification and group membership and identities (Achen and Bartels 2017). First, citizens are more likely to think frequently of issues that are important to them, less likely to oscillate in their opinions on those issues over time, and more likely to form presidential candidate preferences based on those opinions (Lecheler, De Vreese and Slothuus 2009). Second, citizens are more likely to seek out additional information about political issues they deem important and are more likely to learn where candidates stand on those issues (Bolsen and Leeper 2013). Third, citizens are more likely to engage in political participation when issues that are important to them are at stake (Holbrook, Sterrett, Johnson and Krysan 2016).

2.7.1.1 Lack of political knowledge

According to Muralidharan and Sung (2016), motivating young voters is a daunting task, and research is crucial to understand the factors that influence their attitudes and behaviour (Vellymalay 2014). Research on young voters' political participation found that this group has low rates of voter participation. They also have much lower confidence levels in their political knowledge than the general population. Moreover, a lack of information, knowledge and intention from candidates, and changes in the political culture influence young voters to not participate in the political process (Hing and Pong 2014). This, according to Jaharudin (2014), has a major impact on general elections. Lastly, more young people depended on information from the internet as a source of political information, when compared to older voters (Weiss 2012).

Citizenship education has "lasting effects on social and political commitment and shows abilities valuable across scholastic disciplines and in the work environment" (Circle 2013). There is an unmistakable connection between community information and current and expected political cooperation, with those with more significant levels of information bound to take more of an interest (Schulz, Ainsley, Fraillon, Kerr and Losito 2010). Community information is additionally supported by talking about topical issues in present day culture and this, thus, assists with creating abilities related to public speaking. Many schools vouch for the advantages that have come from citizenship education because of empowering students to assume a sense of ownership within the school and their community.

2.7.1.2 Lack of political engagement

Political involvement and political commitment are viewed as fundamental circumstances for a democracy to work successfully (Barrett and Zani 2014). Research into political participation has been receiving more attention throughout developed democracies, not least because of what is perceived to be a persistent separation among citizens and their governments (Albacete and Young 2016). Young individuals are often called a troublesome group, exhibiting significantly lower levels of electoral turnout, a lack of trust in democratic institutions, and signs of distrust and disillusionment toward politicians and

political parties (Dalton 2008). While conventional political actions have shown a slump, young people have developed an interest in political matters (Henn and Foard 2012) and alternative types of political involvement (Dalton 2013). Nonetheless, the conventional image that prevails is that young people are politically "disinterested or even apathetic" when compared to older generations (Henn and Oldfield 2016).

In a study on contrasts in political involvement among youthful and elderly individuals, Kisby and Sloam (2014) distinguished three explanations behind these characterisations of youth and the apparent political support gap among more youthful and more established individuals. Firstly it is ascribed to life cycle and generational impacts; furthermore, the engaging quality of new types of interaction has made more youthful individuals turn from conventional types of political support as accepted by older people (such as democracy); and thirdly, there is a distinction in the manner in which young people embrace political organisations in contrast to older individuals.

Of these, the third explanation is the most significant for the setting of this study. It is not enough for a researcher to offer a meaning of the researched subject; additionally, the definition should be utilized and acknowledged by the overviewed population. Briggs and Youthful (2016) distinguished a disparity between the significance of governmental issues embraced by older and more youthful individuals; a finding that has likewise been recommended in different studies.

Regarding political cooperation, the concept of political commitment differs from it numerous ways. Carreras (2016) states that there is a difference between mental and dynamic political commitment. Mental political commitment alludes to a resident's mental connection to the political framework, including whether they are politically intrigued, are looking for political information, or relate to a specific ideological group. Moreover, dynamic political commitment has a higher likelihood of reaching legislators and politicians by attending ideological group gatherings and taking part in gatherings. In their investigation of young people's political commitment perspectives, Eckstein, Noack and Gniewosz (2012:494) underscored an attitudinal aspect, including reactions to certain things, for example, "someone who moans about ideological groups ought to join and get

involved to transform them" and "we ought to take part more in governmental issues to impact political choices".

McCartney and partners (2013) conceptualized political commitment as a particular sort of civic commitment, which they hypothesize is a method for taking part to impact the existence of a local area. Political commitment alludes more to politically situated exercises that look to affect policy-centred issues, frameworks, and designs. For instance, they contrast "taking part locally in a recycling programme" with "attempting to authorize local area regulations regarding recycling" (McCartney, Bennion and Simpson 2013). The former example shows community commitment; however, only the last option demonstrates political commitment.

Political commitment includes participatory ways of behaving, which are coordinated towards the polity. Someone may likewise have an interest in, focus on, and have information, suppositions or sentiments concerning political issues without fundamentally taking part in any political activities. At the end of the day, people might be intellectually or sincerely drawn in, without fundamentally being behaviourally locked into an issue. Mental commitment can be exhibited by, for example, the levels of political or municipal information an individual possesses, or the levels of thoughtfulness regarding media sources like newspapers, news on the Web, or the degree to which an individual talks about governmental issues or community projects with family or friends. Close-to-home commitment might be exhibited by the power of sentiments on political or municipal issues (Emler 2011).

A few researchers have proactively distinguished young people's thought processes about and participation in politics, prompting the development of a critical worldview concerning contrasts between political involvement and commitment (Barrett and Brunton-Smith 2014; Van Deth 2014). Following discussions on young people's evident absence of political commitment, there has been a conversation concerning the legitimacy and unwavering quality of the instruments utilised in such exploration. For example, one position asserts that the current measures used to evaluate youngsters' commitment need refinement to grasp the full scope of ways of behaving that are locked in involvement (O'Toole 2015). As indicated by Albacete (2014), appropriately approved

levels of youth political commitment are inadequate. Subsequently, more extensive exploration evaluating youth political commitment might be worthless in terms of the utilisation of conflicting standards that need measurable/psychometric legitimacy. Such practices might bring about one-sided measurable ends, as the fundamental result would be evaluated inappropriately. Moreover, responding to questions concerning youthful residents' political commitment requires rationality between the idea, which suggests a more extensive collection of activities (than the current normalized measures) that residents can become engaged in, and its evaluation. To resolve this, it is critical to develop a tool for assessing the levels of political potential among today's young people (Pontes, Henn and Griffiths 2016).

Additionally, groups known to have a lower turnout rate might be disregarded in strategy making and thus in policy outputs. Young people's contribution to governmental issues can take the form of different structures, very much like that of some other age group. Casting a ballot comprises just a single component of a significantly broader collection of political cooperation; however, it is the most fundamental majority rule act that all residents ought to perform consistently.

Resnick and Casale (2011) state that older African residents will vote more often and convey a more significant level of partisanship than their younger counterparts. This finding agrees with results that concentrate on Western democratic systems; however, the focal point is that young Africans are not bound to be defiant more than older individuals are.

2.7.1.3 Socio-economic status

Age is an essential socio-fragment trait of voters, and it is said that older voters will turn out to vote more often than young people do because they do not become confused like young people do when facing various options (Carreras and Irepoğlu 2013).

As said before, in Western democratic systems the socio-economic status (SES) of individuals, for example, education, salary and occupation, are unequivocally associated with their level of productivity. Some groups in Africa have maintained this assumption of the SES model in relation to voting (Amoateng et al. 2014; Larreguy and Marshall 2017);

nevertheless, others have seen the inverse (Kuenzi and Lambright 2007, 2011; Isaksson 2014; Nwankwo and Okafor 2017). Earlier assessments show that rather than the normal result, considering the SES model, Africans of lower SES are just as likely to vote as those of a higher SES (Kuenzi and Lambright 2011) and resource poor Africans do in fact vote more than the resource-rich Africans (Isaksson 2014). One could have second thoughts about this finding. However, this finding was upheld by Nwankwo and Okafor (2017), who researched the determinants of voter turnout involving individual-level information in Nigeria and contended that the justification behind this logical inconsistency is the impact of vote buying that influences individuals of a lower SES to cast their ballot.

Amoateng et al. (2014) offer proof that in Africa higher rates of casting a ballot are found among informed individuals. In light of an investigation on the effects of the Schooling Programme on political cooperation in Nigeria, Larreguy and Marshall (2017) found that training impacts casting a ballot. The study showed that higher educated people connect more in basic types of political cooperation, for instance, interest in governmental issues, casting a ballot, and local area support.

Mac-Ikemenjima (2017) broke down the association between dread of violence and youth election turnout in Sub-Saharan Africa and showed that the relationship was negative. Bekoe and Burchard (2017) indicated that pre-political decision violence had no critical effect on voter turnout; however, violence might be utilized to dissuade cooperation, to gain followers, or to criticise election winners. Along these lines, it very well may be construed that individuals of higher SES may not partake in political violence and because there are moderately low degrees of brutality, their pace of turnout increases.

2.7.1.4 Religion, ethics, and diversity

Pyeatt and Yanus (2018) found that regional variations and ethnic or racial diversity influence voting in elections. Ethnic diversity has an impact on cultures and political ideologies. Furthermore, ethnic groups believe they are marginalised within society and do not receive adequate political attention, so they are hesitant to vote. In the same context, voting is influenced by regional affiliation. For example, refugees in any country who are granted the right to vote in elections while suffering from a lack of basic services will be dissatisfied and will disregard voting in elections.

Dolan (2011) and Fox (2011) addressed how to close the gender voting gap. They arrived at the conclusion that young females' socio-political interests might help to solve this challenge; education could be one of the solutions, as female political involvement increases when women are cognisant of the fact that political events can have a direct impact on their lives. To address this issue, women should overcome their psychological belief that equality with men is impossible.

The subject of ethnic variety and how nations ought to incorporate various societies and customs has turned into a focal component of discretionary governmental issues. The Ethnic Voting Hypothesis holds that people act as indicated by the standards of the group to which they belong. Along these lines, an individual's character becomes inseparable from the group. Subsequently, the electorate will decide in favour of young person from their group on the off chance that he/she is considered the best person to defend their rights (Adjei 2013). As indicated by Bratton, Bhavnani and Chen (2012:1), ethnic democracy happens "at whatever point individuals from a social group show unbalanced bias in an election for a specific ideological group".

2.7.1.5 Socio-demographic factors

Youth involvement is a process that involves young people in institutions and the choices that influence their lives. Checkoway (2011) defines the term by emphasising young people's constructive participation and significant influence, rather than their static mere existence or token positions in adult agencies. Head (2011) identified several advantages to participation for both young people and society. Individual benefits include a variety of skills, self-esteem, and self-development. Increased involvement provides a broader civic activity and contribute significantly to citizenship on a societal level.

While the current writings on youth political cooperation works hard in making sense of recent fads, it frequently disregards the social inequalities of support. Many young people are not politically connected or dynamic. Furthermore, these young people are higher likely to arrive from less privileged backgrounds, do not have access to advanced education, and finish school with few skills. This enormous section of the young populace

will in general be, in Amnå and Ekman's (2014) words, "disappointed and separated". Furthermore, youngsters who participate in non-discretionary types of governmental issues are typically the same people who participate in constituent governmental issues. Those disappointed youngsters are in direct opposition to youthful cosmopolitans and are liable to respond adversely to the apparent dangers of social diversity. At the point when they occasionally participated in government issues, these young outsiders were frequently drawn to autocratic values and causes.

The humanistic model declares that family is the predominant specialist of socialization impacting vote inclination. Through political socialization, the political culture, values and standards of older people are passed over to the youth (Sarlamanov and Jovanoski 2014). This socialization happens most in adolescence, during which time most political perspectives are framed. At this phase, the fundamental qualities that decide the political existence of voters are advanced inside the family, principally through the connection among parents and young people. Along these lines, individuals acquire their political inclinations from their families, and will often vote as their families do (Sarlamanov and Jovanoski 2014).

Another factor influencing voter turnout is political information efficiency. Previous research has found a link between political information adequacy and the likeliness to vote. Due to the close relationship between confidence and efficiency, it was found that there are social factors that impact and naturally elevate political information efficacy levels (Anderson 2010), which might have to be studied more in order to strengthen and potentially nurture their impact on voter turnout. A citizen's faith and confidence in a body of government affects his/her citizen involvement based on his/her personal perception as well as his/her belief that he/she can influence political affairs. Researchers describe this concept as having two components: both internal and external efficacy. The belief that one's own individual choices can impact the political process is referred to as internal efficacy. External efficacy is the belief in the government's responsibility to address citizens' concerns (Anderson 2010).

2.7.1.6 Interest in politics

According to Blais and Loewen (2011), political factors, specifically involvement in and knowledge of politics, have a greater impact on youth voting habits than socio-demographic factors. It is also frequently claimed that political party election platforms do not address issues essential to young people. Though, political scientists who carried out a study for Elections Canada after the 2004 national election refuted this claim. According to Flanagan and Levine (2010), concerns that are important to many young people are in the political discourse, and political parties take positions on them. The problem appears to be that these messages do not register with a substantial proportion of younger voters.

According to Flanagan and Levine (2010), a young person's inability to vote in an election does not imply that they are uninterested in politics. Young people with some academic education are more inclined to participate in national and international political challenges, whereas young people with fewer years of schooling are more interested in local political considerations that are much closer to their own personal experiences. Furthermore, even if policy congruity is equal across all relevant groups, young people's participation rates do not impact their policy representation; turnout injustice can have an impact on interest representation.

2.7.1.7 Land Issues

Daily Maverick (2019, report that, the baseline measurements have been manipulated for political profit. However, this doesn't change the underlying notion that the distribution of individual ownership is misaligned with the country's demographics. Namibia is no different. According to the 2018 Namibia Land Statistics report, domestic and foreign white citizens own about 70% of commercial or freehold agricultural farmland. In both countries, whites account for less than 10% of the total population. Statistics also show that despite commitments to transforming the nature of land ownership in both countries to better reflect population demographics, not enough has changed.

Land reform is not the only initiative that has failed to launch, but land dispossession was central to the segregationist policies that dominated both countries' pasts. Many of their ongoing socio-economic challenges can be traced to this. In both countries, the issue is less about land itself, and more about inclusion, dignity and the need for general redress.

Land is the lightning rod representing dissatisfaction with the status quo, and unhappiness with a lack of economic opportunities and the racialised economic structure of both economies. The issue also carries political currency in each context, particularly as elections approach.

However there are crucial differences in how land reform historically fits in to the ruling parties' discourse and the type of land that people want. In Namibia a largely ethnically denominated liberation movement and now ruling Swapo party fought a "people's war" over land. In contrast, given the multi-ethnic urban elitist composition of South Africa's ruling African National Congress (ANC), there was little mobilisation for a land-based people's war but rather for broader political and economic inclusivity, of which land was part.

While land reform (Gopaldas, and Ndhlovu, (2018), has dominated South Africa's headlines, it has also emerged as a major polarising issue in Namibia ahead of next year's national election. Populist pressure, fears around the trajectory of the economy and uncertainty about how the process will be administered in Namibia have raised alarm, particularly among investors.

2.7.1.8 Media influence and trust in the system

Social media is the most persuasive factor in the political domain in various nations (Effing, Van Hillegersberg and Huibers 2011). It emphatically connects with residents' political cooperation. It is additionally a fundamental benefactor of getting out the word and related data. Moreover, openness is fundamentally connected with political knowledge and conversations via social media impact political cooperation (Trepte and Schmitt 2017).

Social media is "the set of web-based broadcast technologies that enable the democratisation of content, giving people the ability to emerge from consumers of content to publishers" (Scott and Jacka 2011). "Media content is the basis of media impact on political information in the media that many people look for… on candidates and campaigns" (Baek and Wojcieszak 2009). "Voters use the media to learn what issues are important" and about "candidate issue positions" (*ibid.*). Social media is "gaining interactive features, which offer consumers new options for selecting information, personalizing content, and participating in a larger conversation" (Straubhaar, LaRose and Davenport 2012).

According to Kahne and Middaugh (2012:55), "Social media is a phenomenon that could dramatically change how and how many young people participate civically, including voting". Youth see engagement in participatory politics by engaging in activities such as status updates, tweets, and sharing and posting comments; these are ways to become involved in politics (Potter 2012). Moreover, social media makes young people tolerant of racial and ethnic issues when discussing issues with other people. They also use social media to remain in touch with other people in general and their group in particular (Kahne and Middaugh 2012). Other research findings, however, indicate that young people reported only interacting online with those who shared their viewpoints (Kahne, Lee and Feezell 2011:20).

Moreover, social networks assist in the development of personal trust and cooperation among individuals in informal social networks; they have the potential to encourage civic and political interaction that can be used to benefit the community and democracy in the actual world (Pavlik and McIntosh 2011). Informal social relationships influence the way people choose promotional content in the media. Members of a family, friends, and many others introduce media ideas to the attention of voters who have not been exposed to these ideas directly (ibid.). Thus, there is a movement of indirect but significant messages to individuals who have not read or heard the original message even though they encounter the media's impact from individuals who are seriously influenced by the media.

The utilisation of media is said to influence the degree of political knowledge. Individuals with high media utilisation will often have high political knowledge. Studies undertaken by numerous scholars show there is a positive connection between political knowledge and media utilisation. Hypothetical ways to deal with citizen turnout inside a social network can give data that reduces the expense of casting a ballot; for instance, by making sense of how to cast a vote. The media can likewise pique interest in political undertakings through conversations and activate by empowering cooperation. Gerber, Gregory, Doherty and Dowling (2016) state that the fundamental need to have a place in society can cause individuals to act as they anticipate others should act.

Social media can significantly reduce the cost of participating and can "compensate for the disadvantages of undisciplined groups by reducing the costs of coordination" (Shirky 2011). When someone uses the internet to gather information, they can by the click of a mouse join an online protest or sign an online petition. Furthermore, recruiting a friend to join a cause via his/her network connections, or donate money, the cost of participating is now far less expensive for the individual to engage in online political activity than it is for his/her offline equivalent.

Figure 3 illustrates how citizens are likely to receive information on the quality of election management from two main sources:

1) personal experience with election administration, and

2) the media (broadcast, print, and electronic).
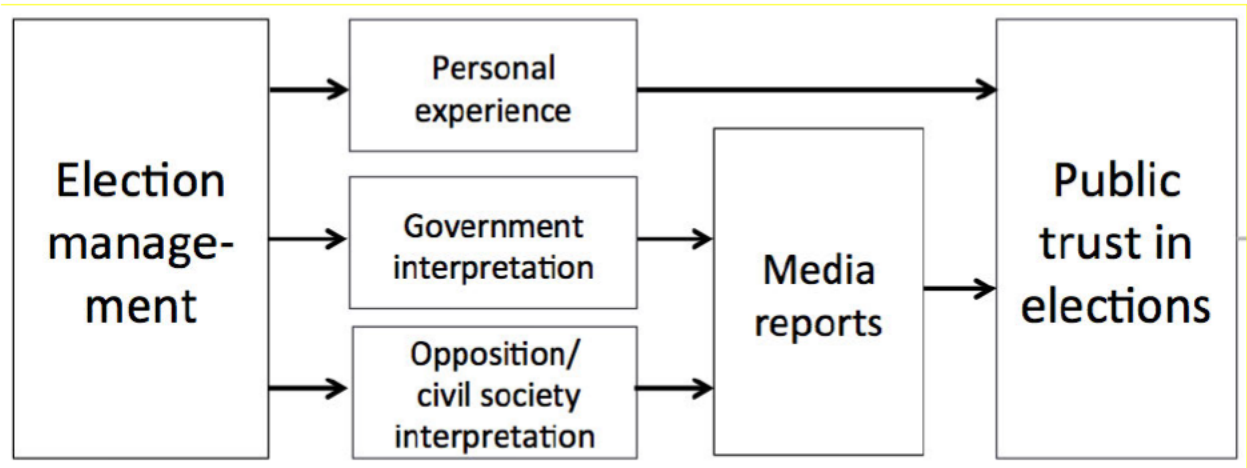
Figure 4 How media link election management to public trust in elections

[Source: Kerr and Lührmann (2017)]

As per research, aside from having restricted information on the political framework, both youthful and older Canadians demonstrated indifference toward public undertakings. A considerable number of these individuals questioned that casting a ballot at regular intervals could genuinely impact the political decision-making process. Subsequently, individuals avoided voting; this could prompt doubt and even negativity over the long run (Bilodeau and Turgeon 2015).

Research has additionally shown that because of progress in innovation over the course of recent years, legislators and ideological groups are turning out to be vigorously dependent on innovation, and specifically web-based entertainment platforms, like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Snapchat. It similarly applies to the media. "An survey among British columnists… found that 70% were involving Twitter for research" (Moore and Martin 2018). What is more, voters are getting information from less traditional outlets; subsequently, this permits government officials to extend their reach from the most established ages, directly down to the more youthful ages.

2.7.1.9 Technological implications

The world is progressively dependent upon the utilisation of innovation; many individuals have become acclimated with utilising innovation and in this manner, they find it tough to work and settle on choices without it. Along these lines, casting a ballot has changed fundamentally because of these progressions in innovation and media. "Following the ascent of email, party sites, web-based entertainment, online recordings and gamification, researchers have shown, since the 1990s, parties have become vigorously reliant upon computerized innovation" (Tonge, Leston-Bandeira and Stuart 2018). This statement demonstrates exactly how significant innovation is, as many will change their perspectives on which ideological group to decide in favour of, whether to cast a ballot, and whether they urge others to cast a ballot in light of what they realize while utilizing innovation. Obviously, utilising innovation is not just significant, it will before long become fundamental to permit an voter to acquire a full comprehension of his/her citizen's privileges, as well as aiding him/her to settle on the significant choice of whom to decide in favour of as "making a choice is the principal manner by which individuals take part in the popularity-based process" (Moore 2011).

The Internet, as part of technology, provides convenient, cheap, and anonymous access to users to express their opinions. This makes users feel safe and comfortable (Medaglia and Zhu 2017). The other mode of influential and transformational information and communication technology is the mobile phone or smartphone, which can include talk, text messaging, Internet and Web access, electronic mail, faxing, pictures, video, and a wide variety of apps. Mobile devices increase political participation and are now being considered as a voting gadget in even the least developed countries. Increased availability of this technology and subsequent access to the public sphere has enhanced the ability of individuals and groups to focus attention on and organise around specialised issues (Jackson and Brooke 2016). More recently, social media has emerged as one of the main areas of influence for politics, where millions of users are able to learn about politicians' policy statements, interact with political leaders, organise, and voice their own opinions on political matters (Boulianne 2015).

2.8 Reasons for not voting.

Huggins (2001:13) describes the reasons for not voting as follows:

- disillusion (the view that it makes no difference who wins)
- apathy (the lack of interest in politics)
- impact (the view that an individual vote will not make a difference)
- alienation (the view that politics is 'not for young people')
- knowledge (not knowing enough about politics to cast a vote); and
- inconvenience (voting is too time consuming).

These factors all affect the youngest sections of the electorate disproportionally. Mori's (2001:127) survey data suggests that young people were the most likely to say, "No one party stands for me," and that they felt "powerless" in the electoral process. A British Social Attitude survey suggests that only one in ten of 18- to 25-year-olds were extremely interested or interested in politics.

2.9 Improving the youth voting system.

Over an extended period, polls have experienced declining participation rates because of the burden of manual voting. Manual voting has a few disadvantages, among which are mistakes in polling form counting and the postponed declaration of political decision results (Qadah and Taha 2007:376). To overcome these drawbacks, Qadah and Taha (2007:376) proposed different electronic systems in support of elections and voting to attract the youth, namely the Electronic Voting (e-voting) technique and the use of computers or computerised equipment to cast votes. The term Electronic Voting (e-voting) refers to the use of computers or computerised equipment to cast votes in an election. E-voting aims to increase participation, lowers the costs of running elections, and improves the accuracy of the results (Qadah and Taha 2007:377).

- **Computer Counting**

This type of systems requires voters to mark their votes on a paper with a pencil or marker or removes divots from a perforated card (Kohno, Stubblefield, Rubin and Wallach 2004:27). The ballot cards are then scanned and tallied at a central computer site or at each polling station.

- **Direct-recoding electronic voting machine (DRE)**

This system requires voters to use a keyboard or touch screen to mark their votes on a computer terminal, directly connected to a stand-alone, polling station located computer (Stuart and Brown 2004:95). The votes are immediately added to a running tally stored in the computer's storage system. The final DRE tally is then moved to a central location where it is added to the tallies obtained from other DRE machines.

- **Online voting**

This type of systems involves the use of a computer and the Internet or a private network in support of the voting process. On-line voting can be conducted in a variety of ways (Kohno et al. 2004:27).

- **"Poll site" e-voting system**

This type of voting systems requires voters to go to staffed polling sites and use computers to cast their votes. A network (Internet or private) is used to transfer ballots from each polling place to a centralised site, where votes are tallied, and election results are published (Draper and Brown 2004:81).

- **"Kiosk" e-voting system**

This type of systems allows voters to vote from computers/ATM-like machines situated within kiosks. The kiosks are set up by the voting authority in suitable locations, such as post offices or shopping malls, and are connected to a central location via the Internet (or a private network). A vote cast at the kiosk will immediately be forwarded across the network to the centralised tallying site. The kiosks are not always monitored by poll workers and this allows for voting over a period of several days or weeks. Once the voting period for a given election has passed, the associated tallying site publishes the results of that election (Kohno et al. 2004:27).

- **"Remote" e-voting system**

This type of systems allows voters to cast their votes from any computer or digital device connected to the Internet or to a private network, typically from home or at work. Devices such as personal digital assistance, mobile phones and even game machines may access these systems.

2.10 Summary

This literature review discussed the low voter turnout of youth and made comparisons between different countries, such as older and newer democracies – with countries in Europe and the United States as examples of youth voting systems. It also covered Congressional voting trends by race and age in the United States between 1966 and 2010.

Factors contributing to youth voting turnout, such as the lack of political engagement; socio-economic status; religion, ethics and diversity; and media influence and political knowledge were highlighted. These address the seriousness of voting behaviour among the youth. The following chapter will deal with the theories of voting systems.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

This chapter clearly outlined theories relating to the low participation of youth in elections. According to Swanson (2013:12), theories are formulated to explain, predict, and understand phenomena and, in many cases, to challenge and extend existing knowledge within the limits of critical bounding assumptions. The theoretical review is meant to critically evaluates existing research relating to the topic.

It is important to indicate how factors discussed in chapter two could shape voters' attitudes and behaviour and how the later are linked to chosen theories. According to Akhter, and Sheikh, (2014) the behaviour of a voter is influence by several factors such as religion, caste, community, language, money, policy or ideology, purpose of the polls, extent of franchise and the like political parties and groups make use of these variables for the sake of winning the battle of the ballot box. Despite making their professions for enlightened secularism, politicians can be found invoking appeals to the religious and communal sentiments of the people; they can also be found involved in exploiting the factors of language or money to achieve the purpose of emerging successful in the war of votes. Appeals are issued and canvassing campaigns are conducted in the name of a particular policy or ideology for the same purpose. The interest of the voters and accordingly their behaviour at the time of voting is also influenced by the nature or purpose of the elections or the extent of the suffrage. That is, national elections or the election of the chief executive engage wider attention than a local election for the post of a sub-ordinate authority. The force of charisma has its own part to play where by voters are influenced by the slogans. Theories therefore used in this study as principles that people use to describe, explain, and evaluate political events and institutions.

It is important for governments to recognise the issues that trigger young people to be opposed to voting, and instead inspire and motivate them to vote. Several studies have been undertaken to determine the reasons why people participate in elections, but no research has concentrated on behavioural approaches. The real question should be: "Why do youth tend not to vote?". The reality is that even if youth are given the right to vote, they do not automatically go out and vote (Mackie 2011). According to Smets and Ham (2013), there are different theories that explain the methods used to increase voter turnout. Other theories explain various factors, including demographics, socio-economic status, and life cycle explanations. This study will focus on theories that clarify the voting behaviour of youth. The theories are the Political theory which is relevant for people of all professions and groups, to act as responsible citizens and have basic knowledge of political ideas and institutions , to examine their ideas , feelings and actions in everyday lives and also , encouraging them to be more careful of them, as well as exposing systematic thinking on their opinions and arguments. The other theories for discussion are Social Choice theory; the Behavioural Theory of Elections; the Democratic Theory, the Political Theory; and the Economic Theory.

3.2 Social Choice Theory

Social choice theory or social choice is a theoretical framework for analysis of combining individual opinions, preferences, interests, or welfares to reach a collective decision or social welfare in some sense (Sen, 2008). Whereas choice theory is concerned with individuals making choices based on their preferences, social choice theory is concerned with how to translate the preferences of individuals into the preferences of a group. A non-theoretical example of a collective decision is enacting a law or set of laws under a constitution. Another example is voting, where individual preferences over candidates are collected to elect a person that best represents the group's preferences (Zwicker, and Herve 2016).

Insofar as social choice theory deals with voting, Lehtinen, (2015:35), it aims to provide answers to two main questions. First, how well does voting perform in collecting information on individual preferences? Second, what is the relative performance of various voting rules? And which rule is the best? The theory aims to answer these questions by imposing conditions on aggregation rules that are intended to represent the voting rules. The conditions are thought to be normatively compelling in the sense that they should be satisfied. They express how given inputs in terms of individual preferences are to be translated into collective judgments or decisions. The voting rules are then evaluated in terms of the set of conditions that the corresponding aggregation rules satisfy. The best aggregation rule is the one that satisfies the largest number of normatively important conditions. This is how the second question is answered according to . (Lehtinen, 2015:34).

Social choice theory is only concerned with aggregating preferences or votes. In other words, it does not take behavioural assumptions into account, and voters are assumed to vote sincerely (i.e., non-strategically). In most voting rules, strategic voting means that a voter gives a vote to an alternative that she does not consider to be the most preferred one. One may consider the assumption of sincere behaviour as merely a consequence of division of labour among extant approaches: social choice theory evaluates voting procedures normatively by imposing conditions on aggregation rules, while various decision and game theoretical approaches study the positive properties of voting rules. Finally, implementation theory combines the normative and positive approaches. This division of labour seems sensible because strategic voting itself is widely thought to be self-evidently harmful, and thus unacceptable in a normative evaluation of voting. social choice theory can become a more promising framework for policy evaluation and offer resources for considering the situated nature of people's agency, inequalities between them, and issues of gender (Peter 2003). Social Choice Theory is a mathematical theory that deals with the aggregation of individual preferences. For example, a presidential election is an extremely simple example of social choice where people vote based on their preference of candidate.

The construct of social considerations measures the concerns of voters regarding the underprivileged classes in their country. Farmers and women are two underprivileged sections of society, which capture a major part of the political debate in many countries. Issues such as low prices of agricultural products, crop failure, high debt and poor income have led to frustration (Basu 2016; Desai and Mehta 2017; Kaushal 2018; Menon and Allen 2018; Sunder 2018).

With reference to women, issues such as domestic violence, women security and workplace harassment have been observed in recent years (Menon and Allen 2018). Previous research has indicated that voters perceive that the prevailing conditions of underprivileged sections of the society reflects the economic status of a country and affects the reputation of a country on the global stage (Kapur and Nangia 2015; Vaishnav and Swanson 2015).

In engaging youth in society, several approaches, according to Farthing (2012), can be used:

- Participation as a rights-based practice, based on the fact that young people are viewed as holders of rights, including the right to participate in politics and decision-making.
- Participation as a mechanism of empowerment of young people. This approach proposes a more progressive view of participation as a way of giving young people a voice in society, addressing political marginalisation of youth, and changing power relations between generations.
- Participation as a guarantee of efficiency in policy, practice, and services. This approach is based on the understanding that young people are best aware of their own needs, and that they have innovative ideas.
- Thus, youth participation is considered as a way in which young people can "enlighten" policy makers to be more informed and aware of young people's reality, in order to "rejuvenate" the political system and develop better policies and services.
- Participation as an instrument of young people's development. By engaging in decision-making, young people are learning about the political processes in

society, but they are also developing the necessary skills, such as self-esteem, confidence, negotiation skills, and a sense of autonomy. Thus, participation is considered a tool for the individual development of a young person as a citizen (Farthing 2012).

3.3 Behavioural Theory of Elections

According to Bendor (2011), most theories of elections assume that voters and political actors are fully rational. While these formulations produce many insights, they also generate anomalies, most famously about turnout. The rise of behavioural economics has posed new challenges to the premise of rationality. The study provides a behavioural theory of elections based on the notion that all actors, such as politicians and voters, are only bound rationally. The Behavioural Theory of Elections posits learning via trial and error: actions that surpass a person's aspirational levels are more likely to be used in the future, while those that fall short are less likely to be used later.

Voting behaviour explains the way individuals are inclined to vote (Van Deth, Abendschön and Vollmar 2011). The evaluation of voting behaviour emphasises why voters vote the way they do and how they make up their minds or arrive at the decisions they make. Comprehending how voting behaviour attempts to understand the decision-making process of voters can be influenced by a number of factors, including campaign issues, economic conditions, ideological orientation, party identification, the personality of the candidate, and other sociological factors such as ethnicity and religion (Schlozman, Verba and Brady 2010).

Harder and Krosnick (2008) assert that voting is determined by an individual's inspiration, capability, and skills to take part in the elections. Behavioural economic concepts such as these would encourage young people to vote and increase their attendance at voting booths. Young people who stay with their parents tend to vote, more so than if they live on their own. This indicates that parents, as well as close friends, may have a major influence on the actions of young people (Fieldhouse, Lessard-Phillips and Edmonds 2016:241). This could mean that they would go with their parents to vote; hence, this occurs through the tradition of behaviour and political sharing within the family by

emulating through values and learning by copying what others do, such as having political discussions (Bhatti and Hansen 2012:386). Klass (2016) agrees that, independently of the above-mentioned cultural dimensions, parents play a key role in the voting behaviour of young individuals. Being raised with political debates at home and the values that parents hold in relation to political matters is of primary importance when analysing the voting behaviour of young people.

Bhatti and Hansen (2012) describe the behaviour-learning model as including exposure, attention, retention and motivation, which results in reproduction. Young people, when growing up, remember what their parents taught them and how they motivated them; but once they leave home, the example set by their parents usually disappears (Tuorto 2014). The decision to vote will be moulded or influenced by attention or curiosity, information, awareness, understanding and involvement in political dialogue. All these factors will have a positive relationship with youth's perspectives on deciding to vote (Kudrnáč and Lyons 2017:43). In addition, gender, election news and peer communication may contribute to young people's decision to vote (Muralidharan 2015).

In relation to gender, Hayes and Lawless (2016) argue that young women are not treated differently than young men by the media during electoral campaigns. It was further established that young females are generally not influenced by gender stereotyping, but they do recognise that gender biases happen beyond the awareness of voters and are able to structure their voting behaviour (ibid).

Young individuals, who did not pursue higher education and who come from rural areas, might miss out on the opportunity of taking part in politics and they might not be exposed to new trends (Amnå and Ekman 2014).They then become discouraged and separated from their peers, and they end up behaving in a negative manner. These young people have little understanding of politics and exhibit no interest in democracy (Mahéo 2018). They will only show an interest in politics if they are engaged and motivated, and if they become more knowledgeable about democracy (Mahéo 2018).

The behaviour of a voter is influenced by several factors, such as issues and policies, the candidate's image, current events, personal events, social imagery and the media, religious beliefs, and family and friends' influence. All these lead to voter intentions.
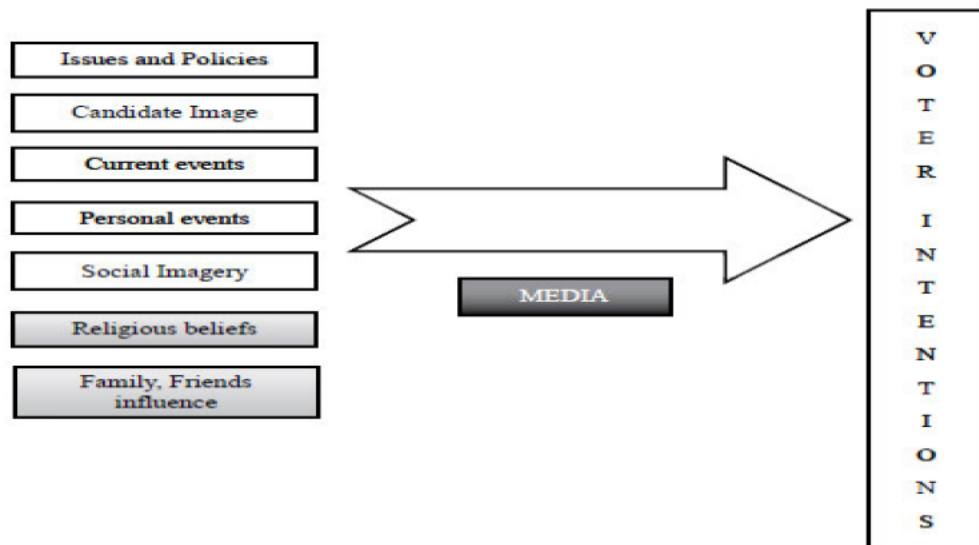
Source: Adopted from Newman and Sheth (1985, p. 179)

Figure 5 Voter Intentions

- **Policy or ideology**

Researchers, such as Winter (2015), confirm that policies and ideologies are ways in which politicians demonstrate their character traits to their voters. As a result, voters are inclined to vote for candidates who bear the same behaviour traits and ideology as them. This behaviour drives incentives for the candidates or political parties to follow a particular ideology, which appeals to the voters, although it is not in the public interest. No ideology can be applied to all aspects of policymaking and each problem may require a distinct set of attitudes and approaches to be addressed. As Winter (2015) writes, "Sometimes a smart decision is liberal; at other times, conservative".

Policy and individuality variables have diverse numerical possessions. Policy variables are handled like properties in a huge universe – like that of other economic decisions; voters vote for individuals or parties whose policies are similar to their own viewpoints. Identity variables, however, are treated like a set of social categories; voters prefer candidates to the extent that voting for a candidate increases their self-perceived status

within each category. Critically, policy and identity compete to shape a voter's choice (Milazzo, Adams and Green 2012).

The technicality of voting assists to guarantee that government policy indicates the expectations of the public (Birch, Glenn, and Lodge 2013), and that the public can hold elected delegates answerable (Bechtel, Hangartner and Schmid 2017). The voter turnout percentage of young people, who have the right to vote, serves to legitimise elected officials and public policies.

The major potential of honest democracy is that it allows voters to circumvent the legislative process to effect policy change. This helps voters sanction policies that the legislature may be forced to reflect on and to encourage the legislature to formulate policies that are closer to the preferences of the average voter (Lupia et al. 2010). Yet, many voters are unaware of the dominance of measures they must consider, meaning that many turn to the brief summaries printed on the ballot as they make their decision (Burnett 2013). The capability to call for the ballot version thus gives those who are elected and politically privileged a chance to frustrate the will of the electorate.

Voting behaviour refers to personal interests in the perspective of elections. It explains a collection of communicated personal and electoral actions, which may include participation in electoral campaigns, voter turnout, and choosing whom to vote for (Bratton 2013). Many factors influence voters' choices. According to Hazarika (2015), several studies have shown that the electorate may determine their votes based on one or more of the following considerations:

- **Candidate's image**

Elections are an important institution in the life of a democratic country. The law has become a legal basis for running elections, which set the mechanism for local government election directly by communities. The involvement of the youth in choosing their leaders is an indicator of the operational process of democratisation.

A critical part of campaign strategy is the image of the candidate. Sometimes voters are ambivalent about issues in campaigns – whether they want to hear a serious discussion

on issues or whether they want to hear the slogans. Eravia and Qomariah (2015) point out political decisions can be understood from the point of view of identities: voters choose the alternative with whom they can identify with. The candidate and his/her campaign objectives are to define those identity factors that could encourage voters (Khatib 2012).

Candidate quality is considered a significant variable in electoral competition. It will influence the decisions of politicians to run for office, campaign fundraising and advertising, voter behaviour, election outcomes and, in the end, policy outcomes. Quality differences among candidates can arise from many reasons, including charisma, experience in leadership, incumbency, advertising, scandal, and other non-policy dimensions. There is evidence that leaders' level of education has a positive effect on governance outcomes (Beath, Christia, Egorov and Enikolopov 2014).

- **Current events**

Young people's contribution to government issues can take on different forms, very much like that of some other age groups. Casting a ballot comprises just a single component of a substantially broader collection of political cooperation; however, it is the most fundamental majority rule act that all residents ought to perform consistently. A few variables apply similarly to all gatherings of voters; others apply to young people. Some factors apply equally to all groups of voters, while others are unique to young people. These factors are as follows:

- Effect on turnout: young people should vote to ensure high overall turnout. The larger the group (as a percentage of all eligible voters) and the lower its group specific turnout, the more it will decrease the cumulative turnout rate.
- Substantive representation of youth: young people may have political interests that differ from those of older voters and which should be represented. The assumption is that voting will affect the nature of representation and the content of public policy. If young people do not vote, they and their distinct interests are more likely to be ignored or neglected by policymakers **(**Bröderna, Boktryckeri and Varberg 1999)**.**
- Political socialisation: casting a ballot while young fosters a predisposition to cast a ballot always, and in this manner guarantees high voter turnout in the future.

Inspiring young people to cast a ballot is important for their political socialisation. It incorporates two perspectives: conduct and attitude. Conduct implies acting politically founded on perspectives, inclinations, and suppositions, for example, talking about government issues with others, taking part in political events, and through casting a ballot. Attitudinal contribution implies obtaining information about how government functions and of public events, as well as fostering an interest in and reaching conclusions on the policy-centred issues of the day. The socialisation debate is well defined for youngsters. It ponders the future impacts of insufficient political instruction. If young people neglect to gain a predisposition for citizenship and the related responsibilities early on, the eventual fate of a majority rule government might be in jeopardy.

- Ability to exercise political influence: similarly, as with disadvantaged sections of the community, young people might be expected to not many assets to impact policymaking and may additionally be incapacitated by a belief that they are not sufficiently experienced to represent themselves, or even to realize what they want. Regardless, the voting structure is an exceptional leveller. Everybody's vote counts similarly, regardless of whether there are deviations regarding assets. By casting a vote, young people have similar power as others to exercise their political impact.

- Political integration strengthens democracy: young people who are engaged with the electoral process confirm their support for a majority rules government, as well as secure a stake in the framework and an appreciation that they, as well, can influence legislative issues and strategy. Without a doubt, the political understanding of the young might advance the demands of the public. However, until young people are given a genuine voice and their vote is viewed as significant and persuasive, these changes cannot happen (Bröderna et al. 1999).

- **Personal events**

According to Carson, Koger and Young (2010), the personal vote is widely considered that portion of a candidate's electoral support that originates in his/her personal qualities, qualifications, activities, and history. The behavioural strategies related to personal vote-seeking concerns have been characterised by a distinct focus of representation and by distinct styles of behaviour. Those seeking personal votes are assumed to perceive themselves as representatives of distinct district-level geographic constituencies.

Theoretically, local constituents and parties are seen as competing principals to politicians and thus to mutually exclude themselves in cases of conflict and distinct policy choices (Grimmer 2013). They may vote for the person or the political party based on the expectations they have for their performance on key issues, such as economic growth and lack of corruption (McGann 2016). Nevertheless, most of the advocates of this stance give credit to the numerous studies done on the role of inner biases in voting behaviour. Otherwise, they would need to extend the definition of rationality to the point of becoming meaningless if they were to assume that inner biases are rational or that their role is insignificant to voting behaviour.

- **Social imagery**

The influence of the media on political participation has changed. Many young citizens choose to avoid political information or selectively address only the issues that appeal to them (Moeller, De Vreese, Esser and Kunz 2014). For those young citizens who still choose to expose themselves to general news, the news effect has become conditional upon parameters of information processing, such as conversations about politics with others (Lee, Shah and McLeod 2012). The effectiveness of youth-relevant content is even stronger on digital media platforms due to the affordances of online news media.

Firstly, online news media cater to younger users' ways of processing news. Features such as multi-media presentation and interactivity (Kruikemeier, Van Noort, Vliegenthart and De Vreese 2014) stimulate information processing of all users, but the effects of online news on younger users are particularly strong. Secondly, online news use also enables online follow-up communication on the news event on social media, which has

been shown to be crucial for information processing (Lee et al. 2012). Thirdly, online news allows users to browse the information quickly and select those messages they want to engage with at a deeper level.

In the past decade, there has been a shift from general news use to specific issue-related news use. Young news users tend to focus increasingly on staying informed on only a couple of issues, while paying little attention to the general news (Mindich 2005). This means that if young citizens encounter information online that is of limited relevance to them, they may be quick to dismiss the message and move on to the next news item. Conversely, this also means that if a message is particularly relevant to them, they may immediately engage with the message via forwarding it through social media, using the comments section to react, or saving the information to re-read at a later stage. Lastly, online news typically is consumed by young people on personal digital devices, such as a mobile phone or a laptop, compared to the access to offline news media, such as newspapers or television news, which is provided by their parents (Lee et al. 2012).

- **Religious-based voting**

Religion is creating a difficult and complex relationship within the structure of the political system and influencing voter preferences. Churches and politics differ because of different values and different ideologies. A religion usually reflects the value of a person's society and it usually continues to exist because it has an assertion of universality. Therefore, the state cannot prevent the effect of religion on an individual's political life, but the secularisation of society increases or decreases this effect. Because the spirit of secularism is not the destruction of religion, on the contrary, the social position of a religion aims to transfer to the private life from the public sector (Huber and Suryanarayan 2016).

Voters are more motivated to nominate candidates belonging to castes or religions that represent their class or religion. Cwalina, Falkowski and Newman (2010) add to this line of thought by stating that it is important to inspire voters in the direction of their political route. Beg (2017) and Bhalotra, Clots-Figueras, Cassan and Iyer (2014) further argue that one could measure a voter's intention through religion and caste, and in most cases,

it becomes a critical situation in decision-making. Researchers, such as Harris (2015) and Beg (2017), view religious uniqueness as a factor in political marketing; they further assert that religious concerns can enhance voter commitment and interest. Huber and Suryanarayan (2016) are of the opinion that the caste concerns of many countries' voters also influence their involvement in the election process. Vaishnava and Swanson (2015) have also emphasised the importance of the religious and caste identity of politicians during elections.

- **Family and friends' influence**

Parental attributes, apart from providing an example of going to the polls or being active in their community, are positively associated with a greater propensity to turn out to vote among their adolescent children (Cicognani, Zani and Fournier 2012). In addition, certain family attributes, such as having frequent political discussions, are positively correlated with electoral participation among future first-time voters living with their parents (Schmid 2012). A social learning explanation of the positive correlation between parental turnout and their adult children's propensity to vote is more parsimonious than a generic socialisation account.

- **Voter intentions**

The objective of young people is that they need a range of academic, social and emotional competencies for civic and political participation (Smith, Faulk and Sizer 2016). Educators need information about contexts where students engage in meaningful learning, attempt to understand others' points of views, make decisions about issues, and acquire a sense of identity as someone prepared to act. Schools are uniquely positioned to provide these types of learning opportunities. This builds on the recognition that students create normative expectations during their interactions – a process with potential to influence later adult political participation (Levine 2010). A community of practice is a broad conceptual framework to understand these social processes. This includes how young people draw meaning from their experiences, develop a sense of community, initiate collective action, and form identities. In short, the concept of communities of practice

helps to operationalise what democracy at school means (Torney-Purta, Amadeo and Andolina 2010).

- **Community-based voting**

The community, as a representative of socialisation, signifies the bigger community association or framework in which young people progress and become participants of as they grow into maturity (Settle, Bond, and Levitt 2011). Alternatively, communities can substitute the growth of political participation and orientation as social norms. Many people in the community may also be positive to take part in political activities (Settle et al. 2011).

- **Language-based voting**

According to Liu (2011), prescribed regulations and familiar standards and patterns that manage the use of language in the public domain put pressure on and manipulate political systems and provide space to express information. Language regimes and terms can comparatively yield diverse results for factors such as democratic participation. Regardless, in Political Science it has been the norm to view language systems or arrangements as conditional factors. Language helps through correspondence and data commitment. It is in this manner essential to deal with the everyday actions to strengthen a majority rules government. A majority rules system depends on open communication among residents, and their collective ability to oversee their government and consider it responsible for its activities. Subsequently, a majority rules government relies upon shared etymological codes (Albaugh 2014).

- **Money-based voting**

The role of money cannot be ignored in the study of electoral behaviour. For example, although India is a poor country, a large amount of money is spent on elections. In the present political and economic context, conducting elections and election campaigns led by candidates and political parties tends to be costly. For political parties worldwide to survive, money is involved. Political parties depend on donations, made by businesses or as loans from other countries.

Money also influences the number of youths who take part in elections, as voting depends on the level of family income. The more the family income varies, the more the voting in elections differs in favour of high-income families, as there are differences in the voting ratios according to the level of family income. Moreover, the voting ratio of low-income families is always low. In addition, the lack of the fair distribution of resources and the concentration of wealth in the hands of business executives make youth from low-income families feel marginalised. It also makes these young people reluctant to vote in elections.

- **The performance of the government in power**

Critical developments, as well as the realisation that even small effects might change the outcome of elections, have led to a re-evaluation of the impact of communication on voting behaviour in recent years. Based on the theory outlined above, communication by political actors, journalists, or through interpersonal networks is regarded to have a direct and an indirect effect on voting performance:

* Voter turnout

Good communication can convince voters to vote, but it can also affect their political knowledge and through this their political interest, their sense of political efficacy and civic duty, and their conviction in political institutions and actors, which will then influence their participation in elections.

* Voter choice

Communication can encourage voters to vote for a particular candidate or party, or on a specific election issue. However, it can also have indirect effects by increasing their knowledge of certain candidates or issues, by changing perceptions of the importance of certain issues, candidates, or their attributes (agenda setting), or by influencing the criteria on which they base their vote (priming), or the interpretation of certain issues (framing).

- **Fear and anxiety**
- Hatemi (2013) states that fear and anxiety related to voting behaviour can raise the political mobilisation of youth because of many factors, such as the power to control them. **Personality of candidates**

Youth have different personality traits that could affect voter turnout and political participation, political ideology, the intention to vote for candidates, and support for specific issues (Gerber 2012).

- **The voters' position or orientation on specific issues**

Knowledge is vitally important to avoid humiliation and embarrassment. It is therefore necessary for voters to have enough information to make informed decisions. Thus, orientation is important so that people do not vote randomly, especially when the youth realise that representatives are ignorant. However, Meredith and Salant (2013) argue that having no information about candidates, or a suggestion in this regard, does not mean that voters will choose a candidate randomly. Instead, there are many characteristics available to them that they can use to make a low-information decision on how to vote.

- **Partisanship or party affiliation**

Partisanship serves as the well-known reminder to voters practice to transverse politics where it offers a practical way that shapes candidate choice, policy opinion and even perceptions of social conditions in the mass public. Despite agreement that partisanship assists as the central sign voters use to navigate politics, tough opinions can outperform and even exceed the effect of party labels on political decisions (Boudreau and MacKenzie 2014; Bullock 2011; Nicholson 2011). Partisan defections are thought to be driven by cross-pressures imposed by excellent political information: voters' support wanes if co-political candidates take the "wrong" position on issues they deem relevant and important (Ciuk and Yost 2016).

* The role of partisanship in political decisions

The role of partisanship suggests that the decisions taken between parties are broad and complicated. Even if the party issues valuable information, the public rely mostly on concerns that are brought up by politicians, even though these may bring a significant obstacle for representative governance (Achen and Bartels 2016; Lenz 2012). In contrast, inconsistencies result in considerable losses in voting support; although, on the other hand, democratic accountability will not be hampered (Lavine et al. 2012; Arceneaux and Vander Wielen 2017). This pressure causes partisanship to fully control the public viewpoint (Lodge and Taber 2013; Bolsen, Druckman and Cook 2014). All these practices influence young voters' public viewpoint.

When partisanship clashes with an individual's other preferences, for example, their policy views, the other norms can still force them to be in conflict with candidates and policy proposals that share their party label, although elite-level candidate selection and the preventative actions of politicians may reduce the chances of this happening during campaigns (Lenz 2012). For example, certain issues may become noticeable to voters because they are highlighted by leaders (Lenz 2012; Nicholson and Hansford 2014), or because they personally influence several people who are voters. The conflict results in young people exhibiting a lack of interest in voting (Anderson 2011).

- **The identity or ethnic background of the candidate**

Identity in voting can be explained in three-dimensional categories and be modelled as an endeavour to choose the candidate whose policy position is most comparable to one's own. To predict voter choice, various theories that can be applied. Firstly, the Proximity Theory, which depends on the choice of an individual and the distance to a given candidate's position; in effect, it is reduced to a one-sided model (Baron 2004). Thus, it can be considered a normative model given a set of preferences.

Other dimension models have been presented to account for the irregularities experienced in the Proximity Theory. The second model is based on Discounting Theory, where it alters the Proximity Theory by assuming that voters expect the effective policy positions of a candidate to be halfway between what was promised and the status quo.

That is, candidates cannot enact all their promised positions, and so preferences should be based on a reduced version of what was promised (Adams, Merrill and Goffman 2005).

Directional Theory holds that voters prefer policy positions on their side of an issue, such that preferences depend on the intensity of the candidate's position rather than the distance between the voter and the candidate (Clithero and Rangel 2014). For example, a voter with moderate, right-leaning views on an issue might prefer a candidate with strong right-leaning views to another candidate with moderate, left-leaning views, even if the second candidate's views were closer to their own overall. This model assists youth or any other individuals to have sufficient time to make a choice.

Bratton, Bhavnani and Chen (2012) define ethnic voting as follows: "…voting for the party identified with the voters' own ethnic group, no matter who the individual candidates happen to be". In this case, the definition implies that where voters have regularly shown huge support for either candidates or representatives, they will be in a position to vote for them. The identity of candidates should display ethnic principles, where the norms and values of voting dictates that individuals behave accordingly. An individual's personality becomes identical to his/her social or tribal group. Therefore, the electorate will vote for a candidate from their social group if they think or believe that the candidate will be the best defender of their interests (Adjei 2013). According to Bratton et al. (2012), ethnic voting occurs "whenever members of a cultural group show disproportionate affinity at the polls for a particular political party". This situation confuses young voters because they are not necessarily inclined to identify themselves with ethnic groups.

According to Pyeatt and Yanus (2018), the differences in ethnicity within the same country and racial diversity, together with culture and political orientation, affect voting in elections. In addition, ethnic groups feel that they are marginalised within society, and they do not receive adequate political attention. Therefore, they are reluctant to participate in voting. In the same context, regional affiliation affects voting. For example, refugees in any country, who are granted the right to vote in elections while they suffer because of a shortage of basic services, could feel discontent, and in turn they could decide not to vote in elections. When co-ethnics gain power, they are inclined to create a socio-

psychological situation, which assists voters in connecting with their group membership, and enhances community self-esteem (Carlson 2015). A view on ethnic voting states that it is not a preferential attachment, but that ethnicity provides voters with a useful indication of good behaviour in office. Hence, some politicians gain power because of ethnic loyalties (Chauchard 2016).

3.4 Democratic Theory

'Voting' is one of the most used terms in the contemporary age of democratic politics. The ever-increasing popularity of democratic theory and practice has made this term a household name. In a democratic system, each adult citizen uses voting as a means of expressing his/her approval or disapproval of government decisions, policies and programmes, the policies and programmes of various political parties, and the qualities of a candidate who is engaged in a struggle to achieve the status of being a representative of the people. In a limited way, voting refers to the function of electing representatives by casting votes in elections.

However, in broad terms, Akhter and Sheikh (2014) point out that voting covers as many as six important functions of democracy, namely:

- It involves individuals' choice of government or major government policies.
- It permits individuals to participate in a reciprocal and continuing exchange of influence with the officeholders and candidates.
- It contributes to the development or maintenance of an individual's allegiance to the existing constitutional regime.
- It contributes to the development or maintenance of a voter's disaffection from the existing constitutional regime.
- It has emotional significance for individuals, and for some individuals it may be functionless, for example, devoid of any significant personal emotional or political consequences; and
- Voting, as such, is a function of immense significance for the voters, the candidates, and the students of politics. The study of voting behaviour has come

to be regarded as an important aspect of contemporary political research and theory.

Democracy is a public good that must be supplied by the citizens of a democratic state. Though no state will draw on the input of all citizens equally, the principles of equality and inclusiveness that ground representative democracy demand of citizens at least minimal participation in the core constitutive choices made in a representative system (Elliott 2017).

Young people want to see change in the ruling government and they vote for several reasons, including taking part in political involvement to make a substantial contribution to their society. If young people try to be involved in politics, they tend to understand what is happening in their country. Hence, they are aware of political problems such as mismanagement, corruption, and the non-delivery of services. They will then be ready to take issue with the government, and the government should understand why citizens are not happy about what is happening in their country. This active citizenship will assist the government and strengthen democracy (Elliott 2017).

Democratic governments and civil society demonstrate the concern of public participation; without this, there can be no effective democracy. Democracy can take various shapes and forms; it can be direct, demonstrative, purposeful, or sharing or involving. There will however always be disagreements or even conflict about what is considered the most accurate democratic system. The modern system of democracy accommodates citizens to have chances and choices to vote (Whiteley 2012:34).

In the light of democratisation, especially in many developing countries, political participation forms expanded and diversified to include voting, participating in voting campaigns, community participation, and the expression of opinions on society-related issues. Participation witnessed further expansion, as some studies have pointed out, including street protests, the involvement in institutional policies, participating in social movements (Roth and Saunders 2019) and engaging in youth political debates.

There are different theories about the relationship between democracy and trust. Abramson (2017:17) believes that trust and distrust ideally should play complementary roles in a democracy. It is well known that democracy, as a system of decentralised action, generates the rate of uncertainty; on the other hand, generalised trust through risk reduction amortises several types of day-to-day uncertainties (Volchenko and Shirokanova 2017:10). There are many diverse levels and classifications of trust. Theoretically, there are several ways of categorising trust. The most common types are political trust and social trust. Social trust (horizontal, interpersonal) is defined as trust in other people; it is essential for the cultivation of stability and peaceful relations, which are the basis for productive human cooperation. Social trust is further divided into generalised trust (trust in people in general) and particularised trust (in groups and individuals who they are in contact with).

Political (public) trust is the ability of any government to govern effectively and efficiently without the use of coercion. In short, political trust is an individual's expectation that a political actor will act in his/her interest (Bauer and Fatke 2014:51). Political trust is further divided into trust in political institutions (e.g. parliament and governments) and trust in political operators (e.g. the president, political authorities, and other political actors). Enhancing the legitimacy of the system, political trust is a key factor for stability and the effectiveness of democracy.
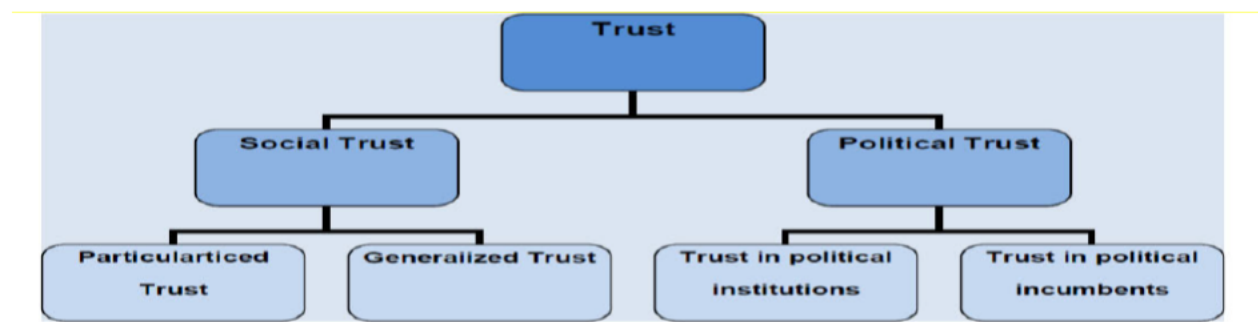
Figure 6 Categories of trust

[Source: Soithong (2011:31)

Notably, there are five fundamental practices that can ensure trust in a democratic system:

(1) communication between citizens to define public goals.

(2) tolerance and acceptance of pluralism.

(3) consensus on democratic procedures.

(4) civic awareness among the actors competing for different purposes; and

(5) citizen participation in governing organisations (Carreira et al. 2016:6).

On the one hand, trust should be seen as a prerequisite for a democratic process, while, on the other hand, trust is a result of democratic rule. Camaj (2014:187) asserts that trust directly affects both the regime's survival and its effective functioning by influencing perceptions about the quality of the democratic regime and political involvement. In examining the relationship between democracy and trust, there are differences in the aspects of democracy, namely:

(1) its long-term stability.

(2) the level of democracy at given points in time; and

(3) short-term changes in levels of democracy.

According to Jamal and Nooruddin (2010:45), particularised trust tends to be attached to the kinds of group identities that are solidified against outsiders, which in turn increases factionalisation and decreases chances that conflicts can be negotiated by democratic means. Generalised trust, on the other hand, is connected to several dispositions that underwrite democratic culture, including tolerance for pluralism and criticism. Generalised trust is a vital component of democratic transition, given the fact that it increases the sense of empathy towards others and raises the level of tolerance, and thus resolves the collective action dilemma. Trusting people are more likely to volunteer in associations, which is an indicator of the intensity of social participation. In addition to enhancing connectivity through social networks and mobilising common resources, generalised trust also affects the level of political participation. Horizontally, generalised trust is an

attitudinal glue that in a democracy uniquely requires citizens to accept one's fellow citizens as equal participants in the political process (Abramson 2017:3). According to Jamal and Nooruddin (2010:45), generalised trust is important for democracies because it enhances communal ties, norms of reciprocity, and collective action among the population. The close relationship between interpersonal trust and the vitality of democracy is well documented by several studies.

Political trust is not only an indicator of the quality of democracy; it is also crucial for the process of democratic governance given that the legitimacy of representative democracy defines the political attitudes of citizens towards institutions and politicians. If citizens believe in the political system and politicians, this will guarantee the functioning of democracy. Satisfaction with democracy and trust in political institutions are strongly determined by factors such as personal socio-economic position, evaluation of the economic situation, trust in other members of society, political efficiency, education, political knowledge, and political authoritarianism (Henjak 2017:352). Bauer (2018), for example, explored the causal link between unemployment and political assessments (i.e. trust in government and satisfaction with democracy). Political trust is an important indicator of political legitimacy, which is needed for a democracy to be stable and effective. Moreover, this kind of trust is crucial for the representative relationship as a key component of most democratic regimes. The relevance of institutional trust for democracy is reflected as follows:

(1) it provides citizen support for the necessary political and economic reforms.

(2) it creates conditions for reaching compromise and consensus.

(3) it increases the likelihood of rejecting non-democratic alternatives and speeding up democratic consolidation.

(4) it imposes itself as the "creator of collective power";

(5) it strengthens the capacity of the system in maintaining and improving prosperity, increasing the efficiency of governments by strengthening the links between citizens and elected institutions that represent them; and

(6) it encourages political participation, civil rights activism, and civil engagement.

Political trust is equally important for the stability of established democracies, as well as for new/flawed democracies, hybrid regimes or authoritarian regimes. Trust in institutions is a basic feature of modern democracies and plays a key role in guaranteeing social, economic, and political stability (Bonasiaa, Canale, Liotti and Spagnolo 2016:4). Public support for democracy rests on whether political institutions work to satisfy people's expectations (Ching-Hsing 2015:9).

3.5 Political Theory

Ekman and Amnå (2012) identified three reasons for the characterisations of youth and the perceived political participation gap between younger and older people. Firstly, it is due to life cycle and generational effects; secondly, the attractiveness of new forms of participation has caused younger people to divert from traditional forms of political participation as practiced by older generations, such as voting; and thirdly, there is a difference in the way young people embrace politically related concepts compared to older people. Sveningsson (2016) identified a huge discrepancy between the definitions of politics espoused by older and younger people, a finding also suggested in other studies (Van Deth 2014). Some researchers identified how young people think about and engage in politics, leading to the emergence of significant paradigm controversies concerning differences between political 'participation' and 'engagement' (Pontes, Henn and Griffiths 2016).

Moreover, elections should be conducted in a free and fair manner. The system should also allow for freedom of thought, expression, and association for the people. However, the mere presence of an electoral system does not make a political system democratic. Manipulating and vote rigging need to be avoided in elections. Moreover, no actions should be taken which would undermine the popular will expressed through elections (Akhter and Sheikh 2014).

The literature concludes that there are measurements of political efficacy, which comprise of internal and external measurements, which recognise the judgment concerning one's own ability or competencies to take part in and influence politics, which includes internal political efficacy and external political efficacy. Concerning the youth, Rasmussen and Norgaard (2018:25) state that young people with low levels of political efficacy are occasionally politically indifferent and uninterested because of their individual lifestyles and of various other issues that confront them. These lifestyle and related conditions and environments include increased movement, insufficient long-term attachments to neighbourhoods, and eventually the lack of patterns of registering to vote. Jung, Kim and De Zúñiga (2011) disagree, stating that internal political efficacy has been considered as a motivational factor in rational pathways to political participation, as it combines both elements of rationality and motivation. It may also be viewed as whether or not one feels capable to participate in politics and it is enhanced by the increased knowledge and understanding of political systems and practices provided by education. In a society where most of the citizens have obtained a high level of education, these young people tend to feel less externally efficacious because their individual resources will not provide them with any greater levels of influence or access to the political arena. Those with low levels of external political efficacy have been found to relate to or connect with general trust in the functioning of the political system and institutions (Persson 2013). In addition, Chamberlain (2012) states that external political efficacy, on the other hand, measures one's belief that political leaders and government institutions are responsive to the demands of its citizens. Youth with low levels of external political efficacy lose interest in politics. There are however young people, including young non-voters, who are interested in and enthusiastic about political issues, and many young people, including young non-voters, are politically engaged in alternative ways.

Patterns of political behaviour among young people in different countries have attracted much attention, as research suggests that they are increasingly turning their backs on democratic institutions and withdrawing from the formal political process (Norris 2011; Farthing 2010; Henn and Foard 2012). Indeed, the current young generation is often characterised as apathetic or even as apolitical, with neither aptitude nor inclination for

participating in any form of collective social endeavour, and with no sense of civic responsibility (Farthing 2010). For instance, the driving force underpinning the introduction of citizenship classes in schools was an acknowledgement of, and apparent concern with, what was considered as a growing democratic deficit and increasing political apathy among young people (Kisby and Sloam 2012; Tonge, Mycock and Jeffery 2012). Politicians have observed young people's interventions with increasing concern. Young people's apparent willingness to take part in more unorthodox methods of mass social and political action, along with their abstention rates at recent elections, have left policy makers lamenting what they consider to be a persistent decoupling of young people from the formal political process (Mycock and Tonge 2012).

The principal theme to emerge out of much existing research into the general field of young people and politics is that this generation has been characterised as dissatisfied with, and alienated from, the political process (Dermody, Hanmer-Lloyd and Scullion 2010). Furthermore, many studies conclude that young people have comparatively lower levels of political knowledge than their older contemporaries have and have a distinct lack of interest in (formal) politics. Compared with older adults, they are also less likely to be politically active (Furlong and Cartmel 2012), and they display comparatively weaker commitment to political parties and are less likely to be members of such organisations (Mycock and Tonge 2012). Indeed, the message from many such studies is that young people's levels of political participation in general are in decline, and at a more rapid rate than is the case for older adults and for previous youth cohorts (Sloam 2012). Several recent quantitative and qualitative-based empirical studies have challenged the predominant political apathy thesis, arguing instead that young people are interested in political matters and do take part in diverse forms of political action. Furthermore, Bennett (2013) has observed an emerging alternative 'anti-apathy' paradigm, in which young people are considered to have an interest in politics but feel alienated from formal politics and institutions (Dermody et al. 2010; Stoker 2011), and therefore, are characterised as engaged sceptics. Despite this evidence, the central preoccupation with young people's falling election turnout rates persists, as do concerns about their detachment from the democratic process.

What is certain is that young people's perceptions of politics and their range of engagement have changed. Political participation is increasingly viewed through the lens of individual action frameworks, whereby "formal organizations are losing their grip on individuals, and group ties are being replaced by large-scale fluid social networks" (Bennett and Segerberg 2012:748). These networks form the basis of alternative modes of political engagement that suit younger citizens' preferences better for horizontal forms of engagement. For example, it is much more attractive to sign an online petition, forwarded by a friend, on online 'snooping' by the state, than to actively promote the broad programme of a top-down organisation like a political party.

3.6 Economic Voting Theory

According to the Economic Voting Theory, voters are primarily influenced by their economic circumstances when making voting decisions. The Economic Voting Theory presupposes that every voter wants prosperity or a good economy; as a result, a voter will pay particular attention to how the economy is managed. The economic voter will reward the incumbent when the economy is flourishing and punish it when it is not. This assumption is underlined by the fact that elections are highly competitive.

According to Silver (2012), an elastic good is one whose demand is sensitive to changes in prices; in comparison, the votes of an elastic state respond to changes in the political conditions of the state. In an elastic state, voters have an equal likelihood of voting for either party's candidate because the electorate is not firmly attached to any political party. The voters are mostly independent, devoid of characteristics that are likely to be strong predictors of voting behaviour, other than economic performance.

Hazelkorn (2014) states that the economic considerations of voters are crucial for influencing election results in the global context. Vaishnav and Swanson (2015) have suggested that voters make election decisions after careful evaluation of the economic policies of the incumbent governments. This suggests that the perception of voters about the economic policies of successive governments could be a predictor of their satisfaction with the existing political system in the country. Moreover, Hazelkorn (2014) suggests that the sustained economic growth of a nation improves its global rankings.

Economic management can be considered central in the analysis of government performance. However, most research on economic voting focuses on how national conditions, or the individual's well-being, affect voting decisions. Studies have analysed how local economic conditions affect election choice, which raises concerns because the theoretical component of the literature on economic voting considers local economic conditions as relevant. In addition, regarding the estimated response for most of the widely used levels of analysis, the individual or national levels may be spurious if the response to the local variables is substantial (Elinder 2010; Ansolabehere, Meredith and Snowberg 2014).

A key assumption of both prospective and retrospective voting theories is that the government has a direct influence on the country's economic performance. Thus, an improvement in economic conditions increases the probability of voting for the party that is perceived as responsible for this outcome. In addition, a better economic performance tends to indicate a greater administrative capacity, as well as positively affecting the voters who do not identify with any party (Anderson and Morgan 2011). These considerations are shaped by short-term and long-term influences. The short-term influences are specific to a particular election and are susceptible to substantial shifts from one election to the next. Examples of this include the state of the economy, the government's performance, or the candidate's personality. However, other factors, such as party loyalty are more stable overall.

3.7 Summary

The chapter discussed in detail how the youth could be involved in political engagement. Knowing youth audiences and developing a successful strategy for communicating with the youth audience is important. It is also important that theories can reveal what the youth want and how they perceive their relationship with the government, political life and civil society.

When considering communicating with youth audiences, it is essential to remember that they include a diverse array of people with diverse backgrounds, expectations and needs.

Developing a communication strategy for youth audiences must therefore consider the various subcategories of young people.

However, this does not mean that youth audiences cannot be engaged collectively. In fact, there are certain issues that are of relevance and concern to all young people, such as education and training, social inclusion and diversity, economic opportunity, housing, health, and mobility.

Both Namibia and South Africa are democratic countries. The theories discussed in this chapter are all relevant and appropriate for both countries as they both deal with social choice for voters' preference. Voting behaviour explains the way individual are inclined to vote. According to the Economic Voting Theory, voters are primarily influenced by their economic circumstances when making voting decisions. Firstly, it is due to life cycle and generational effects; secondly, the attractiveness of new forms of participation has caused younger people to divert from traditional forms of political participation as practiced by older generations, such as voting; and thirdly, there is a difference in the way young people embrace politically related concepts compared to older people.

CHAPTER FOUR

COMPARING YOUTH ELECTIONS IN NAMIBIA TO SOUTH AFRICA

4.1 Introduction

Both Namibia and South Africa are democratic countries. Hence, it is important to engage youth in the democratic governance processes, as it could bring with it huge social, political, and economic benefits, as well as challenges (AU Report 2016-2018). While it could stimulate development, ingenuity and initiative, and boost or increase growth and progress, if not properly administered, it could stimulate uncertainty and violent conflict. Subsequently, the success with which a country on the African continent implements policies, structures and processes regulates whether most young individuals will have a positive or a negative effect on the development of their countries (AU Report 2016-2018).

In many countries, cultural differences and a lack of political drive to implement change or improvements and fix postcolonial and autocratic approaches have resulted in young people not being able to take part in the development of their countries. It also means that youth are not involved in the creation of solutions to the socio-cultural and political challenges that often affect them directly. Yet, in other parts of Africa and West Africa, where they are presented with good opportunities, young people continue to demonstrate the transformational value they can bring to governance (AU Report 2016-2018).

Solijonov, S. 2016:24, describes, the situation worldwide, that, young individuals have been branded as apathetic in recognised democratic administrations. This is ascribed to the fact that youth have continually ignored the call to vote in elections. While South Africa has witnessed a similar trend of declining voter registration and turnout, young people are far from apathetic. Instead, they are critical about political leaders and parties, whom they believe have overlooked and disregarded their demands and wishes and failed to involve them in a significant way (Malila 2016). In this study, the researcher goes beyond this, and compares those factors in South Africa with similar factors in Namibia.

4.2 Background of youth in South Africa and Namibia

The first multi-racial elections in South Africa in 1994, following the end of apartheid, ushered in majority rule under an ANC-led government. In South Africa, elections are held every five years; the last national elections were held in May 2019. Since 1994, South Africa has struggled to address apartheid era imbalances in housing, education, and health care. Moreover, the number of youths participating in elections continues to decline (Tracey-Temba 2016).

In Namibia, youth associations and political groups, along with the Electoral Commission of Namibia (ECN), presented their concerns over the low turnout among the youth, explicitly highlighting that indifference among the youth must be addressed to prevent the legitimacy of elections being undermined. Voter indifference has been serious area of concern for Namibians since its independence (Ndimbira 2014). Namibia has held six National Assembly elections – in 1994, 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2019 – since its 1989 independence elections, which ended many decades of South African rule, which lasted since the end of World War 1. Notwithstanding the many years of apartheid South African rule, Namibia has successfully nurtured its multiparty dispensation and has enjoyed relative political stability. It has also developed a culture of the peaceful handover of power.

In South Africa, research was conducted by the Institute for Security Studies in 2016 to understand the factors that influence voting among 2000 young South Africans across the nine provinces of the country (Tracey-Temba 2016), and in 2018, on factors influencing young men and women's political engagement in six high protest communities in Gauteng (Tracey-Temba 2018). The research established that several issues shaped their decision to vote in an election, or not. These included access to and the responsiveness of state institutions, access to and quality of education, employment opportunities or the absence thereof, and the prevalence of corruption. As with youth globally, South African young people are increasingly finding alternative modes of political expression and engagement. This could range from participation in public protests to social media activism.

According to Plan International (2017), girls and young women, particularly in developing countries, face countless challenges and have limited chances to influence the social norms and political climate that govern their lives. While some progress has been made in reaching the goal of gender equality, girls and young women remain the single most discriminated against and excluded group. One of the most effective ways to empower girls and young women is to enable them to have a voice. When they actively participate in social and political life, they become drivers for change in their own lives and in their communities. Early experiences in political participation build their confidence, allow them to act on issues that matter to them, and empower them to stand up for their own rights (Girls Report 2018).

4.3 Youth in South Africa
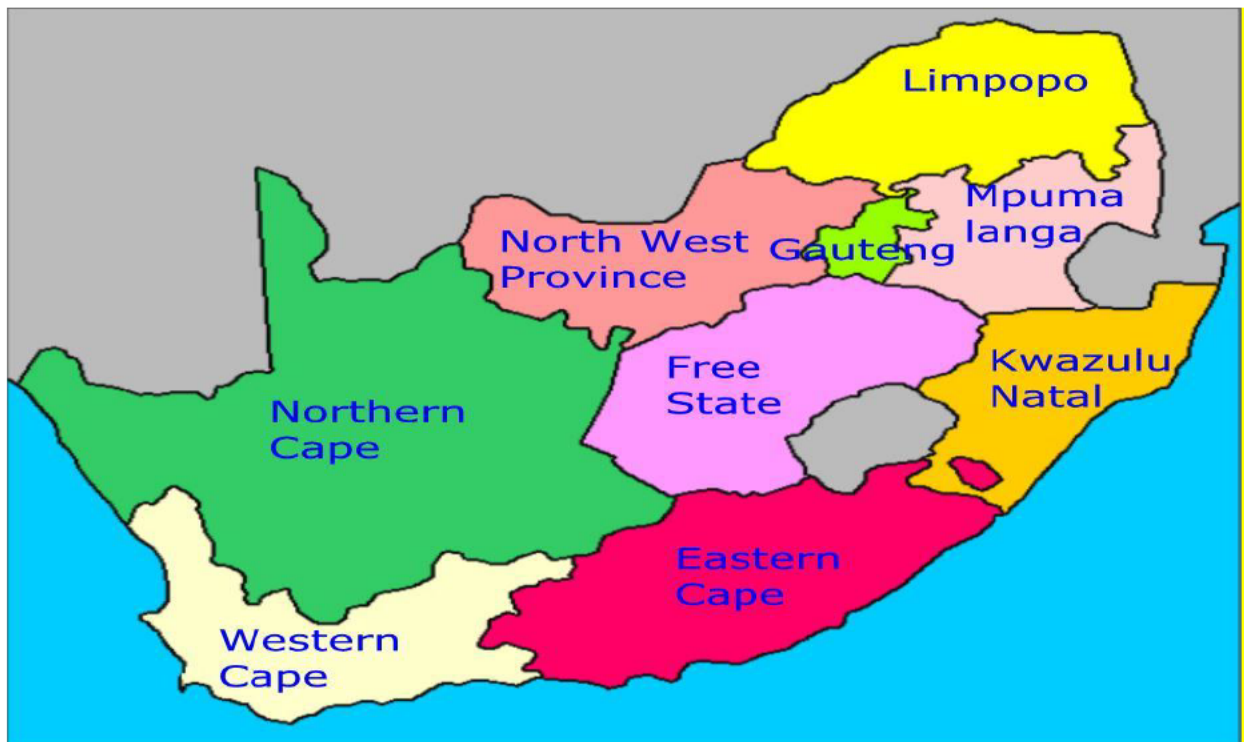
Figure 7 The provinces of South Africa

South Africa has nine provinces – the Northern Cape, the Western Cape, the Eastern Cape, the Free State, Gauteng, the North West Province, KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Mpumalanga. According to the mid-year estimates of 2019, the youth (aged 18-34) constitute almost a third of the population (17,84 million) in South Africa, with 9,04

million males and 8,8 million females. According to The National Youth Policy (2009-2014:12), the voting age is 18. South Africa, through its apartheid policy, did not regard youth as part of the population who should participate in elections. The country's young people were therefore highly politicised during the years of resistance from the mid-1970s (Swartz and Arnot 2014:2).

Post-apartheid in South Africa could be described as having five distinct political generations. Through the processes of change, dominant movements were created. The first movement was the pre-apartheid generation. This was a time when oppression was intense. In 1948, the National Party (NP) gained the majority in the elections, and the party leaders quickly acted to protect their position, which was built on a system of racial classification and segregation. While this group still constituted a sizeable proportion of the electorate in 1994, it shrunk to less than two percent of all voters in 2012 (Mattes 2012:137).

From 1948 to 1960, the second generation was born with a group of individuals who turned 16; racial legislation was still there to enforce racial discrimination. This encouraged youth to launch a series of protests, such as those against apartheid, the bus boycotts, the pass protests, the Kliptown Congress, and the creation of the Freedom Charter. Almost all these protests were planned to plead to more rational fragments of white opinion to affect political re-organisation (Meredith 2010).

This was followed by the third generation – those who turned 16 between 1961 and 1995. Their early memories were filled with the stirrings of internal black resistance, such as the Poqo uprising, the marches that led to the Sharpeville Massacre, and foreign news of gathering decolonisation – including Kenya's Mau-Mau rebellion. This generation's memories of late adolescence and early adulthood also carried the recollection of the post-Sharpeville reaction of the NP government, which banned all black political movements and imprisoned prominent leaders such as Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and Oliver Tambo (Mattes 2012:137). The fundamental idea of this period was violent resistance and reaction (Briggs 2016). The fourth generation is understanding the wider implications of these factors for individual's political behaviour (Nemcok and Wass 2021).

The fifth generation was different from the first four, in that they were free and not limited, restricted, inhibited or controlled by any limitations as to where they could go, work or live, and which race they could date or marry. They consumed news provided by a reformed public broadcaster and had access to privately owned radio and television stations, as well as to satellite television and social media. This period also witnessed the rapid expansion of a new black middle class (Mattes 2012:138). This involvement influenced youth to participate in events and protests, such as the #FeesMustFall campaign and the #RhodesMustFall movement (Swartz and Arnot 2014). Political participation among this group of young people is not forbidden, as during apartheid, but there is a resistance to vote (Resnick and Thurlow 2015). Voting should however be an opportunity, in a democratic system, for all citizens to voice their opinions to capture the attention of policy makers towards addressing events or topical issues in the public sphere (Briggs 2016).

With more than 36% of its citizens aged between 15 and 34, South Africa has one of the youngest populations in the world (StatsSA 2016). However, when comparing statistics from the 2014 and 2019 national and provincial elections, the Parliamentary Monitoring Group (PMG) found a 47% decrease in the number of people aged between 18 and 19 on the 2019 voters' roll. The PMG also found that the number of registered voters between the ages of 20 and 29 decreased by 9% in 2019 (PMG 2019). On 9 May 2019, the day after South Africa's national elections, the Southern African Development Community's observer mission announced that it had observed a lower youth turnout at the polls (Kubheka 2019). This decrease in youth participation in elections becomes more pronounced when considering that South Africa's population has grown by 7.5% over the preceding five years since 2019 (GroundUp 2019).

The question of youth participation in elections is made even more complex by the variety of youth interests and frustrations. To appeal to the youth, political parties must understand and address issues that young people are interested in. Studies conducted by YouthLab and the Institute of Security Studies found that the most pressing issues for the youth, which may inform their decisions on whether to vote, are unemployment, free and quality education, corruption, crime, and drug use (YouthLab 2019).

According to the National Youth Policy 2009-2014, South Africa's political parties are in no doubt about the centrality of youth to their future electoral prospects; this young group of citizens also have a profound impact on their operations, both in electoral and non-electoral periods. Political parties feel compelled to speak to the needs of this demographically defined population group, while the youth motivate political parties to use social media for a range of reasons relating to both an individual party's fate and the practice of democracy in South Africa in general.

4.4 Youth in Namibia

Figure 8 A political map of Namibia
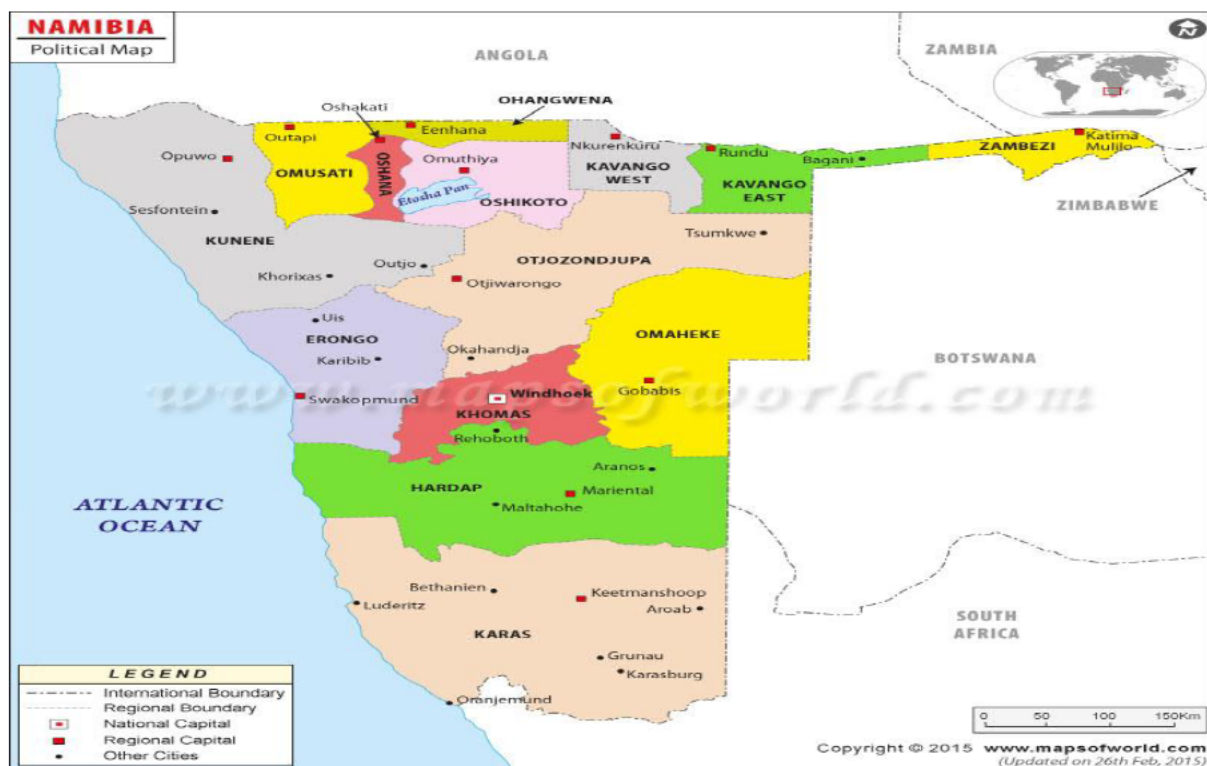
[Source: Maps of the World (2015)]

According to Plecher (2020), the total population of Namibia in 2019 by gender was 1.29 million females and 1.21 million males. The female population, aged between 15 and 24, increased from 75 980 in 1970 to 246 100 in 2019, growing at an average annual rate of 2.44%. In 2019, Namibia had an estimated population of 15- to 24-year-olds of 257 190 males and 257 984 females.

In Namibia, youth refers to every person between the ages of 15 and 35. Like South African youth, Namibian youth also contributed to liberation by boycotting various levels of apartheid, specifically 'Bantu education', and jointly through the Namibia National Students Organisation (NANSO). NANSO was founded in 1984 as a non-racial, democratic, and independent student (youth) organisation. NANSO was organised with the intention of assisting students and other youth to participate, not only economically, but politically, as well as to assist Namibians who were oppressed by colonialism and foreign domination. In Namibia today, youth make up 40% of the ever-increasing population. In 1990, the population was 1.35 million, whereas the 2011 Population and Housing Census counted 2.2 million, of whom 38.2% were identified as 'youth', and of whom 70% were under 30 years of age (Namibia Statistics Agency 2013).

Young people in Namibia are often accused of being without vision and not caring about politics or taking their role as citizens seriously. However, the silent approach adopted by many youth leagues of political parties in the country has highlighted the inactivity of young people in formal politics. This, however, does not mean young people have no strongly defined opinions or knowledge of current affairs. Many participate in some kind of civic activity, while others have taken a keen interest in the future of the country and are staking their claim in forging that future, albeit in different ways, outside of politics (Joseph 2019).

4.5 Youth participation in politics and elections in Namibia

Namibia does not perform well with regards to the involvement of young people in political issues, in contrast to other nations, such as South Africa. While the longing for change and improvement is steadfast, youth political involvement is askew across the electoral cycle (ECN 2012). Most Namibian youth are disappointed with governmental issues.

Many variables drive youth voter unresponsiveness in Namibia. These constitute judgments that political activism and commitment do not yield results; a suspicion of ideological groups; and the absence of access to political initiative (Motsamai 2015). In 2012, the ECN produced a report to quantify the degree of public comprehension of discretionary and popularity-based projects and the viability of the projects (ECN 2012). These projects were created to develop communities and citizen schooling drives, with the view on expanding voter turnout for the 2014 elections. The report estimated the progress of ECN's citizen schooling points and targets, zeroing in on the degrees of comprehension of a majority rules government and popularity-based processes; public and voter trust in the discretionary framework; the breach of basic procedures; attendance at public, local and neighbourhood meetings; e-mail to deal with voter training; success with choosing government transport; orientation mainstreaming and individuals with handicaps in the election processes; youth contribution; and the viability and effectiveness of the legal structure (ECN 2012).

As per Ndimbira (2014), the National Youth Council (NYC) held a drive that was imaginative and cut across all segments and financial youth sections in the country. Its key targets were to:

- urge Namibian youth to register for the elections between 15 January and 2 March 2014.

- further discussions and arguments around the registration and casting of a ballot among Namibian youth.

- build a feeling of national pride and a culture of responsibility among Namibian youth; and

- get Namibian youth to cast their vote during the November 2014 decisions.

4.6 South African youth participation in the 2014 elections

South Africa's 2014 elections was the first time that the so-called 'born free generation', those born after the end of the apartheid regime, were able to vote. South Africa's Electoral Commission (IEC) stated in February 2014 that 25 310 543 citizens were registered to vote in the elections of 7 May 2014. More than one in four of those were in the age bracket of 18 to 29 years (see Table 1 below – slight variations in the statistics are due to continuous fluctuations in the data the IEC released).

Table 1~~18~~ Age and gender breakdown of South Africa's May 2014 voters' roll

Age band (years)	Female	Male	Total	Proportion of electorate
18 – 19	349,957	296,356	**646,313**	2.55%
20 – 29	3,098,577	2,660,659	**5,759,236**	22.68%
30 – 39	3,223,740	2,956,794	**6,180,534**	24.34%
40 – 49	2,693,943	2,313,558	**5,007,501**	19.72%
50 – 59	2,111,311	1,684,820	**3,796,131**	14.95
60 – 69	1,301,401	963,313	**2,264,714**	8.92%
70 - 79	741,549	418,950	**1,160,499**	4.57%
70 - 79	741,549	418,950	**1,160,499**	4.57%
80 & older	417,825	157,397	**575,222**	2.27%

Source: http://www.gov.za/certification-voters-roll-2014-elections

Total numbers: 13 938 303 female voters and 11 451 847 male voters equal 25 390 150 voters. The broad 18- to 35-year category of South African youth make up 41.2 percent of the country's population. The categorisation of the available details (see Table 1) does not permit direct comparisons between voter registration and the proportion of the population. However, approximate comparisons of these details, along with age-band registration details released by the IEC at the time of the 2014 elections, showed that the

proportion of youth registered as voters was notably lower than the proportions of the higher age bands.

4.6.1 Youth perceptions towards participation in politics and elections in Namibia
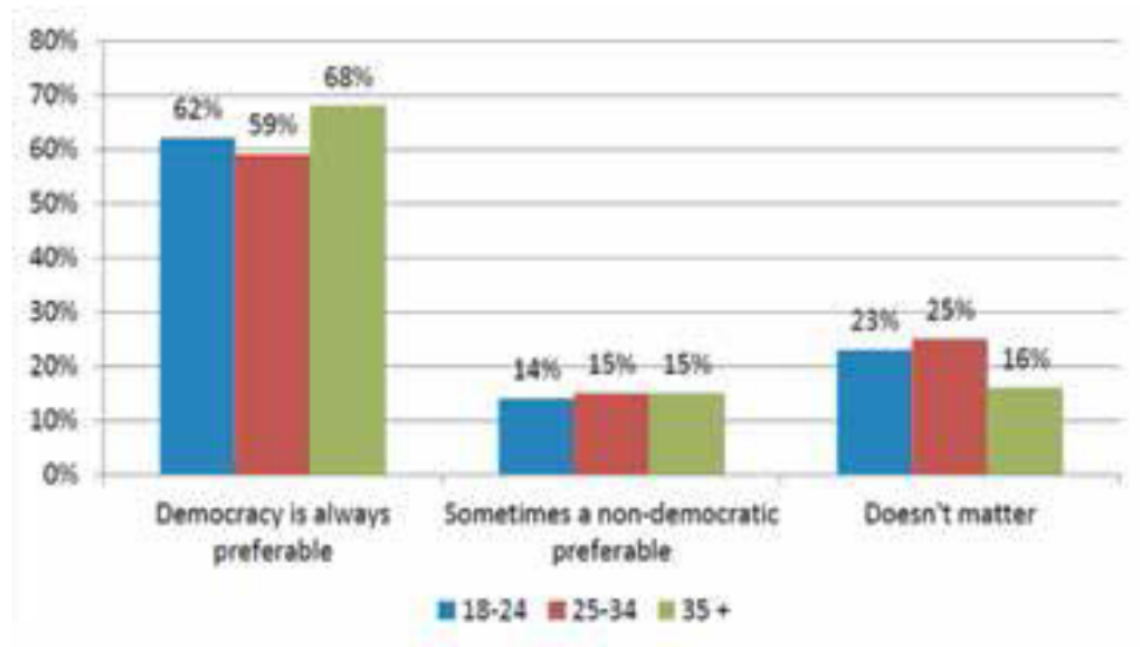
Figure 9 Youth support for democracy

[*Source: The Namibian* (2013)]

Youth in Namibia called for an crucial part in negotiations and an exchange of ideas leading up to the election, so that they could articulate their demands. Just before the election, this generation contributed to the campaigning of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Namibia Institute for Democracy (NID). Young people were excited about key issues that affected their lives (Henning 2010).

Latukhina (2013) asserts that according to official government rhetoric, the important role of the youth in Namibian society is generally acknowledged. They are energetic and have a dream and vision for the future. This view is declared in official documents as well. For example, in both the National Youth Policy and the African Youth Charter, which the Namibian government ratified on 12 March 2008, it is stated that youth are an important part of the society as they could have a positive impact on the social, political and economic spheres if provided with the appropriate resources for the development of their skills and capacities. However, in practice, this does not always conform to the ideal. This

is evident in the kinds of social problems youth encounter and how the government responds to them. Namibia, like the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa, has a large youth population. Generally, young people strive to be educated and have a good job and a stable family (Latukhina 2013).
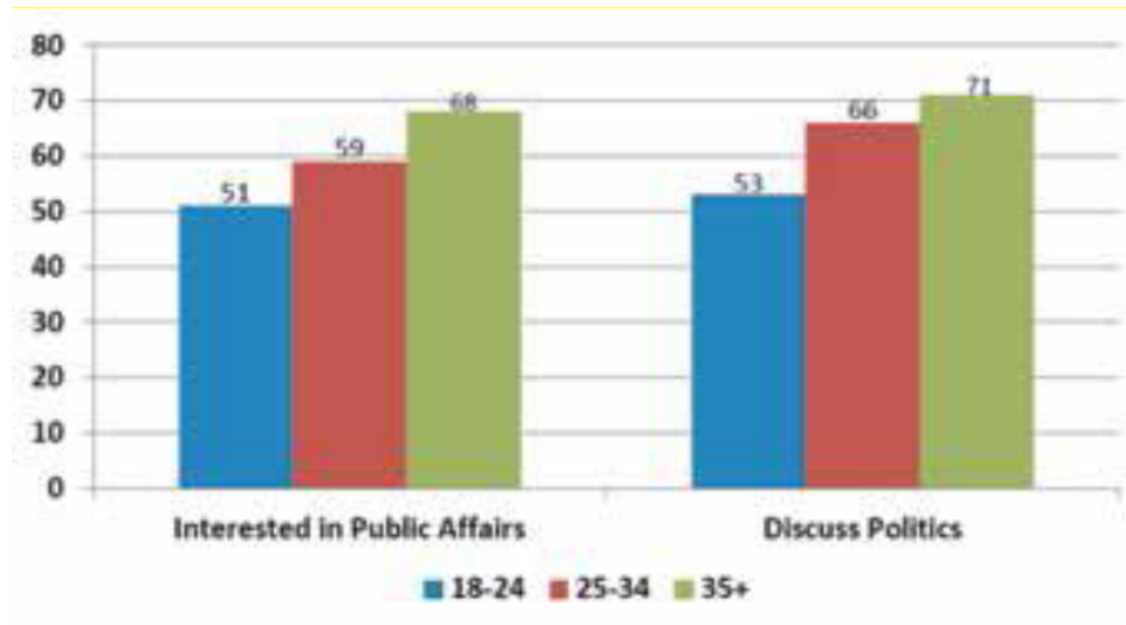
Figure 10 Youth's interest in public affairs

[Source: The Namibian (2013)]

In the 2014 election, 'born-frees' comprised an even bigger chunk of the electorate than in 2009. Despite this, there was a lack of interest in public affairs, with only 51% of youth in the 18-to-24 age brackets stating that they were interested in public affairs, and 53% stating that they discussed politics with their friends or family, compared to significantly higher numbers in the older age groups. Moreover, youth indicated in both 2008 and 2012 that they were not necessarily closely affiliated to a political party. In 2012, only 50% of young people aged between 18 and 24 said that they felt close to any political party, compared to 74% in the 25 to 34 age group, and 78% in the 35+ age group (Bastedo 2012).

While this large disparity and the lack of closeness to political parties may signify general apathy among the youth when it comes to politics, it is also important to question what the underlying reasons for this apathy could be. Bastedo (2012) highlighted the importance of symbolic representation – youth are much less likely to vote or to be involved in politics when they feel that their values are not aligned with those of political leaders. Bastedo (2012) further states, "If the values that young people care about are not symbolically represented by political leaders and their electoral platforms, then youth will have less to vote for, and will likely just stay home and ignore elections altogether". Bastedo (2012) concludes, "Conversely, if political leaders make modest changes to their campaign strategies that also appeal to values, rather than strictly to interests, there could also be an increase in turnout among youth and therefore an increase in democratic legitimacy".

If young people's values are ignored, according to Bastedo (2012), it could cause disillusionment among them with party politics in Namibia. These findings present an important wake-up call for Namibia's political parties. It also begs the question on why political parties seemingly do not appeal to young voters and why young voters do not demand that parties become more in tune with the issues affecting youth unemployment. According to Bastedo (2012), "Politicians should decide in earnest to consider how to reach out to young people and construct a campaign that resonates with what young people care about; a campaign that leads youth to believe that there will be a possibility and reason to vote". Given the composition of the youth vote, and what this could potentially mean for all competing political parties, appealing to the needs and aspirations of young people in a way that aligns with their own values could provide a strong basis for young people to become less apathetic about politics in general and elections in particular.

Additionally, Namibia does not perform well as far as the involvement of youngsters in governmental issues is concerned when contrasted with different nations in the Sub-Saharan district. While the desire for change and improvement is solid, youth political cooperation is unequal (ECN 2012). Most Namibian youth are disappointed with governmental issues. Many variables drive youth unresponsiveness in Namibia. These

incorporate a judgment that political activism and commitment does not yield results; a doubt of ideological groups; and the absence of access to political initiatives (ECN 2012).

In 2012, the ECN undertook a benchmark study to quantify the degree of public comprehension of discretionary and popularity-based processes and the viability of its projects. This was in an attempt to further develop its community and voter training drives with the view of expanding citizen turnout for the 2014 elections. The study projected the following:

- The progress of the ECN's voter training goals and targets, zeroing in on the degrees of comprehension of a majority rules government and popularity-based processes.
- Public and citizen trust in the discretionary framework.
- Seen infringements of the discretionary regulations.
- Turnout in public, regional and neighbourhood decisions.
- Email to deal with voter training.
- Partner fulfilment with discretionary assistance with transport.
- Orientation mainstreaming and individuals with handicaps.
- Youth contribution; and
- The viability and the effectiveness of the legitimate structures.

The study utilised a quantitative assessment outline and targeted all Namibian residents 18 years and over in Namibia's 14 districts. It found that the fundamental difficulties for youth cooperation included restricted chances to take part in active drives; doubt among youth and establishments; and an absence of progress, particularly for young women. On youth political cooperation, it found down that most of the respondents (54.6 percent) believed that its specific methods did not appeal to the youth; and 74.8 percent of respondents felt that its youth drives must be connected to public drives. In various ways, the benchmark study highlighted the challenges the ECN had in being more visible and appealing to young voters (ECN 2012).

Following the benchmark study in 2012, the ECN started citizen responsibility drives for young voters from late 2013. These at first centred around expanding youth voter registrations. It became obvious that the ECN required a broader and more distinctive structure for youth political participation (Republic of Namibia Electoral Act 2014). Creating it required investment, but the ECN needed to wait for the election cycle to end. The cycle brought new legislation, which the ECN thought would change its power and focus. It did not. Its targets, which were to coordinate, direct, administer, oversee, and control the outcomes, continued as before (ECN 2012).

The new legislation also did not include a provision on youth political participation. It only referred to "the youth" in Section 49, which covers voter and civic education. It states, "The ECN must, when promoting voter and civic education: ensure that they particularly address the young population; and should cooperate with the ministry responsible for education regarding the development of a syllabus for material relating to voter and civic education and involve the ministry responsible for information in voter and civic education". There is no other reference to the youth beyond this. Shortly after the elections, the ECN started drafting a comprehensive Youth Policy. It was yet to be concluded at the time of this research.

In past elections, the ECN's youth engagement activities were conducted under its voter education programme. As highlighted, the ECN used findings from its 2012 baseline study to shape its approach to youth engagement, opting for long-term activities instead of ad hoc ones. This approach to electoral programming, where organisations look beyond the immediate electoral event, is referred to as the Electoral Cycle Approach. It divides the electoral process into three main periods: the pre-electoral period, the electoral period, and the post-electoral period. The approach treats elections as continuous processes, rather than isolated events, and interventions are tailored before elections are held.

According to the ECN's Performance Assessment and Post-election Report of 2015, it initiated the following programmes:

1. Targeted voter registration campaigns: the ECN's General Registration Drive (GRD) was progressing during the pre-political decision stage. Explicit GRD exercises were carried out in regions where young people live and that they regularly visited.

2. The Youth Ambassador's initiative: the ECN enlisted 112 youth as its youth representatives for between two and 90 days to help with voter training, aimed at the youth.

3. Roadshows: the ECN enlisted musicians to perform at its street shows as a method for draw crowds and urge neighbourhoods to cast their vote. It involved music as an instrument to draw in young people to its events.

4. Trade Fairs: the ECN coordinated exchange fairs with town committees as an approach to expanding its reach. Exchange fairs for the most part have a high turnout in Namibia and the ECN had the option to address youth, focused on community and voter education training at these events.

5. ICTs and social media messaging: the ECN's Public Relations Office utilized Facebook and Twitter to bring issues to light on voter registration and casting a ballot.

6. Customised media messaging: this included radio, TV, announcements, as well as mobile phones, aimed at the youth. The ECN's voter education officials additionally took part in youth centred radio and TV programmes.

Namibia has been making slow progress in attaining the desired gender parity. Women representation in the National Assembly increased slightly from 26.4% in 1999 to 27.3% in 2004, which gradually increased to 32%, because of vacancies that arose from time to time due to death and voluntary retirements. Only two parties have women legislators in their ranks, these being the governing Swapo Party, with 20.8% women representation, and the Rally for Democracy and Progress (RDP), which has one woman (or 12.5%)

among its eight elected legislators. This situation can be attributed to the poor showing of other parties, in particular the CoD, which in the National Assembly attained a 50/50 gender representation in its ranks (*Windhoek Observer* 16 October 2009; *New Era* 15 October 2009; Kaapama 2008). Thus, despite the public pretence of the various parties regarding their commitment to gender equality and/or the inclusion of women candidates on their respective lists, women continue to be victims of glass ceilings as the balance of power within the various political parties are tilted in favour of men.

This trend attests to the fact that although women candidates normally account for more than 30% of the names tendered on the lists of contesting political parties, their names are placed towards the end of the lists. This trend is a grave concern because the only other opportunity prior to the 2015 deadline set by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) for member states to comply with the 50% women representation in their respective parliaments was in 2014.

Another group who attracted tremendous attention was the youth – for several distinct reasons. For example, according to the 2008 Afrobarometer survey, 33% of the 18 to 24 age group indicated that they had no interest in public affairs, while another 48% were undecided when asked which party they identified with. Thus, in their quest to appeal to the youth, especially first-time voters, parties such as SWAPO, CoD, DTA and RDP ventured into the extensive use of websites, blogs and social networks sites like YouTube and Facebook. These were used to provide members and cyber visitors with basic party information, such as parties' constitutions, election manifestos, leadership profiles, and recent press statements. Furthermore, in some instances, opportunities were provided for users to participate in online current affairs polls and debates, cell phone fundraising campaigns, and competitions in which cash and other prizes could be won.

Regarding the electoral environment, Namibia has an electoral code of conduct in place that was signed by all political parties in 1999, which impressed upon all contestants to refrain from using language in their various campaign materials, be it speeches, pamphlets, newsletters or posters, which may be construed as inciting violence in any form.

4.6.2 Aspects of youth participation in Namibia's election in 2014

The South West African People's Organization (SWAPO) party has dominated Namibian politics since its independence from South Africa in 1990. This pattern continues today with SWAPO controlling 77 of the 96 seats in the National Assembly. President Hage Geingob won office in a landslide victory, with 87 percent of the popular vote, in 2014.

As Namibia has yet to experience a transition of power between parties, some questions remain over the robustness of its checks and balances. Nonetheless, Namibia has realised considerable strengthening of its democratic institutions over the years. This maturing of the political system is seen in the adherence of presidents to term limits, the precedent of which was established with Namibia's second president, Hifikepunye Pohamba, who stepped down in 2015.

Further institutionalisation of the democratic process is seen with a strengthening civil society and the growing independence of the press, government oversight mechanisms, and the private sector. In this way, Namibia provides a positive model of a liberation movement party taking meaningful steps to transition to democracy. Namibia's political stability has made it an anchor for governance and security issues in Southern Africa – a pattern that was expected to continue after the 2019 elections.

4.6.3 Namibia engaging youth in political new media.

The election system of the Namibian government is improving in the regional and local authority of governance (Republic of Namibia 2014), with government representatives being closer to the citizens for electorate purposes. They are equipped with offices, vehicles, mobile phones, as well as internet connectivity on their mobile phones; furthermore, they receive a cell phone allowance monthly to ensure that they can be in touch with their communities. With an increase in mobile phone subscriptions in Namibia, civic and political leaders are tapping into these media to engage citizens in their villages or communities in civic responsibilities or political activities.

4.7 South African general election (General Election, May 8 2016)

A benchmark election for the continent is South Africa's general and parliamentary elections, from which the president is selected. As one of Africa's leading economies and advanced militaries, the elections in South Africa have implications for the rest of the continent.

In many ways, the South Africa polls are an election within an election. The ruling African National Congress (ANC) remains the dominant political party in the country. The question that will be answered at the polls is whether, after a series of corruption scandals, growing urban crime, and perceptions that the ANC has lost touch with ordinary South Africans, the ANC still commands sufficient trust among the majority of the population. In the municipal elections in 2016, the ANC suffered its worst electoral defeat since the end of apartheid, when it lost control of many cities, including the political and business capitals, Pretoria and Johannesburg, the legislative capital, Cape Town, and the industrial city of Port Elizabeth.

The ANC has made significant course corrections since then with the replacement of former party leader and President Jacob Zuma with Cyril Ramaphosa at the ANC National Conference in December 2017. Ramaphosa has moved decisively to distance the party from many of the abuses of power associated with Zuma by instituting a series of reforms to reinstate more transparency in party and government practices. Through these actions, South Africa demonstrated that its system of democratic checks and balances was strong enough to rein in a populist leader willing to test the limits of the rule of law. Nonetheless, many in the ANC who benefited under Zuma's patronage have resisted Ramaphosa's reforms. The 2019 general elections were a referendum on the ANC's current direction. Ramaphosa became president, which empowered him to push forward with additional reforms.

Another storyline to watch is the ongoing transformation of a liberation movement. Having led South Africa in its opposition to and transition from apartheid, the ANC enjoys deep loyalty among many South Africans. Yet, as with other liberation movements in Africa, such loyalty may create a sense of entitlement among party leaders, a deterrent to pursue reforms, and the space for abuse of power. The 2019 elections were an important juncture in this process, helping to answer the question of whether the ANC can undertake fundamental reforms itself or whether genuine reform must wait for an opposition party to gain power nationally.

There are also important regional security implications from the elections in South Africa. Under Ramaphosa, South Africa has begun reasserting its leadership within SADC and the African Union on issues of conflict resolution and upholding democratic norms in regional crises. These policies, as well as its position as a standard-bearer for the protection of human rights, have been associated with South Africa since the presidency of Nelson Mandela, but had lapsed under Zuma. The former president's allies resisted Ramaphosa's reassertion of these foreign policy initiatives, underscoring the regional consequences from the South Africa elections.

4.8 Political and civic engagement of African youth
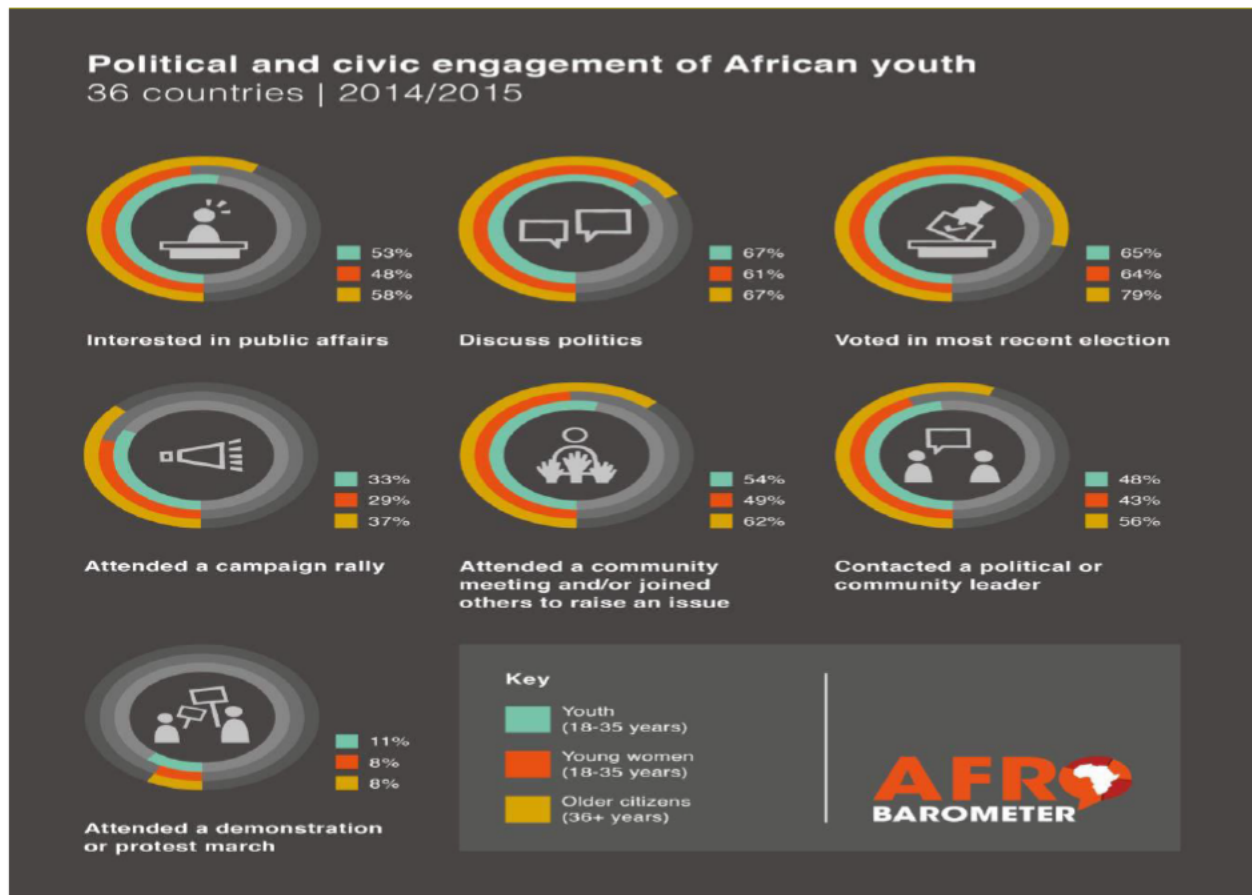
Figure 11 Political and civic engagement of African youth

[Source: Lekalake and Gyimah-Boadi (2016)]

Figure 4.5 above shows the statistics on the political and civic engagement of African youth; it also provides an idea of the activities involved, including in South Africa. According to the African Union (2011), empowerment requires young Africans to be engaged in a range of activities to ensure their full representation in the political process.

Table 2~~19~~ Strengthening participation of young people in South Africa's electoral and democratic processes

Categorisation of youth issues – perspectives from political parties		
Substantive issues on which the youth request information		
The following continuum is evident in parties' thinking about youth issues:		
Issues are generic: all policies are youth-centric; youth are encapsulated in the general policy positions.	A mixture: policies are a mixture of exclusive and generic issues.	Exclusive youth issues: there are many issues that concern the youth specifically and issues on which they seek information, including education, work opportunities, gangsterism, community safety, and substance abuse.
Procedural issues on which the parties engage the youth		
Three categories of issues were discerned in the interview responses:		
Mobilisation for electoral registration and voting in elections: the EFF, for example, argued it had failed to use its wide social media access to mobilise young South Africans to register.	Marketing of party events: rallies, meetings, community walkabouts, and 'meet the leader' gatherings; thus, open-ended besides being directed by a specific party.	Recruitment: specific 'cajoling', persuasion, and propaganda.
Youth generational issues		

Youth participation as motivation to activate further youth participation: two such lines of argument were discernible		
The time for 'old politics' is over, and young leaders are taking over. This is evident in the Parliament.	Youth will be targeted for registration – motivated by the message that it is through registration that the new South Africa will emerge.	
Source: Booysen (2015)		

4.9 Reasons for youth not voting in South Africa

There are many reasons for the youth in South Africa to not interested in voting in elections. So many young voters, even those who say they are politically motivated, often fail to turn up at the polls. Disappointment, disillusionment, and confusion are the sentiments that drive abstention.

The following are the reasons for youths' indifference to voting, according to the Institute for Security Studies (2016):

- **No Interest in Politics:** Young people focus on many different issues, the main being employment, success, and leisure. Hence, politics is not necessarily an interesting topic of discussion for them. Thus, the youth do not bother to visit polling stations.

- **They feel it will not make a difference:** The majority of young people do not think voting is an effective way to change society.

- **They Lack Knowledge in Politics:** There is a significant lack of knowledge about how exactly the government works, and, therefore, how their vote actually matters. Many young people do not think they know enough to be able to vote.

- **They Find Politicians Corrupt and Disloyal:** For many young people, politics and corruption go together; most politicians only look out for their own interests

and that of their families; and once a person is voted into power, they change and do not live up to the promises they made prior to the elections.

- **They Are Ignored by Candidates:** If young people do not vote, they are less likely to be targeted by political campaigns. Conversely, those young people who are contacted by an organisation or a campaign are more likely to vote. Additionally, those who discuss an election are more likely to vote in it.

- **They Are Ignored by The System:** Levels of poverty and unemployment are high among young people. Moreover, limited opportunities are available for young people, especially young black South Africans. Young people feel the government takes them for granted and only needs them when they want their votes.

- **They Feel Their Voice Is Not Heard:** Young people in South Africa do not feel that they are heard. They do not feel that their voices count and that the issues they face are addressed. This issue cuts across all political parties.

- **Their Families are Not Involved/Interested in Politics:** A young person's home environment can have an impact on their political engagement. Youth who live in houses where members of their household are engaged and vote are more likely to do so themselves.

- **They Have Barriers to Overcome:** Sometimes young people do not have time to vote on Election Day. Some are not able to spend time in long queues at a voting station. There might also be a lack of transport, inconvenient hours, the location of the polling station, trouble locating their polling station, and registration problems.

- **Religion:** Many people think politics and religion do not mix, and that includes young people. Those who are deeply religious, like certain Christians, feel they have no business in politics. This is because they feel that only God is the answer to their problems, or they simply do not want to be part of the corruption associated with politics.
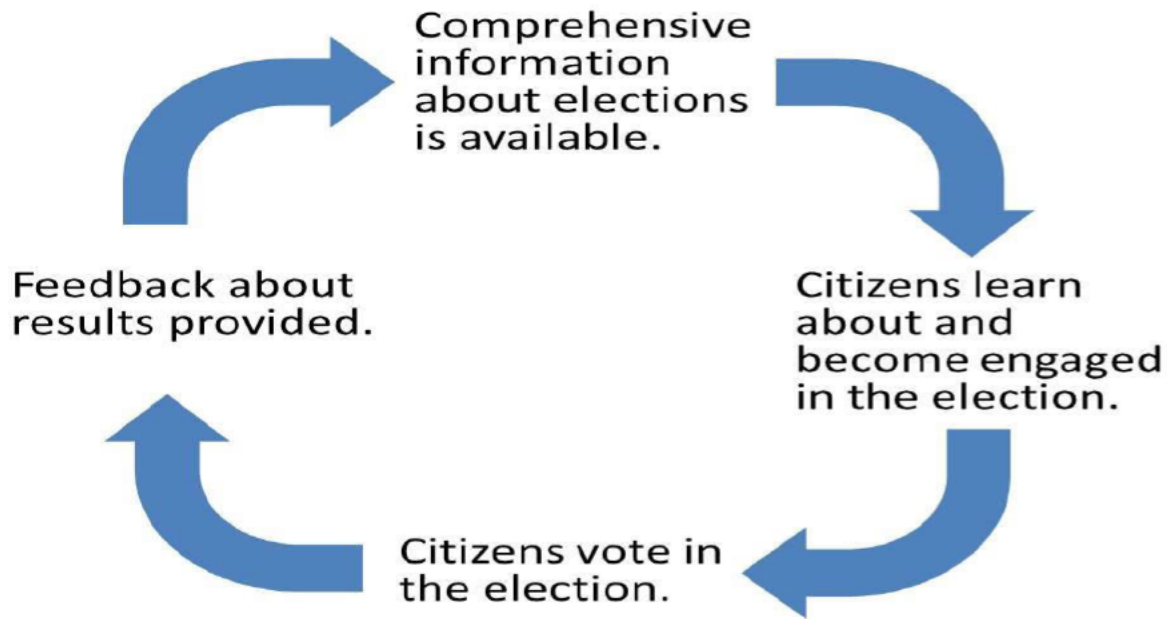
Figure 12 Voter Information Feedback Loop

The Electoral Commission (2013) demonstrates in the figure above how important it is to make information available to young voters on a constant basis, especially considering their experience of not receiving sufficient information. Moreover, the information provided by public authorities has become particularly important because the number of local media outlets have declined. In this regard, research by Baekgaard (2014) indicated that the coverage of local elections in the local media has a significant impact on voter turnout.

In addition, technology is a central tool for young people to engage with each other and the political system but is often not accessible or used effectively as a form of civic engagement. The participation of youth is a fundamental part of the advancement of a majority rules government in South Africa. As democratic elections are new to the political scene, youth should be urged to practice their political privileges, including their right to cast a ballot. In a majority rules government, various barriers limit voter turnout among young people, including a lack of experience with the voting processes.

According to Mattes and Richard (2015), youth in South Africa and Namibia are provided with limited voter information; this has serious implications for younger voters, who are the social group least likely to be on the electoral register. Mattes and Richard (2015) also

argue that the youth find politics less interesting and engaging. In Namibia, youth interviewed during the country's 2014 Afrobarometer survey, said that political leaders used inappropriate platforms, such as face-to-face meetings, to communicate with their communities (IPPR, 2015).

Furthermore, Berry and Dunleavy (2012) list the key issues relating to election results:

- Each type of election is reported in a different manner.
- Results reporting are fragmented across many different sources.
- There are no standard formats for the publication of results; variation occurs between different sources for the same election, and between types of election at the same source.
- Different sources provide only summary results with no links to locally specific details that voters require about their ward or constituency area.
- A postal code search is not widely available, often requiring users to find the name of their ward or constituency (if known) by scrolling down long lists. New residents and young people are least likely to know such highly obscure names.
- Sources do not integrate different types of elections so that they are all easily accessible in one place.

The structural reasons behind young people's low levels of registration and voting are varied and they increase in severity with every passing year. There is substantial and reliable evidence suggesting that younger voters are strongly disadvantaged by the existing methods of getting them registered and able to participate in elections. The existing strong structural barriers can partly be overcome by better skilled and educated young people.

4.10 Constraints of Namibian youth in politics

In Booysen's (2015) survey in South Africa, multiple obstacles were found that affected political parties' usage of social media. These barriers affected the choice of social media and the extent to which political parties would rely on social media in their future operations. The most notable barriers related to national infrastructure (signal unavailability in outlying areas), and modest access to smartphones (due to poverty and unemployment largely). Other significant constraints were political parties' own modest resources and limited in-house expertise.

Table ~~3~~20 Barriers to political parties' use of social media

Barriers to political parties' use of social media		
Level	**General aspect**	**Specific illustration**
Infrastructural (national level)	No mobile phone signal in remote areas of South Africa	Many rural areas suffer because of this problem.
Affordability and familiarity (individual level)	No access to smart phones, which is a prerequisite for most social media platforms.	In conditions of poverty and unemployment, many citizens cannot afford relatively expensive cell phones.
Personal skill/low familiarity (individual level)	Supporters have access to cell phones, but do not yet have matching levels of skill.	Language and literacy, or techno-literacy, are constraints.
Party political resources	Low human resource capacity to facilitate social media use.	Party finances do not permit more extensive HR to facilitate in terms of

		persons to generate trending, or for poster design.
Hostile political environment	Social media use is public, and false messaging or infiltration is possible.	

4.11 Challenges and lesson learnt in Namibia.

The National Youth Council of Namibia (2014) listed the following challenges and lesson learnt with youth voters and elections:

- A lack of sustainable funding for youth initiatives: frequently assets from the ECN are redirected to different regions, which frequently cut back the actions.
- Weak internal research capacities on youth participation: the ECN is yet to direct research that would give specialized knowledge on its youth commitment methodologies.
- Minor focus on internal capacity development for the youth: at the time of writing, the ECN had only a few young staff and lacked training opportunities for them to drive its policies from within.
- Weak support to the ECN from political parties: usually, political parties neglect their responsibilities to increase the engagement and participation of young people in their processes. Consequently, they fail to support the work of the ECN in this regard.
- Cultural sensitivities: these have to do with gender and generational roles in certain contexts where young people and women are discouraged from political participation.
- Limitations of ICT-based programmes: the ECN reported that most of these programmes were time-consuming and expensive. Aside from the costs, not all youth have access to these mediums.

4.12 Voter information feedback loop in South Africa

According to Appelstrand (2012), information includes the following vital elements:

Consultation: This involves "two-way information flows and exchange of views. Consultation consists of sharing information and gathering feedback and reaction, beneficiary assessments, participatory poverty assessments, town hall meetings, focus groups, national conferences, round tables, and parliamentary hearings".

Collaboration: Appelstrand (2012) suggests that collaborating with the beneficiaries of the policy helps to create a sense of inclusion. Collaboration also helps to prevent policy makers from acquiring services and facilities, which do not match the needs of the community.

Joint Decision-making: Regarding joint decision-making, Mkandawire (2012) suggests that it is "collaboration where there is shared control over the decisions made". Shared decision-making is useful when the external actor's knowledge, capacity and experience are critical.

Empowerment: Mathieson (2012) defines empowerment as the **"**transfer of control over decision-making, resources and activities from the initiator to other stakeholders. Empowerment takes place when external actors acting autonomously and in their own interests and can carry out policy mandates without significant government involvement or oversight. Examples are local natural resources management committees, community empowerment zones, water associations, some forms of partnerships and civil society seed grants."

The Emergent Global Youth Bulge: Ortiz and Cummins (2012) define the youth bulge as "a demographic trend where the proportion of persons aged 15 to 24 in the population increases significantly compared to other age groups". This means that the participation of young people becomes even more important in democracies because if the trend of the youth bulge continues, the youth, in time, will constitute the majority of the population in most countries.

4.13 Challenges and lesson learnt in South Africa

The lack of understanding of the benefits of youth engagement in policy and programmes of action by African governments challenge youth participation in African politics. Limited capacity, skills, resources and tools are other obstacles for the youth. Tracey and Kahuthia (2017) describe South African youth, as is the case with other African countries, as facing huge challenges that inhibit their ability to participate in democratic governance and development processes. This incorporates minimal commitment to civic and political spaces, and unemployment. The latter has been highlighted as a persistent challenge in a country where youth account for three out of every five unemployed persons. The plight of unemployment is also believed to have fuelled armed conflict in Africa. Research shows that one out of two young people who joined a rebel movement cited unemployment as the main reason for doing so. To address these and other challenges, such as the scourge of radicalisation and violent extremism, African states must adopt legislation that enhances youth engagement.

4.14 Summary

This chapter provided the broad differences and similarities between Namibia and South Africa, as well as the lack of engagement of youth in politics. It also showed the gap that emerged relating to gender, and the barriers and challenges encountered by young people in Namibia and South Africa. Moreover, the voter information feedback loop indicated a lack of information dissemination.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

5.1 Introduction

The chapter focuses on the rationale behind the research design and methodology employed in the study. The researcher undertook a mixed-method study. A questionnaire, as a qualitative data collection tool for primary data and qualitative data collection methods, was explained in detail in this chapter. Furthermore, the ethical and confidentiality undertakings were explained, as provided to the respondents in the study. Moreover, the methods of data collection, the data analysis and interpretation, as well as the procedures of reliability was highlighted.

5.2 Research approach

The research approach section describes the methodology of the study when dealing with the research problem, the research questions, and the objectives of the study. The approach in its entirety is highlighted in Figure 5.1 in this chapter. The figure below illustrates the research paradigm, the research design, the research methodology, the target population, and the sampling procedures and methods.

Table 424 The Research Procedure Model

Research paradigm

Transformative

→

Research design

Mixed method

Approach

Sequential transform-active design

→

Research methods

Online questionnaire

→

Target population

First target group - [100] South African government officials

Second target group

[56] Youth of 14 political parties represented in South Africa's Parliament

Third target group - [100] Namibian government officials

Fourth target group

[44] Four top young leaders of youth formations of 11 political parties represented in the Namibian Parliament

Fifth target group

Three South African and three Namibian IEC officials

→

Sampling strategies

First target group: [100] South African government officials

Random Sampling

Second target group: [56] youth of 14 political parties represented in the South African Parliament

Random Sampling

Third target group

[100] Namibian government officials

Fourth target group

[44] **Youth** of 11 political parties represented in the Nam bian Parliament

Fifth target group

[3] South African and [3] Namibian IEC officials

Random Sampling

Judgement sampling

5.2.1 Transformative Paradigm

The transformative paradigm is often used in the mixed methods approach. It is used at an early stage of the study to determine who needs to be involved and how they can be roped in to contribute effectively to the study (Mertens 2015). Moreover, the transformative paradigm provides a philosophical framework for designing research that has the potential for change at the individual and societal level (Mertens 2015). Furthermore, this paradigm focuses primarily on the lives and experiences of marginalised groups in society. Thus, when researchers embrace this paradigm, they ensure that the results of social inquiry are linked to the action, as well as to wider questions of social equity and social justice. Further qualities of this paradigm stem from its ontological (the reasons that lead younger voters not to take part in politics and voting processes in South Africa and Namibia), epistemological (the manner in which knowledge production in relation to younger people's voter apathy can be realised), axiological (the ethical procedures and considerations when approaching the issue of voter apathy amongst the youth in South Africa and Namibia), and methodological orientations (how to obtain the results about youth voter apathy and reliable responses, whilst the application of the scientific methods are undertaken, to arrive at the results) (Room 2015; Mertens 2015:3; Matjila and Van der Merwe 2021).

However, it should be highlighted that transformative theory assumptions are different from post-positivist and interpretive/constructivist worldviews. Creswell (2014:6) states that the transformative paradigm focuses on social justice and agendas for reform and empowerment and, habitually, political debates are initiated. In this study, the transformative paradigm was applied because this thesis aimed to empower young people on the importance of electoral participation. In addition, the researcher hopes to spark further political and public debate on the issue of the participation of the youth in elections in the newest democratic countries in Africa, namely South Africa and Namibia. However, the critics of this theoretical paradigm indicate that emancipation and transformation cannot be achieved and/or guaranteed as improvements in young people's voter apathy towards politics and the voting processes in their respective countries (Matjila and Van der Merwe 2021).

5.2.2 Research design and methods

This section highlights the research design and methodology that was utilised in the study to address the objectives and research questions of the study exploring political apathy among South African and Namibian youth.

5.2.2.1 Research design and methods

For the research findings to be thorough and consistent, a researcher needs to design a plan to assist in collecting and analysing data based on the objectives of the study (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013). This study adopted a sequential mixed methods approach. In this study, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used for collecting numerical data. Mixed methods methodology draws on the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methods (Teddlie and Tashakkori 2008). However, according to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), because of the lack of a distinct definition of mixed methods studies, they indicate that mixed methods studies mean the following:

- both qualitative and quantitative methodologies are used in the collection and analysis of data, and
- the data can be collected concurrently and sequentially to address the research questions and objectives.

However, the reason the sequential mixed method approach was selected for the study was to ensure that adequate information was collected that would help the researcher address the issues of voter apathy amongst the youth during elections in South Africa and Namibia. The data was collected sequentially, whereby quantitative data was first collected, followed by qualitative data collection. The mixed methods approach, as indicated by Doyle, Brady and Byrne (2009), is a research approach where the researcher acquires and analyses the data, then combines the results through triangulation, and lastly, illustrates interpretations utilising both quantitative and qualitative research approaches in a single study.

5.2.2.1.1 The quantitative research approach

The quantitative approach, according to William (2011), deals with quantifying and analysing variables, using specific statistical numerical data to obtain results. In this study, the mixed methods approach determined the factors contributing to the interest in voting, or the low voter turnover, of young people.

Moreover, the methodologies are used to explore a phenomenon taking place and to examine 'why' and 'how' such occurrences take place. Consequently, these methodologies are used to describe individual experiences and to develop theories (Berman 2017).

5.2.2.1.2 The qualitative research approach

Qualitative research, according to Zohrabi (2013), is a way in which social action expresses how people, together with their experiences, understand the reality of life. It uses interviews, diaries, journals, classroom observations and immersions, and open-ended questionnaires to obtain, analyse and interpret data. These methodologies are used to address research questions about the causes of events, their magnitude, and, lastly, for generalisability (Berman 2017).

5.2.2.2 Population and sampling

This section highlights the target population of the study and the sampling procedures and methods that were used in this study.

5.2.2.2.1 Population

For Aschengrau and Sewage (2008:7), a faction of people possessing the same characteristics, among others, place of residence, gender or age, or utilising a certain service, is called a population. In this study, South African government ministers, deputy ministers, heads of departments, deputy directors-general and policy developers, Namibian government ministers, deputy ministers, heads of departments, deputy directors-general and policy developers, and South African and Namibian IEC officials were the target population. The other target population was youth from political formations represented in both the parliaments of South Africa and Namibia. Furthermore, in this study, the definition by IDEA (1999:24) that youth are characterised as individuals between the ages of 18 and 29 years was adopted. Therefore, the target age of the study

was youth between 18 and 29 years because from 18 years youth have started voting and/or expected to participate in national elections.

The South African and Namibian government departments who form part of the target population are as follows:

I.   The Department of Women, Youth and People with Disabilities – 20: 10 females and 10 males
II.   Home Affairs – 20: 10 females and 10 males
III. Statistics – 20: 10 females and 10 males
IV.   The Presidency – 20: 10 females and 10 males
V.   Education – 20: 10 females and 10 males

These are Institutions where youth issues are dealt with.

The researcher targeted the four top leaders of the youth formations of all 14 political parties represented in South Africa's sixth Parliament, which were elected in the national elections of 2019. The parties are as follows:

- The African National Congress
- The Democratic Alliance
- The Economic Freedom Fighters
- The Inkatha Freedom Party
- The Freedom Front Plus
- The African Christian Democratic Party
- The United Democratic Movement
- The African Transformation Movement
- Good
- The National Freedom Party
- Congress of the People
- The African Independent Congress
- The Pan Africanist Congress
- Al Jama-ah

Included in the target population are the four top leaders of the youth formations of all the 11 parties represented in Namibia's seventh parliament. The breakdown of the population from the South African and Namibian populace was as follows:

- Youth: four participants from each political party in the South African and Namibian parliaments: fifty females and fifty males. The total sampled number of youth who responded to the questionnaires was 100.

The political parties, which are part of the seventh administration of the Namibian parliament, are as follows:

- The South-West Africa People's Organisation
- The Popular Democratic Movement
- The Landless People's Movement
- The United Democratic Front
- The All-People's Party
- The Namibia Economic Freedom Fighter's
- The Republican Party
- The Christian Democratic Movement
- Rally for Democratic and Progress
- The South-West Africa National Union

5.2.2.2.2 Sampling techniques

Bhardwaj (2019) states that sampling can be defined as a procedure to choose a sample from the larger population. Consequently, it helps the researcher to save costs and reduce the time that would be used if the whole population were to be surveyed. Furthermore, as this is a mixed methods study, the researcher had to compile a questionnaire, and draw up the procedure to be used to administer the questionnaire, and the ways in which the questionnaire would be distributed and retrieved from the respondents. Moreover, for quantitative research, the researcher used simple random sampling, and as for qualitative research, the researcher utilised judgemental sampling.

In simple random sampling, according to Kumar (2014), there is a need for the researcher to ensure that all members of the population have an equal opportunity to be chosen in the sample for the study. Furthermore, the technique, which adheres to the concept of equality amongst the elements in the population, is the same. Judgemental sampling was also used to select the interviewees for the qualitative data collection process. Judgemental sampling, also called purposive sampling, indicates that the researcher, using his own judgement, select respondents for the interviews, because in his opinion the chosen interviewees would have the information needed about youth voter apathy in South Africa and Namibia, to address the research questions and objectives of the study (Kumar, 2014). In this case, purposive random sampling was used to filter individuals from a population and create samples. This kind of sampling, according to De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport (2010:202), is based entirely on the judgement of the researcher by composing elements containing characteristics and representative or typical attributes of the population. In this case, the youth and government officials responsible for election policies.

For this study, 306 respondents were chosen for the quantitative data collection, which included the 200 government officials (100 South African and 100 Namibian government officials), 100 youth representatives (56 South African and 44 Namibian youth), and lastly, six electoral commission members (three South African IEC members and three Namibian ECN members). Moreover, for the qualitative data collection, 15 interviewees were selected by the researcher using the purposive judgemental sampling technique.

5.2.3 Data collection process

The study adopted the use of secondary and primary data collection processes. Using the IEC and ECN reports for South Africa and Namibia, journal articles, and search engines on the internet, the researcher was able to collect secondary data on youth voter apathy in South Africa and Namibia, which would explain the importance and the involvement of young people in politics in both countries. The study took the form of an electronic survey and questionnaires were sent out online through an online platform called Survey Monkey because of the Covid-19 pandemic. This platform allowed the researcher to collect the data without any risk to the respondents for the quantitative data

collection process. Consequently, for the qualitative data collection process, the researcher used telephonic interviews, as well as Microsoft Teams and Zoom sessions, to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

5.2.3.1 Questionnaire as a data collection instrument (quantitative research)

According to Roopa and Rani (2017), the questionnaire was invented by Sir Francis Galton, a British anthropologist, in the 1800s. Nowadays, questionnaires form the backbone of research studies globally; however, their success lies in their design. Moreover, they are the main means of data collection in quantitative research studies. The main reasons why a questionnaire was used in this study were the following (Roopa and Rani 2017; Kumar 2014):

- It is inexpensive to design and distribute,
- It helps to conceal the privacy of the participants,
- It allows the participants to be honest as their identity concealed, and
- The data can be used to easily corroborate the findings of other studies, which are similar in nature.

Moreover, Kumar (2014) states that questionnaires should always be clear for the respondents to be able to understand them when completing them.

5.2.3.2 Interviews as a data collection instrument (qualitative research)

Fox (2009) states that interviews are an integral part of qualitative research. However, interviews are used mostly in the designs of explanatory and descriptive studies. The researcher used structured online interviews for the purposes of the research, to ensure that the relevant data was acquired from the participants.

Research interviews are used to explore the views, experiences, beliefs, and motivations of individuals on specific matters. This type of qualitative research approach is believed to provide a deeper understanding of social phenomenon than when using quantitative approaches. Moreover, these approaches are good at exploring sensitive topics and for when little is known about the study topic (Gill, Treasure, Stewart and Chadwick 2008). Hence, the researcher believed that this type of data collection method would ensure that the study would grasp the issues related to young people's voter apathy in South Africa

and Namibia; also, it would provide the study with an in-depth understanding of the topic at hand.

The link for the questionnaires was distributed through emails to the respective respondents and organisations, as well as via websites, social media, and Zoom or online discussion platforms, and potential participants were then invited to take part in the survey. According to Bhat (2015), this process entails survey questions, collecting data from a pool of people, and analysing the collected data to produce numerical results.

A questionnaire on Question Pro is used to demonstrate data collection as a process to gather and measure information on the variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion, which enables one to answer research questions and evaluate outcomes (Cooper and Schindler 2010). Question Pro, according to Bhat (2015), is web-based software for administering online surveys. It provides an intuitive wizard interface for creating survey questions, tools for distributing surveys via email or website, and tools for analysing and viewing survey results.

The study's questionnaire was divided into two; one directed at the youth in **APPENDIX A** and the government officials in **APPENDIX B.** Section A provided the demographic status; Section B answered objective one: The electoral systems in South Africa and Namibia; Section C dealt with the factors that shaped and defined voter apathy and voter support in South Africa and Namibia respectively; Section D dealt with the South African government's response to youth apathy during elections; and Section E dealt with new theoretical perspectives in the context of youth political participation within electoral processes within the African continent, and its impact on democracy.

5.2.4 Data analysis methods

The mixed methods approach involves the acquisition, analysis and combining of data acquired through qualitative and quantitative research approaches in a single study. Statistical data analysis was performed on the acquired questionnaire data. The results included the descriptive statistics, and inference and linear regression tests. The researcher illustrated the data in a descriptive manner, and statistically, as the data acquired through the questionnaire was measured using a Likert scale of 1-5, which made

it easier to conduct the following tests: correlation tests such as Phi co-efficient, Cramer's V, as well as the Pearson significance assesses.

1. According to Richard and Morse (2013), preparation of data for analysis is called a process of transformation. The researcher managed to transform the information into a format that could be manipulated in the process of analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). SPSS 27 statistical software was used for this study's data analysis to manipulate and make sense of the data.

For the qualitative data analysis, the researcher opted to utilise content analysis, which is used mostly in data analysis for qualitative studies. Furthermore, this method of analysis describes the family of a range of approaches, such as impressionistic, intuitive, interpretive analysis, and systematic analysis. The main goal of content analysis is to ensure that the knowledge and understanding of the phenomena studied by the researcher is well grasped (Hsieh and Shannon 2005). However, Hsieh and Shannon (2005) indicate that content analysis results are limited by the lack of attention to the broader meanings illustrated by the data. Trustworthiness in this type of analysis mostly relies on the credibility of the responses received from the participants. Moreover, such limitations can be mitigated using qualitative data analysis software, such as NVivo and NUDIST (Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing, Searching and Theorising). The researcher used summative content analysis as the study involved summarising themes from the responses of the participants.

The study was largely quantitative, supported by the qualitative research approach, which quantitatively measured and analysed the collected numerical data into graphs and tables, using SPSS 27. Babbie (2010) defines quantitative analysis as the numerical representation and manipulation of observations for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations reflect. A statistical data analysis method was used in this study to help the researcher to turn the quantitative data into useful information for decision-making. This method can also be used to summarise data and describe patterns, relationships, and connections (Parab and Bhalerao 2010). By using the aforementioned statistical tests, the validity and reliability of the variables were

assessed. The results of the reliability testing highlight that the instrument used and the questions asked determined the reliability, validity and trustworthiness.

5.2.5 Validity and reliability

Zohrabi (2013) and Abowitz and Toole (2010) argue that the principles underlying qualitative research approaches are based on the premise that validity is a matter of trustworthiness, utility, and dependability. Moreover, validity is concerned with whether the research is believable and true, and to highlight whether it is examining what is meant to be evaluated. According to Zohrabi (2013), validity can be considered as an integral criterion for evaluating the quality and believability of the research study. In this research, the researcher employed internal validity to ensure the congruence of the research results with reality. Furthermore, the researcher ensured that what was supposed to be observed and measured was done through the triangulation of the data. The validity was strengthened through triangulation and the collection of data from a variety of sources, such as questionnaires and interviews. This helped the researcher to eliminate the issue of bias, and the weakness of only using one source of data collection (Zohrabi 2013; Abowitz and Toole 2010). Finally, through triangulation the researcher managed to gain insights from the qualitative and quantitative data as a way of corroborating the findings of the study.

Zohrabi (2013) and Abowitz and Toole (2010) indicate that one of the main requirements of the research process is the reliability of the data and the results of the study. Consequently, reliability deals with the consistency, dependability and replicability of the results obtained from the study. Moreover, getting the same results in quantitative studies is more straightforward because of their numerical nature; however, in qualitative research, it is not that straightforward to replicate the study as it can be a demanding and difficult task. Lastly, in this study the research adopted Cronbach's alpha as a measure of the internal consistency and reliability of the study for quantitative data analysis. According to Bonnett and Wright (2014), Cronbach's alpha is the most widely used measure of reliability in the social sciences.

According to Kekana (2012:16), the validity of information is described "as the honesty and the exactness of the information and reliability as how dependable the information is". In this study, the researcher used triangulation as a method that ensures that exact and reliable data is collected and that the questionnaires are distributed to the right participants; that is, South African and Namibian government officials and selected individuals at the South African and Namibian IECs.

5.3 Limitations of the research

The research study was limited to two countries in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), namely South Africa and Namibia. There were no comparisons, gathered from other African countries, except for generalised observations from the literature. Moreover, COVID-19 impeded the collection of data as countries feared the spread of the virus to their population, and mitigating measures were put in place to restrict travelling, which prevented the researcher from interviewing respondents face-to-face.

5.4 Ethical issues in mixed research methods

In addition to the importance of choosing the relevant methodology, ethical considerations in research are crucial (Fleming and Zegwaard 2018). It is also critically important to consider ethics in research when the study involves human participants (Fleming 2018). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2011), the cornerstone of ethical research is the issue of informed consent. This indicates that participants should be fully aware of the questions they would be asked, the usage of the data collected, and the ramifications thereof. Lastly, the participants must consent to taking part in the study, through written and signed consent forms, which included the knowledge of their rights to take part in the study, how they to access the information if the need arises, and the right to withdraw from the study at any point during the study (Fleming and Zegwaard 2018).

The researcher obtained the necessary documents from the University of KwaZulu-Natal and the IECs of Namibia and South Africa confirmed the purpose of the study. These documents were used to communicate with the respective institutions and were attached to each questionnaire.

The study was based on the principle of voluntary participation. The respondents were informed that they were under no obligation to participate or to divulge any confidential information. To safeguard the respondents, confidential information was not disseminated, because the topic was sensitive. During the interview sessions, the respondents were free to withdraw if they felt uncomfortable in continuing to take part in the study. During the data gathering process, all the respondents' withdrawals that occurred were not registered by the researcher. Furthermore, the respondents were assured that confidentiality and privacy were taken into consideration during the question answer sessions.

The researcher requested a permission letter from the University, which was presented to the targeted departments and youth formations of the political parties represented in the South African and the Namibian Parliaments and from the IECs of South Africa and Namibia. The email addresses of participants were obtained from the websites of the institutions of the target population. The researcher administered the questionnaire himself, as it was conducted online.

5.5 Summary

This chapter focused on issues related to the research design and methodology. This research study adopted the mixed method approach, using both quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection.

The chapter also highlighted the research, based on the literature reviewed by the researcher. Furthermore, it emphasised the core research procedures and methodologies used in the research, which included data collection and designing effective measuring instruments, namely a questionnaire and a research interview schedule. Moreover, the chapter examined the ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

The next chapter focused on the data analysis and the findings, which outlined and compared the youth issues surrounding elections in South Africa and Namibia, both during the apartheid era and since the advent of democracy.

The findings of the quantitative and qualitative data allowed for a better understanding of the issues related to young voter apathy in South Africa and Namibia. The term 'triangulation' is regarded as a measurement technique that is often utilised by surveyors to locate an object. In mixed methods research, this ideology can be used to integrate qualitative and quantitative results to show a more complete understanding of the issue or problem under study (Mertens and Hesse-Biber 2012). Consequently, a framework was developed with key factors that could be used to encourage youth to take part in politics and the voting process.

CHAPTER SIX
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presented the results collected from a questionnaire and the interviews administered to South African and Namibian government officials and youth of political parties represented in both countries' parliaments. The data from the questionnaire and interviews were presented and analysed in the order of the research objectives presented in Chapter one. The questionnaire and interview schedule were divided into the following three sections for both the government officials and political party representatives for South Africa and Namibia, namely:

Part 1: Responses from government officials in South Africa and Namibia

Part 2: Responses of youth of political parties represented in both the South African and the Namibian parliaments.

Part 3: This section provided the interviews' thematic responses from both the government officials and political youth representation for South Africa and Namibia.

6.2 Part 1: Responses from government officials in South Africa and Namibia

This section provided demographic information and statements that provide information on electoral systems in South Africa and Namibia, the factors shaping and defining voter apathy and support, the responses of the South African government to youth voter apathy during elections, and the theoretical perspectives in the context of youth political participation in electoral processes from government officials from South Africa and Namibia.

6.2.1 Response rate

The total number of questionnaires distributed to the respondents was 306. The questionnaires were administered to the South African and Namibian government officials. Out of the 306 questionnaires distributed, 207 were completed and returned, which was a 68% response rate by the government officials in South Africa and Namibia.

6.2.2 Gender of respondents

Figure 13 illustrates the gender of the South African and Namibian government officials.
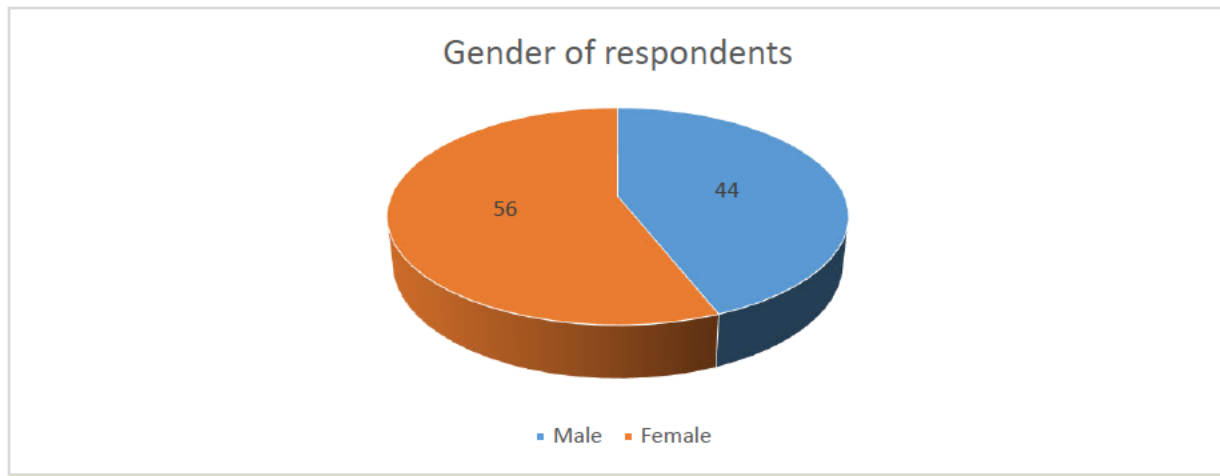
Figure 13 Gender of respondents

Figure 13 depicted that the respondents were 54% female and 44% male. This implied that there were more female government officials compared to their male counterparts, as this could be corroborated by the number of those registered to vote in both countries. Furthermore, according to the website of the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC), there were more females registered to vote in South Africa than males, with 55% and 45% respectively (Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa 2021).

6.2.3 Age groups of respondents

Figure 14 below indicates the age groups of the South African and Namibian government officials.
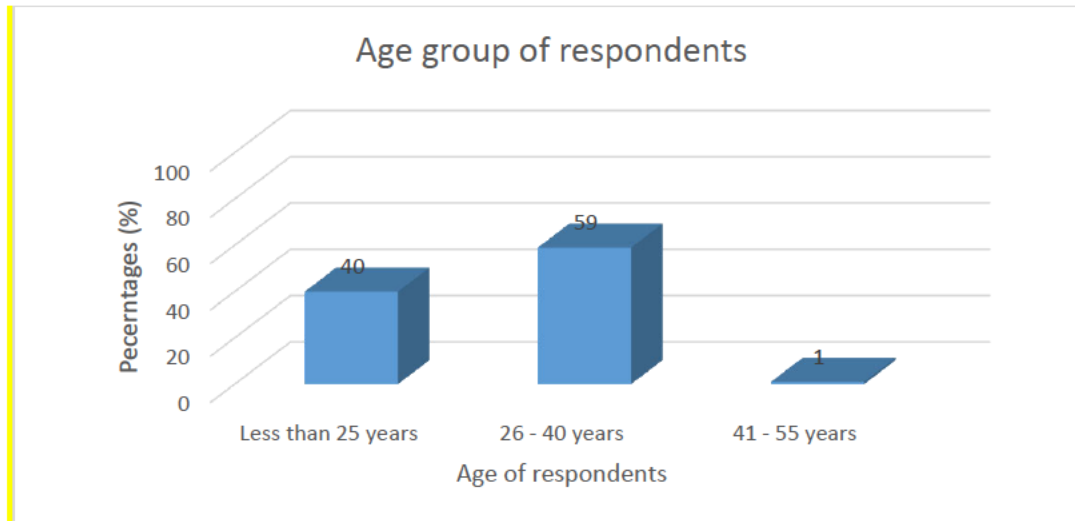
Figure 14 Age groups of respondents

Figure 14 showed that most of the respondents were in the age group 26 to 40 years, 40% were younger than 25 years, and the minority was in the age group 41 to 55 years, at 1%. The aforementioned figures thus indicated that the government officials in both countries were fairly new in the ministries chosen for the study. Consequently, this makes for a positive observation as it indicates that most people participating in politics in these countries are young people or youth. In South Africa, the voters' roll indicates that people in the age group 20 to 39 years are the majority (43%) of the voters registered in the country (Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa 2021).

In Namibia, young people find elections exciting, and participation is very high; this was confirmed in a 2014 report presented by the Namibia Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC 2014), which revealed that nearly all eligible voters – about half of the population of 2.3 million – had registered to vote. Of these, almost half were under the age of 35 years, which means that approximately 1.15 million youth out of the total Namibian population wanted to participate in the elections. According to Tjiehenuna (*The Namibian* 4 April 2014:2), the turnout of young people in Namibia was satisfactory for the 2014

national elections registration; their 85% participation rate was the highest since Namibian independence.

6.2.4 Job status of respondents

Figure 15 below illustrates the job status of the South African and Namibian government officials.
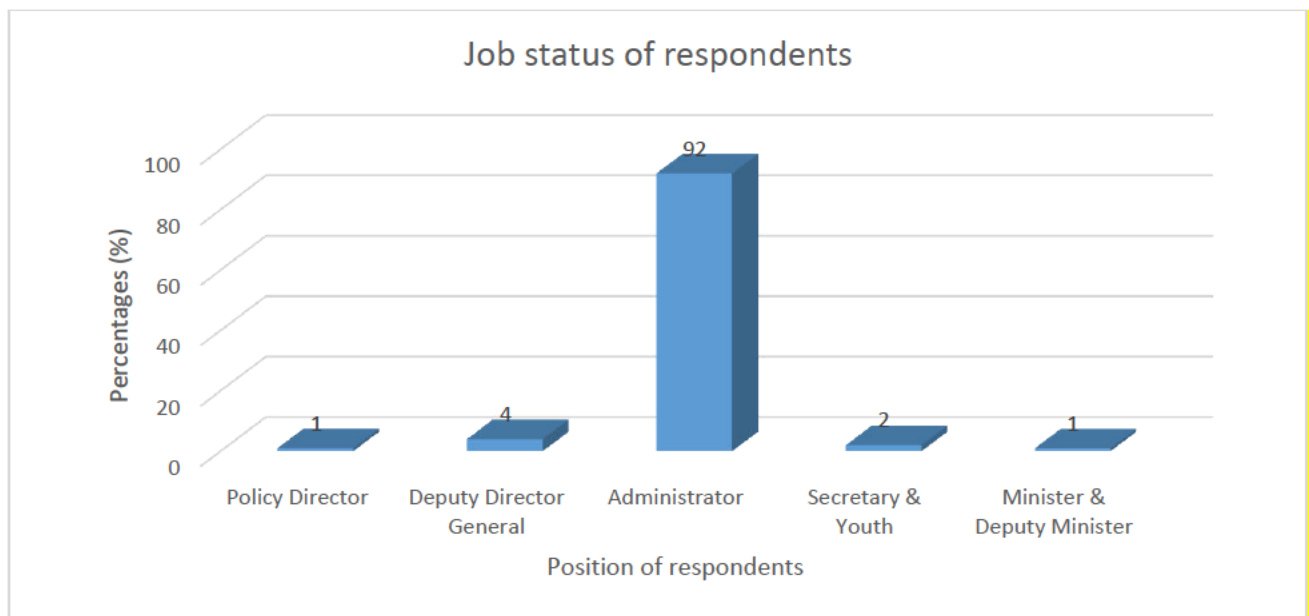
Figure 15 Job status of government officials

Figure 15 reflected that the majority of the respondents (92%) who completed the questionnaires were administrative staff in the respective ministries. Only a handful were officials in senior positions, at 4%, and the minority was Policy Directors, Ministers, and Deputy Ministers, at 1% respectively. This implied that most employees in these ministries were administrators without any managerial powers.

6.2.5 Highest qualification of respondents

Figure 16 highlights the highest qualification of the government officials from South Africa and Namibia.
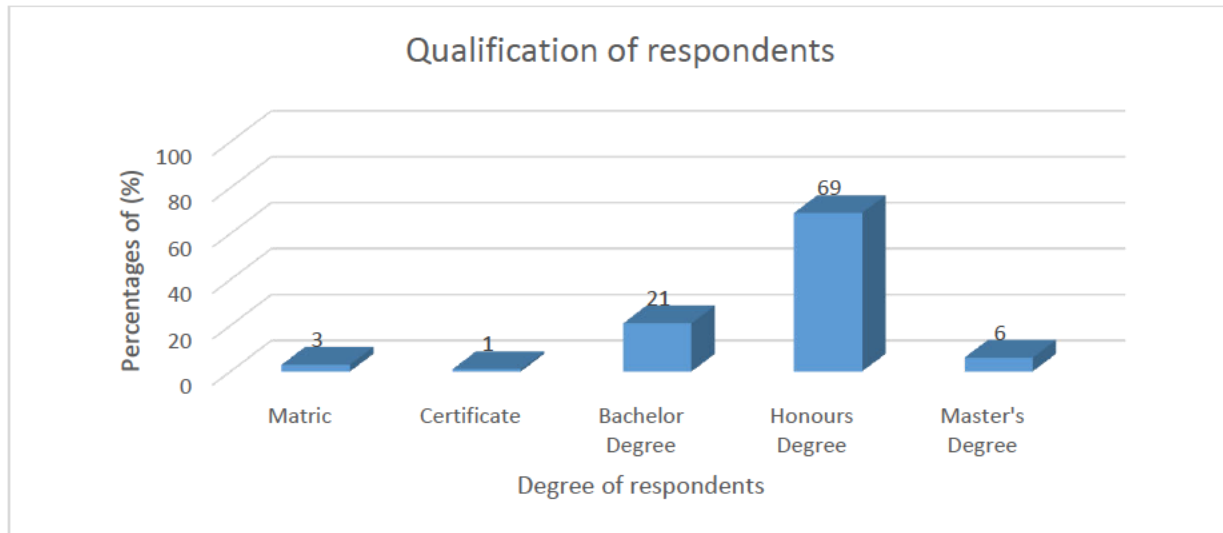
Figure 16 Highest qualifications of the government officials

Figure 16 reflected that the majority of the respondents (69%) had an Honours degree as their highest qualification, 21% of the respondents had a bachelor's degree, and the minority of the respondents had either a Master's degree (6%), a Matric qualification (3%), and lastly, a certificate (1%) as their highest qualification. This implied that most of the employees had adequate knowledge and experience regarding political apathy and voter issues in both countries, which made it evident that whatever decisions they took concerning voting and politics in their countries they did so in an informed way.

6.2.6 Number of years employed at your organisation

Figure 17 highlights the number of years the respondents have worked at their respective ministries in South Africa and Namibia.
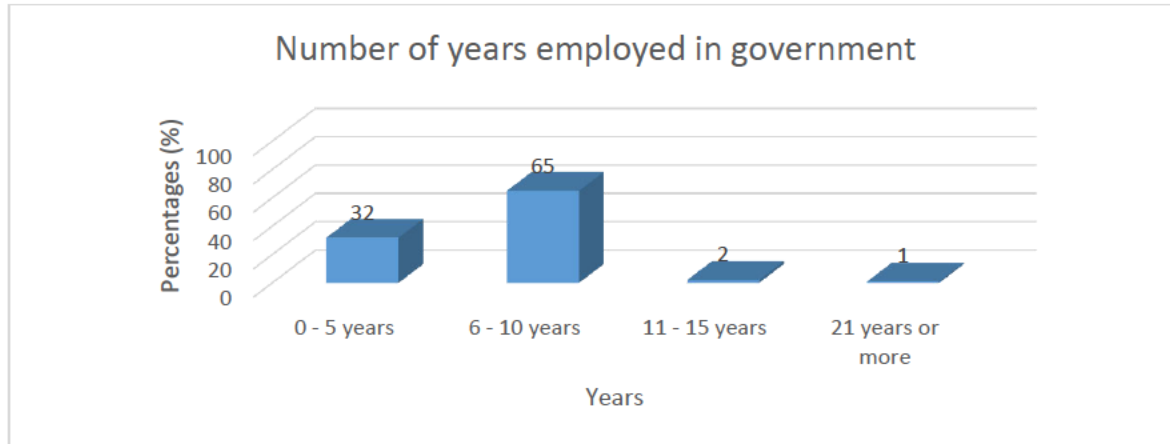
Figure 17 Number of years respondents have been employed by government

Figure 17 reflected that most of the respondents (65%) had worked in the government for between six and ten years; 32% were new to the job, falling in the range between nought and five years; the minority were in the range between 11 and 15 years; and those with 21 years or more experience comprised 2% and 1% respectively. This implied that most of the government officials in South Africa and Namibia had adequate knowledge and experience of the politics in their countries, how youth dealt with politics, and whether they participated in their country's politics or not.

6.2.7 Section respondents work in for government

Figure 18 below indicates the section/department the government officials work in, both in South Africa and Namibia.
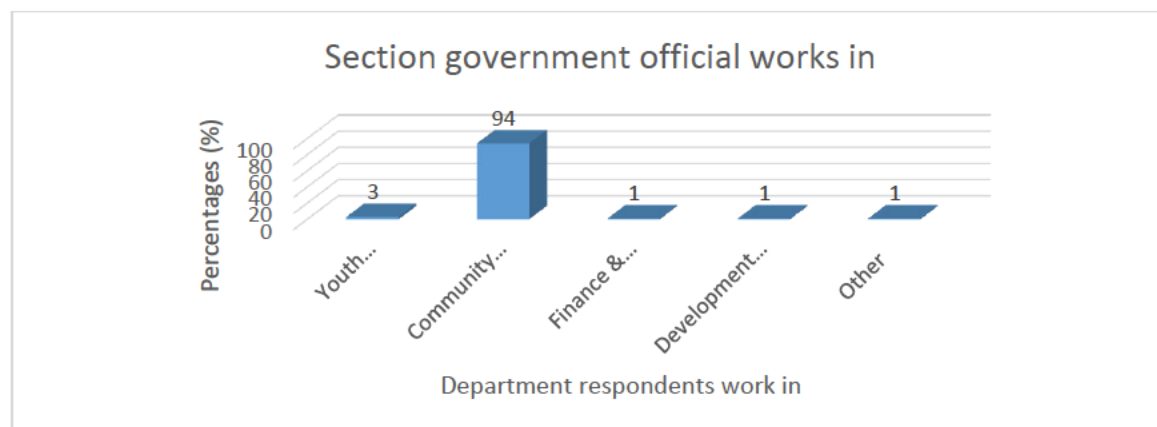
Figure 18 Section government officials work in

Figure 18 above showed that that 94% of the respondents worked in the Community Services section, and the minority (1% respectively) worked in the Finance and Engineering section, Development Services, and other sections in government ministries. This implied that most of the respondents were well versed in youth issues and politics in their communities because they were involved with communities on a daily basis.

Table 5 These tables summarise the responses from the respondents on the electoral systems used in South Africa and Namibia.

Table 522 This table summarises the responses from the respondents on the electoral systems in South Africa.

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
The Electoral System Design Database provides comparative data in both countries.	(7) 6.5%	(76) 71.0%	(0) 0%	(22) 20.6%	(2) 1.9%

The database is the most comprehensive source of information in the election field.	(6) 5.6%	(72) 67.3%	(0) 0%	(29) 27.1%	(0) 0%
Interactive tools, including maps and graphs, allow users to easily compare regions and sub-regions for voting.	(6) 5.6%	(40) 37.4%	(0) 0%	(60) 56.0%	(1) 1.0
A voter education system is used.	(3) 2.8%	(73) 68.1%	(1) 1.0%	(29) 27.1%	(1) 1.0%
Election systems are wildly inconsistent in the distribution of votes.	(3) 2.8%	(41) 38.2%	(1) 1.0%	(61) 57.0%	(1) 1.0%
A plurality system is used, where a majority coalition cannot override the election leader.	(0) 0.0%	(71) 66.3%	(6) 5.6%	(29) 27.1%	(1) 1.0%
Ballot papers are more complex.	(0) 0.0%	(42) 39.2%	(0) 0%	(62) 58.0%	(3) 2.8%
Faithfully translate votes cast into seats won, and thus avoid some destabilization and 'unfairness'.	(2) 1.9%	(71) 66.3%	(1) 1.0%	(30) 28.0%	(3) 2.8%
Leads to greater continuity and stability of policy; makes power-sharing between parties and interest groups more visible.	(1) 1.0%	(43) 40.0%	(0) 0%	(60) 56.2%	(3) 2.8%
Ballot papers are as user friendly as possible for all voters to maximize participation and reduce the number of spoilt ballots.	(1) 1.0%	(73) 68.1%	(0) 0.0%	(33) 30.9%	(0) 0.0%
The system allows for the transferring of ballots to enable voters to accumulate diverse and related interests to win representation.	(1) 1.0%	(43) 40.0%	(0) 0%	(62) 58.0%	(1) 1.0%

Table 5 presented the responses to the statements relating to the electoral systems used in South Africa. The respondents were requested to respond to 11 statements. They were asked to rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = uncertain; 4 = disagree; and 5 = strongly disagree).

Out of the 107 responses received from South African respondents, 78% of them agreed that the electoral system designs databases provided comparative data in South Africa; 73% agreed that databases were the most comprehensive source of information in the election field; 71% agreed that voter education systems were used in South Africa; 69% agreed that the ballot papers were as user friendly as possible for all voters in order to maximise participation and reduce the number of spoilt ballots; 68% of the respondents indicated that faithfulness translates votes cast into seats won, and thus avoids destabilisation and 'unfairness'; and lastly, 66% agreed that the countries used a plurality system where majority coalitions could not override the election leader.

The mere presence of an electoral system does not make a political system democratic. According to the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, voter education programmes begin in public schools across the country, targeting youth aged 15 and older, to encourage new voter registrations (IEC 2019). Voter education is typically focused on a specific election and includes information such as the official date and times; the type of election and an election timetable; the location of voting stations; identification and registration requirements; and the actual voting process (balloting education) (IEC 2021).

A total of 61% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that the ballot papers were complex. Furthermore, 59% disagreed that power-sharing between parties and interest groups did not lead to more visibility, continuity and policy stability in either of the countries; and, that the system did not allow for the transferring of ballots to enable voters to accumulate diverse and related interests to win representation. Moreover, 58% disagreed that the election systems were wildly inconsistent in the distribution of votes and lastly, that interactive tools, including maps and graphs, allowed users to compare regions and sub-regions with ease. Some 5.6% were not sure whether plurality was used, which ensured that majority coalitions could not override the leader in the elections.

Table 623 The table below summarises the responses from the respondents on the electoral systems in Namibia

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
The Electoral System Design Database provides comparative data in both countries.	(7) 7.0%	(71) 71.0%	(0) 0%	(21) 21.0%	(1) 1.0%
The database is the most comprehensive source of information in the election field.	(6) 6.0%	(67) 67.0%	(0) 0%	(27) 27.0%	(0) 0%
Interactive tools, including maps and graphs, allow users to easily compare regions and sub-regions for voting.	(6) 6.0%	(37) 37.0%	(0) 0%	(56) 56.0%	(1) 1.0
A voter education system is used.	(1) 1.0%	(68) 68.0%	(3) 3.0%	(27) 27.0%	(1) 1.0%
Election systems are wildly inconsistent in the distribution of votes.	(3) 3.0%	(38) 38.0%	(1) 1.0%	(57) 57.0%	(1) 1.0%
A plurality system is used, where a majority coalition cannot override the election leader.	(1) 1.0%	(66) 66.0%	(5) 5.0%	(27) 27.0%	(1) 1.0%
Ballot papers are more complex.	(1) 1.0%	(39) 39.0%	(0) 0%	(58) 58.0%	(2) 2.0%
Faithfully translate votes cast into seats won, and thus avoid some destabilization and 'unfairness'.	(1) 1.0%	(67) 67.0%	(1) 1.0%	(28) 28.0%	(3) 3.0%
Leads to greater continuity and stability of policy; makes power-sharing between parties and interest groups more visible.	(1) 1.0%	(40) 40.0%	(0) 0%	(56) 56.0%	(3) 3.0%

Ballot papers are as user friendly as possible for all voters to maximize participation and reduce the number of spoilt ballots.	(0) 0.0%	(69) 69.0%	(0) 0.0%	(30) 30.0%	(1) 1.0%
The system allows for the transferring of ballots to enable voters to accumulate diverse and related interests to win representation.	(1) 1.0%	(40) 40.0%	(0) 0%	(58) 58.0%	(2) 1.0%

Table 6 above presented the responses to the statements relating to the electoral systems used in Namibia. The respondents were requested to respond to 11 statements. They were asked to rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = uncertain; 4 = disagree; and 5 = strongly disagree).

Out of the 100 responses received from the Namibian respondents, 78% of the respondents agreed that the electoral system databases provided comparative data in Namibia; 73% agreed that databases were the most comprehensive source of information in the election field; 69% agreed that voter education systems were used in Namibia and that the ballot papers were as user friendly as possible for all voters to maximise participation and reduce the number of spoilt ballots; 68% of the respondents indicated that faithfulness translated votes cast into seats won, and thus avoided some destabilisation and 'unfairness', and lastly, 67% agreed that the countries used a plurality system where majority coalitions could not override the election leader.

In 2012, the Electoral Commission of Namibia directed a benchmark study to measure the degree of public comprehension of discretionary and popularity-based processes and the viability of its projects (ECN, 2012). This was offered to further develop its community and voter education initiatives, with the view to expand citizen turnout in the 2014 elections. The study estimated the progress of the Electoral Commission of Namibia's voter education goals and targets, zeroing in on the degrees of comprehension of a majority rules government and popularity-based cycles, and public and citizen trust in the discretionary framework. In previous elections, the Electoral Commission of Namibia's

youth commitment exercises were addressed under the sponsorship of its voter education programme. As previously mentioned, the Electoral Commission of Namibia utilized findings from its 2012 benchmark study to shape its way to deal with youth commitment, deciding on long term goals. The Electoral Commission of Namibia coordinated trade fairs with town meetings as an approach to expanding its reach. Trade exhibitions have a high turnout in Namibia and the Electoral Commission of Namibia had the option to address youth focused on municipal and citizen education training at these events.

Returning to the findings, 60% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that the ballot papers were more complex. Furthermore, 59% disagreed that power-sharing between parties and interest groups did not lead to more visibility, continuity and policy stability in either of the countries; and, that the system did not allow for the transferring of ballots to enable voters to accumulate diverse and related interests to win representation. Moreover, 58% disagreed that the election systems were wildly inconsistent in the distribution of votes, and lastly, that interactive tools, including maps and graphs, allowed users to compare regions and sub-regions with ease. Some 5% were not sure whether plurality was used, which ensured that majority coalitions could not override the leader in the elections.

Table 6.1 These tables summarise the responses related to factors shaping and defining voter apathy and support in South Africa and Namibia.

Table 724 This table below summarises the responses from related to factors shaping and defining voter apathy and support in South Africa.

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
Government faces criticism from the population	(3) 2.8%	(72) 67.3%	(2) 1.9%	(30) 28.0%	(0) 0%
Government experiences poor participation in political activities	(4) 3.7%	(66) 61.7%	(2) 1.9%	(35) 32.7%	(0) 0%
Low levels of trust in government	(3) 2.8%	(62) 58.2%	(2) 1.9%	(40) 37.1%	(0) 0%
Belief that women have no knowledge of politics	(3) 2.8%	(65) 60.7%	(2) 1.9%	(37) 34.6%	(0) 0.0%
Unemployment	(3) 2.8%	(62) 58.2%	(2) 1.9%	(40) 37.1%	(0) 0.0%
Government experience challenges of land issues	(0) 0.0%	(68) 63.6%	(2) 1.9%	(36) 33.5%	(1) 1.0%
Poor education	(3) 2.8%	(47) 43.9%	(2) 1.9%	(55) 51.4%	(0) 0%
Poor infrastructure and service delivery	(4) 3.7%	(66) 61.8%	(1) 1.0%	(36) 33.5%	(0) 0.0%
Corruption and malfeasance	(3) 2.8%	(62) 58.2%	(2) 1.9%	(40) 37.1%	(0) 0%

Election policy is clear enough for everyone to understand	(3) 2.8%	(66) 61.8%	(2) 1.9%	(36) 33.5%	(0) 0%
Religious reasons hamper young women from participating in elections	(1) 1.0%	(47) 43.9%	(3) 2.8%	(56) 52.3%	(0) 0%
Social media attracts the youth to vote in elections	(2) 1.9%	(66) 61.7%	(2) 1.9%	(36) 33.5%	(1) 1.0%
There is compliance to law and policies	(3) 2.8%	(47) 43.9%	(2) 1.9%	(55) 51.4%	(0) 0.0%
Fear of threats in voting	(2) 1.9%	(68) 63.6%	(1) 1.0%	(36) 33.5%	(0) 0.0%

Table 7 presented the responses to the statements relating to factors shaping and defining voter apathy and voter support in South Africa. The respondents were requested to respond to 14 statements, rating each item on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = uncertain; 4 = disagree; and 5 = strongly disagree).

Out of the 107 responses received from the respondents from South Africa, 70% of them agreed that the government faced criticism from the population in both countries; 66% agreed that there was poor infrastructure and service delivery in South Africa, and that there was a fear of threats against participants in the voting process; 65% of the respondents indicated that government experienced poor participation in public activities and that the election policy was clear enough for everyone to understand; 64% agreed that there was a belief that women had no knowledge of politics, that the government experienced challenges relating to land in South Africa, and that social media attracted the youth to participate and vote in elections; lastly, 61% agreed that there was low levels of trust in the government, that there was high unemployment and that there was increased corruption and malfeasance in the government in South Africa.

According to Adriaansen, Van Praag and De Vreese (2010), some potential voters may not understand politics, so they argue they have no reason to become involved. Some may simply opt out as they have no faith or trust that the government will listen to them (Nickerson and Rogers 2010). News content could however reduce political cynicism. Other studies have found that political cynicism may increase a respondent's likelihood to vote because cynicism does not lead to apathy, but instead to critical thinking about politics (Fu, Jalette, Miller and Mou 2011).

A total of 52% of the respondents disagreed that religious reasons prevented young women from participating in elections and 51% of them disagreed that there was poor levels of education and that there was compliance to laws and policies in South Africa. Moreover, 2.8% of the respondents were uncertain whether religious reasons prevented young women from participating in elections.

According to Tracey (2014:1), South Africa's youth is often seen as a "lost generation"; one with no causes or political purpose, an apathetic generation. Some, however, have opted out of democratic processes such as elections due to the lack of interest by the ruling elite to respond to their interests and needs. Promises of a brighter future are weighed against the lived realities of elevated levels of unemployment, poverty and inequality.

As young people make up such a sizeable proportion of voters in South Africa, understanding their sentiments on voting could provide insights into the way they feel about democratic participation. Studies conducted by YouthLab and the Institute of Security Studies found that the most pressing issues for the youth, which might inform their decisions on whether to vote, were unemployment, free and quality education, corruption, crime, and drug use (YouthLab 2019).

Levels of poverty and unemployment are high among young people and limited opportunities are available for young people, especially young black South Africans. Young people also feel that the government takes them for granted and only needs them when they need their votes. According to Statistics South Africa (2021), the youth

unemployment rate stands at 46.3%, which highlights the dilemma the country is facing when it comes to the youth.

In Namibia, according to Shanghala (2013), the following is required: compliance to law and policies; peace and order should always prevail during elections; and refraining from instigating, participating and being involved in any conduct that might infringe upon any other voter's right to participate in elections, without fear or favour. A study found that subjects primed with fear spent more time seeking information on the web before a hypothetical voting exercise than those primed with anger (Groenendyk 2011).

According to the Department of Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation (2021:4), public trust in South African state institutions has remained below 50%, with only the SABC increasing from 51% to 58%. However, trust in the national government has remained higher in South Africa than in the provincial and local government spheres.

 Mac-Ikemenjima (2017) analysed the connection between fear of violence and youth voter turnout in Sub-Saharan Africa, showing that the relationship is negative. Bekoe and Burchard (2017) indicated that, on aggregate, pre-election violence had no major influence on voter turnout, but violence might be used to lower participation, to assemble supporters, or to chastise election winners. Moreover, electoral malpractices such as violence and rigging have been argued to be relevant in the waning of trust in the electoral process in a number of countries (Nwankwo et al. 2017; Nwankwo and Okafor 2017). Thus, it could be inferred that people of a higher socio-economic status might not support political violence and, because there were low levels of pre-election or electoral violence, their rate of turnout increased.

Social media is the most influential factor in the political realm in various countries (Effing, Van Hillegersberg and Huibers 2011). It is positively associated with citizens' political participation. It is also essential for spreading news and related information. Moreover, news exposure is significantly related to political knowledge and discussions on social media influence political participation (Trepte and Schmitt 2017).

According to Kahne and Middaugh (2012:55), "Social media is a phenomenon that could dramatically change how, and how many young people participate civically, including voting". Youth consider engagement in participatory politics by engaging in activities such as status updates, tweets, sharing and posting comments; these are ways to become involved in politics (Potter 2012). Social media also makes young people indifferent to racial and ethnic issues when discussing issues with other people. They also strive to stay connected with others, in general, and their group, in particular, through social media (Kahne and Middaugh 2012). However, other studies have indicated that young people reported that they interacted online only with those whose views aligned with their own (Kahne, Lee and Feezell 2011:20).

In a survey conducted by Booysen (2015) in South Africa, multiple barriers were found that affected political parties' usage of social media. These barriers affected the choice of social media and the extent to which political parties would rely on social media in their future operations. The most notable barriers were related to national infrastructure (signal unavailability in outlying areas), and modest access to smartphones (due largely to poverty and unemployment).

Table 825 The table below summarises the responses related to factors shaping and defining voter apathy and support in Namibia.

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
Government faces criticism from the population	(2) 2.0%	(67) 67.0%	(2) 2.0%	(29) 29.0%	(0) 0%
Government experiences poor participation in political activities	(4) 4.0%	(62) 62.0%	(2) 2.0%	(32) 32.0%	(0) 0%
Low levels of trust in government	(2) 2.0%	(52) 52.0%	(2) 2.0%	(44) 44.0%	(0) 0%

Belief that women have no knowledge of politics	(2) 2.0%	(60) 60.0%	(2) 2.0%	(34) 34.0%	(2) 2.0%
Unemployment	(1) 1.0%	(52) 52.0%	(2) 2.0%	(43) 43%	(2) 2.0%
Government experience challenges of land issues	(1) 1.0%	(64) 64.0%	(0) 0.0%	(33) 33.0%	(2) 2.0%
Poor education	(3) 3.0%	(45) 45.0%	(0) 0.0%	(52) 52.0%	(0) 0%
Poor infrastructure and service delivery	(5) 5.0%	(62) 62.0%	(0) 0.0%	(33) 33.0%	(0) 0.0%
Corruption and malfeasance	(5) 5.0%	(52) 52.0%	(0) 0.0%	(43) 43.0%	(0) 0%
Election policy is clear enough for everyone to understand	(5) 5.0%	(62) 62.0%	(0) 0.0%	(33) 33.0%	(0) 0%
Religious reasons hamper young women from participating in elections	(3) 3.0%	(43) 43.0%	(2) 2.0%	(52) 52.0%	(0) 0%
Social media attracts the youth to vote in elections	(3) 3.0%	(60) 60.0%	(3) 3.0%	(32) 32.0%	(2) 2.0%
There is compliance to law and policies	(2) 2.0%	(42) 42.0%	(2) 2.0%	(52) 52.0%	(2) 2.0%
Fear of threats in voting	(2) 2.0%	(62) 62.0%	(2) 2.0%	(32) 32.0%	(2) 2.0%

Table 8 above presented the responses to the statements relating to factors shaping and defining voter apathy and voter support in Namibia. The respondents were requested to respond to 14 statements by rating each item on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = uncertain; 4 = disagree; and 5 = strongly disagree).

Out of the 100 responses received, 69% of the respondents agreed that the government faced criticism from the population in Namibia; 67% agreed that there was poor infrastructure and service delivery and that the election policy was clear enough for everyone to understand in Namibia; 66% agreed that the government experienced poor participation in political activities and also that there were low levels of trust in the government in Namibia; 65% agreed that there were challenges related to land in Namibia; 64% agreed that there were fears of threats among voters; 63% indicated that social media could attract the youth to participate in the voting process; 62% of the respondents indicated that there was a belief that women had no knowledge of politics; and 53% indicated that there were unemployment issues in Namibia that needed to be addressed.

According to Adriaansen et al. (2010), some potential voters may not understand politics, so they believe that they have no reason to become involved. Others may simply opt out as they have no faith or trust that the government will listen to them (Nickerson and Rogers 2010). News content could however reduce political cynicism.

A total of 54% of the respondents disagreed that there was compliance to laws and policies in Namibia; while 52% disagreed that there were poor education levels and that religious reasons prevented young women from participating in elections.

According to the African Peer Review Mechanism of 2018, the youth unemployment rate stood at 46.1% in Namibia (as reported by the Labour Force Survey in 2018), of whom the majority were females. Furthermore, corruption was indicated to be the most problematic issue for the country, as it had deprived Namibia from the means to develop a vibrant economic base. Moreover, a fund which had been meant for developmental projects in Namibia had been misappropriated, embezzled and/or stashed away in individual banking accounts (African Peer Review Mechanism 2018)

According to the Report of the Commonwealth Expert Team (2014), youth in Namibia seemed to be proactively involved in political and electoral issues, both during the campaign period and on election day. For example, the leader of the South-West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) Youth League spearheaded an unprecedented yet

illegal land repossession campaign on the outskirts of the city of Windhoek, citing corruption related to land distribution, which affected the prospects of allocation of land to the youth who comprise the majority of the country's voting population. Although the authorities moved swiftly to thwart this campaign, the land issue was brought to the centre of the campaign issues because of the youth activity. Consulted stakeholders indicated that the actions of the SWAPO Youth League leader were a sign of general frustration, which the young working class felt and, therefore, it resonated well with young people. Thus, the land issue had a huge influence on the way in which young people viewed elections.

Table 926 This table below summarises the responses from the respondents relating to how the South African government responds to youth apathy during elections.

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
Voter education programmes provided by the government increase young people's interest in elections	(5) 2.4%	(132) 63.8%	(7) 3.4%	(61) 29.5%	(2) 1.0%
Government encourages the youth to vote	(3) 1.4%	(64) 30.9%	(5) 2.4%	(133) 64.3%	(2) 1.0%
Government improved living standards	(1) 0.5%	(135) 65.2%	(2) 1.0%	(62) 30.0%	(7) 3.4%
Youth are allowed to influence decision making in voting	(1) 0.5%	(61) 29.5%	(2) 1.0%	(135) 65.2%	(8) 3.9%
The youth are too lazy to study	(1) 0.5%	(135) 65.2%	(0) 0%	(69) 33.3%	(2) 1.0%
The level of education among the youth is very low	(3) 1.4%	(64) 30.9%	(1) 0.5%	(136) 65.7%	(3) 1.4%

The curriculum in schools does not include politics	(3) 1.4%	(138) 66.7%	(0) 0%	(61) 29.5%	(5) 2.4%

Table 9 presented the responses to the statements relating to how South Africa responded to youth apathy during elections. The respondents were requested to respond to seven statements in this regard. They were asked to rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = uncertain; 4 = disagree; and 5 = strongly disagree).

Out of the 207 responses received, 68% of the respondents agreed that the curriculum in schools did not include politics; and 66% agreed that voter education programmes provided by the government increased young people's interest in elections; also, that the government improved living standards; and lastly, that the youth were too lazy to study. Education, for example, has shown to have an important and positive influence on youth voter turnout (Howe 2006:137), as well as protest activities. More educated people may be able to better process complex political information (Dalton 2008:2) and possess a greater sense of citizen responsibility (Anderson 2007:271). Some empirical research however suggests that education's impact is clearer in some countries than in others (Goldstone 2010:31).

In 2012, ECN conducted a baseline survey to measure the level of public understanding of electoral and democratic processes and the effectiveness of its programmes (ECN 2012). This was in a bid to improve its civic and voter education initiatives, with the view of increasing voter turnout for the 2014 elections. The survey measured the following:

- the success of ECN's voter education aims and objectives, focusing on the levels of understanding of democracy and democratic processes,
- public and voter confidence in the electoral system,
- perceived violations of the electoral laws,
- turnout in national, regional and local elections,
- communication approaches to voter education; stakeholders' satisfaction with electoral service delivery,
- gender mainstreaming and people with disabilities in electoral processes,

- youth involvement, and
- the effectiveness and the efficiency of the legal framework (ECN 2012).

During previous elections, ECN's childhood commitment exercises were directed under its voter education programmes. As mentioned, ECN utilised findings from its 2012 benchmark study to plan how to deal with youth commitment, deciding on long-term exercises rather than specific ones. This way to deal with discretionary programming, where groups look past the basic event, is called the Electoral Cycle Approach. It partitions the discretionary interaction into three fundamental periods: the pre-constituent time frame, the appointive period, and the post-election time frame. The methodology regards decisions as persistent cycles, as opposed to disconnected occasions, and interventions are custom made before elections are held. Subsequently, the ECN coordinated trade fairs with town gatherings as an approach to expanding its reach. These trade fairs have a high turnout in Namibia and the ECN had the option to direct youth allocated community and voter education exercises at these events. Furthermore, artists were enlisted to perform at these shows to draw in more youth to urge them to cast their ballot.

Even though there is no curriculum that addresses politics in schools in both countries, there are school political organisations for learners, such as the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) and the Namibia National Students Organisation (NANSO), which are the main pillars that engage in political matters for learners in schools. According to the Liliesleaf Museum (2020), the role of youth in politics cannot be overstated because youth structures saw the likes of Steven Bantu Biko emerge through the emergence of the South African Students' Organisation (SASO) to fill the youth movement gap in the 1960s.

Students were looking for a new movement after SASO was banned in 1977. In the late 1970s, numerous local youth groups were formed that were affiliated with powerful and openly political national structures such as the South African National Students Congress (SANSCO) and the Azanian Students Organisation (AZAPO). Many youth organisations joined the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), the national high school student

organisation. COSAS played a significant role in mobilising young people in the 1980s (Liliesleaf Museum 2020).

Returning to the finding in Table 6.3 above, 69% of the respondents disagreed that youth were allowed to influence decision making in voting; 67% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that the level of education among the youth was very low; and 65% disagreed that the government encouraged youth to vote.

Turning to the 2021 municipal elections in South Africa, the trend of low and declining voter turnout among young and first-time voters continued. Ninety percent of the 1.8 million 18- to 19-year-olds who were eligible to vote in the election did not register. Similarly, less than 20% of the population aged 20 to 35 registered to vote, compared to more than 90% of the population aged 40 (Bekker and Runciman 2022:1). Furthermore, the government and political parties did not encourage the youth to take part in the voting process because of such issues, as highlighted below by Chauke (2020:45):

> As a youth, we are the most important constituency during the election period, the politician wants us to vote for them so we can guarantee them success and strategic positions. Come the time of deployment we as youth we are excluded. Therefore, I rather stay home and not vote for such people who dare walk.

Moreover, various sectors have urged the government to invest in the youth and give them positions of responsibility, but politics in South Africa remains an old-age requirement. According to the community youth development theory, South Africa's electoral system must empower young people through the legislature to hold leadership positions in the political space (Chauke 2020:45). Even though young people are the most important constituency in the eyes of many South African political parties, they remain unrepresented, and youth participation in electoral and democratic processes appears to be on the decline (Chauke 2020:45).

Back and Westholm (2011) state that there are many ways to participate in political and electoral processes, including the following:

- voting, where people use their vote to choose what candidate or party they want to make decisions for them in parliament;

- campaigning, which involves many different types of activities;

- demonstrating, sending letters and emails, media campaigns, visiting MSPs, sending petitions.

- signing petitions, where people sign petitions to show how strongly they feel about an issue and try to influence decision makers;

- participating in a political party, where political parties seek to become the government; and

- becoming involved in a pressure group that aims to change policy (but does not want to become the government), focuses on a particular area or areas of concern, and seeks to influence decision makers.

Table 1027 The table below summarises the responses from the respondents on the new perspectives in the context of youth political participation within electoral processes within the African continent and its impact on democracy.

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
More youth are knowledgeable on politics	(1) 0.5%	(131) 63.3%	(0) 0%	(74) 35.7%	(1) 0.5%
Young men are more educated than young women	(1) 0.5%	(75) 36.2%	(0) 0%	(130) 62.8%	(1) 0.5%
Women, minorities and younger citizens have slowly gained recognition of their rights	(1) 0.5%	(133) 64.3%	(0) 0%	(71) 34.3%	(2) 1.0%

Becoming involved in a pressure group	(1) 0.5%	(81) 39.1%	(5) 2.4%	(120) 58.0%	(0) 0%
Red tape and unproductive 'talk shops'	(3) 1.4%	(128) 61.8%	(4) 1.9%	(72) 34.8%	(0) 0%
Improved living standards	(1) 0.5%	(72) 37.2%	(1) 0.5%	(121) 58.5%	(7) 3.4%
Influencing decision makers	(4) 1.9%	(123) 59.4%	(0) 0%	(73) 35.3%	(7) 3.4%

Table 10 above presented the responses to the statements relating to the new perspectives in the context of youth political participation within electoral processes on the African continent and its impact on democracy. The respondents were requested to respond to seven statements in that regard. They were asked to rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = uncertain; 4 = disagree; and 5 = strongly disagree).

Of the 207 responses received, 65% of the respondents agreed that women, minorities and younger citizens had slowly gained recognition of their rights; 64% conceded that more youth were knowledgeable on politics; 63% agreed that red tape and unproductive 'talk shops' were the order of the day in politics both in South Africa and Namibia; and lastly, 61% agreed that there was influencing of decision makers when it came to politics in both countries. In this regard it should be noted that opportunities for youth to engage in governance and participate in political and decision-making processes depends largely on the political, socio-economic and cultural contexts, where social norms in many parts of the world result in multiple forms of discrimination against young people.

Moreover, 63% of the respondents disagreed that young men were more educated than young women; 62% did not agree that the politics in both counties had improved the living standards of the youth; and 58% disagreed that youth were becoming more involved in pressure groups in the political cycles of their respective countries.

6.3 Part 2: Responses of youth of political parties represented in the South African and Namibian parliaments

This section provides demographic information and statements that provide information on electoral systems in South Africa and Namibia; factors shaping and defining voter apathy and support; the response of the South African government to youth apathy during elections; and the theoretical perspectives in the context of youth political participation in electoral processes from youth in South Africa and in Namibia.

6.3.1 Response rate

The total number of questionnaires distributed to respondents was 306. The questionnaires were administered to South African and Namibian government officials. Out of the 306 questionnaires distributed, 207 were completed and returned, which is a 68% response rate by the government officials in South Africa and Namibia.

6.3.2 Gender of respondents

Figure 19 below indicates the gender of the youth who represented political parties in the South African and the Namibian parliaments.

Gender of respondents

56   44
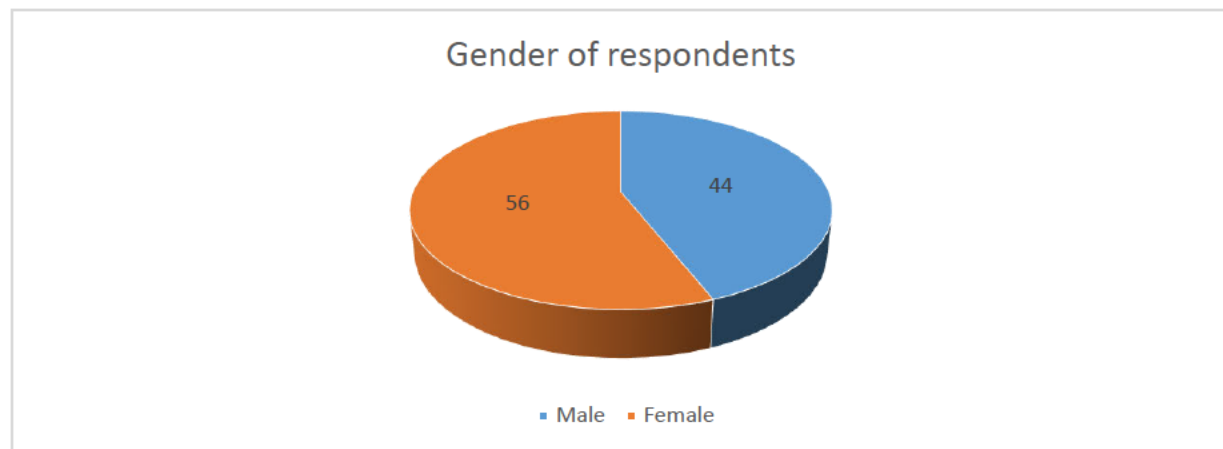
■ Male   ■ Female

Figure 19 Gender of respondents

Figure 19 above indicates the gender of the respondents – 56% were females and 44% were males. This implied that there were more female youth representing their parties than males in South Africa and Namibia. This could be substantiated by the voters registered in both countries, as globally there are more females than males. Furthermore, according to the website of the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, there

were more females registered to vote in South Africa than males, at 55% and 45% respectively (Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa 2021).

Turning to Namibia, it has been making slow progress in attaining the desired gender parity. Women representation in the National Assembly increased slightly from 26.4% in 1999 to 27.3% in 2004, which gradually increased to 32%, because of vacancies that arose from time to time due to death and voluntary retirements. This dropped to 22.2% in the National Assembly in March 2010. Only two parties had women legislators in their ranks, those being the governing Swapo Party, with 20.8% women representation, and the Rally for Democracy and Progress (RDP), which had one woman (or 12.5%) among its eight elected legislators. This situation could be attributed to the poor showing of other parties, in particular the CoD, which attained a 50/50 gender representation in its ranks (*Windhoek Observer* 16 October 2009; *New Era* 15 October 2009; Kaapama 2008). Hence, despite the public pretence of the various parties regarding their commitment to gender equality and/or the inclusion of women candidates on their respective lists, women continued to be victims of glass ceilings as the balance of power within the various political parties were tilted in favour of men.

6.3.3 Age groups of respondents

Figure 20 below indicates the age groups of the respondents from the youth of the political parties represented in both the South African and the Namibian parliaments.
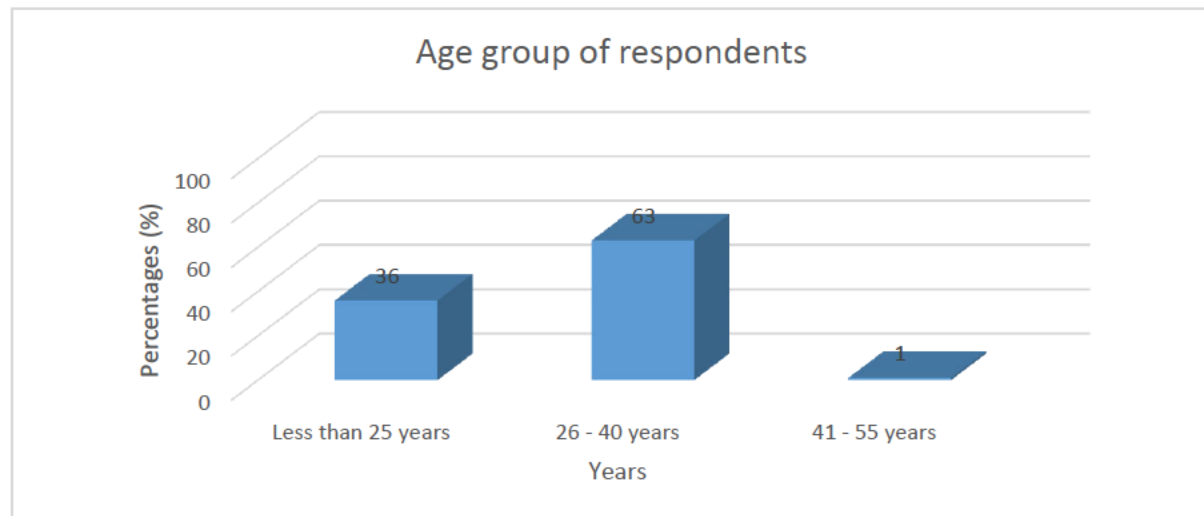
Figure 20 Age groups of respondents

Figure 20 indicated that the majority of the respondents were in the age group 26 to 40 years; those younger than 25 years old stood at 63% and 36% respectively; and the minority were in the older age group of 41 to 55 years with 1%. The figure above also showed that the youth of political parties, represented in both countries' parliaments, was young. Consequently, this makes for a good observation as it indicated that the two countries' majority participants in politics were young people or youth. According to Statistics South Africa, youth is defined as the people in the age group between 15 and 34 years (Statistics South Africa 2021). The voters' roll of South Africa indicated that people in the age group 20 to 39 years were the majority (43%) of those registered in the country (Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa 2021). In Namibia, young people find elections exciting, and participation is very high. This was confirmed in a 2014 report presented by the Namibia Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC), which revealed that nearly all eligible voters – about half of the population of 2.3 million – had registered to vote. Of these, almost half were under the age of 35 years, which meant that approximately 1.15 million youth out of the total Namibian population wanted to

participate in the elections. According to Tjiehenuna (*The Namibian* 4 April 2014:2), the turnout of young people in Namibia was satisfactory during the 2014 national elections' registration; their 85% participation was the highest since Namibian independence.

6.3.4 Job status of respondents

Figure 21 below illustrates the job status of the youth of political parties represented in both the South African and the Namibian parliaments.
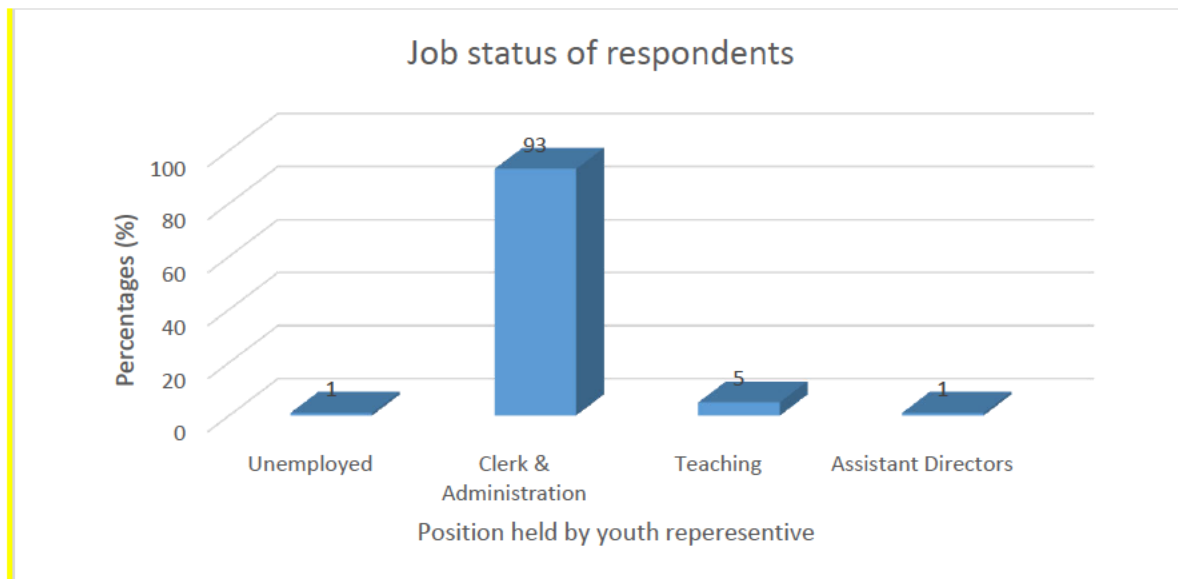
Figure 21 Job status of political party representatives in parliament

Figure 21 reflected that the majority of the respondents (93%) who completed the questionnaires were clerks and administrative staff in the respective ministries or departments; only a handful were teaching officials (5%); and the minority were unemployed and Assistant Directors, with 1% respectively. This implied that most employees in these ministries were clerks and administrators, without any managerial powers.

6.3.5 Highest qualification of respondents

Figure 22 below highlights the highest qualification of the youth of political parties represented in both the South African and the Namibian parliaments.
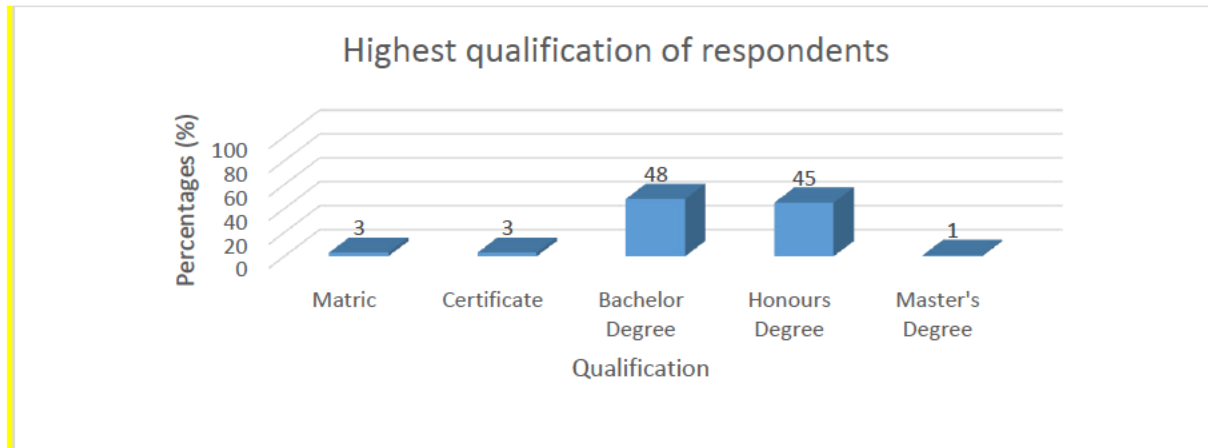
Figure 22 Highest qualifications of the political party representatives in parliament

Figure 22 reflected that the majority of the respondents (48%) held a bachelor's degree as their highest qualification; 45% of the respondents had an honours degree; and the minority of the respondents had either a matric certificate (3%), a certificate (3%), and lastly, a Master's degree (1%) as their highest qualification. This implied that the majority of youth party political party representative had some sort of educational training; the majority, as a result, would be able to make informed decisions when it came to voting and influencing voter decisions.

6.3.6 Number of years employed at the organisation

Figure 23 below highlights the number of years the respondents have worked at their respective ministries in South Africa and Namibia.
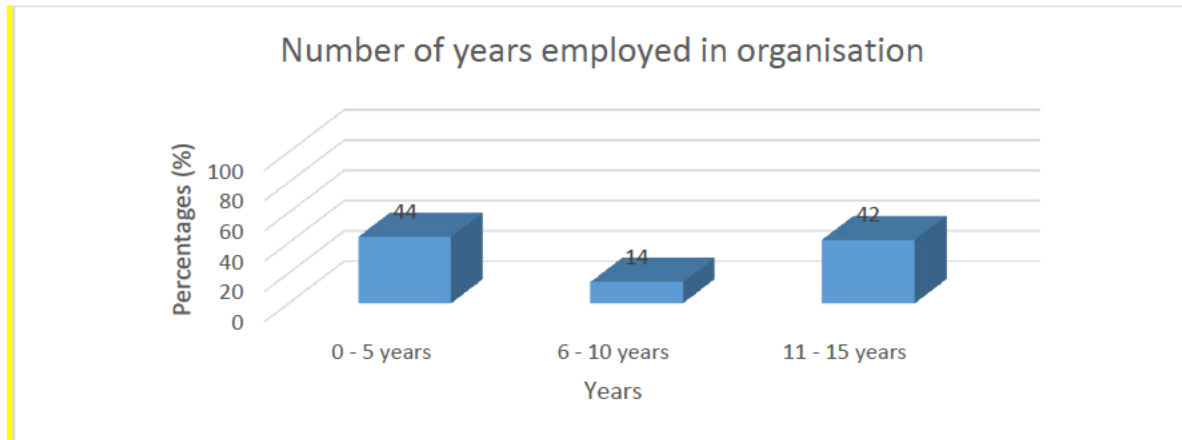
Figure 23 Number of years political party representatives have been working in parliament

Figure 23 indicated that most of the respondents (44%) had worked in their organisation from nought to five years; 42% had been with their organisations between 11 and 15 years; and those who had been at their organisations for 21 years or more were 2% and 1% respectively. This implied that the majority of the youth who represented political parties in the South African and Namibian parliaments were fairly new entrants, but there were also a high number who fell in the 'between 11 and 15 years category', which meant that they had adequate experience in party politics in both countries.

6.3.7 Section respondents work in for government

Figure 24 below highlights the section that the political party representatives work in for the South African and the Namibian government.
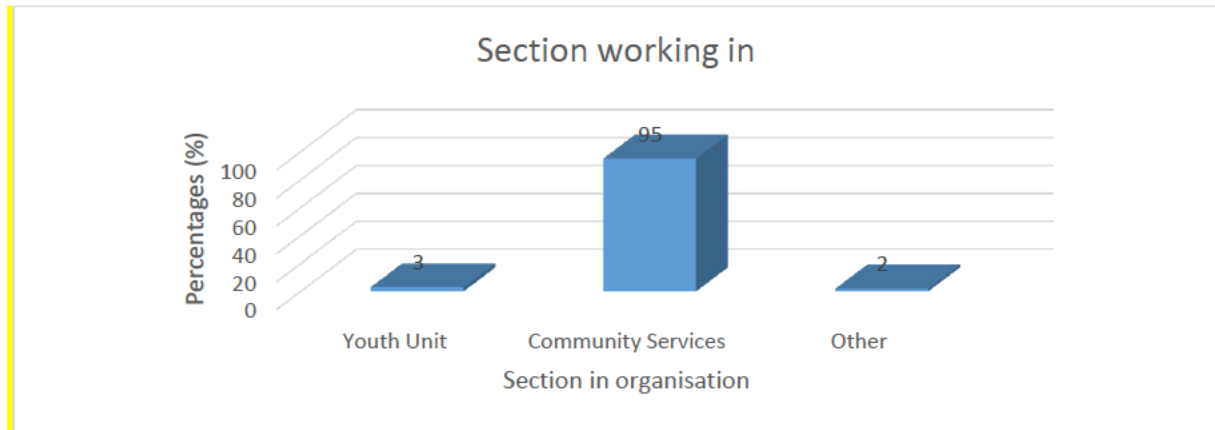
Figure 24 Section the political party representatives work in parliament

Figure 24 indicated that 95% of the respondents worked in the Community Services section, while 3% worked in the Youth Unit, and 2% in the other sections in their respective parliaments. This implied that most of the respondents were well versed in youth issues and politics in their communities because they were involved with communities on a daily basis.

Table 6.2 These tables summarise the responses, on the electoral systems used in South Africa and Namibia, by the youth who are political party representatives (n=207).

Table 1128 The below table summarises the responses, on the electoral systems used in South Africa, by the youth who are political party representatives.

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
The Electoral System Design Database provides comparative data in both countries	(5) 4.7%	(78) 72.9%	(3) 2.8%	(21) 19.6%	(0) 0.0%
A database is the most comprehensive source of information in the elections field	(5) 4.7%	(30) 28.0%	(3) 2.8%	(69) 64.5%	(0) 0%
Interactive tools, including maps and graphs, allow users to easily compare regions and sub-regions for voting	(5) 4.7%	(80) 74.7%	(1) 1.0%	(21) 19.6%	(0) 0%
A voter education system is used	(0) 0.0%	(35) 32.7%	(0) 0.0%	(72) 67.3%	(0) 0.0%
The election system is wildly inconsistent in the distribution of votes	(5) 4.7%	(80) 74.7%	(1) 1.0%	(21) 19.6%	(0) 0%
A plurality system, where a majority coalition cannot override the election leader, is used	(0) 0.0%	(35) 32.7%	(0) 0.0%	(72) 67.3%	(0) 0%
Ballot papers are more complex	(5) 4.7%	(80) 74.7%	(1) 1.0%	(21) 19.6%	(0) 0.0%

Faithfully translates votes cast into seats won, and thus avoids destabilisation and 'unfairness'	(1) 1.0%	(32) 29.8%	(2) 1.9%	(72) 67.3%	(0) 0.0%
Leads to greater continuity and stability of policy. Makes power-sharing between parties and interest groups more visible	(2) 1.9%	(80) 74.8%	(0) 0.0%	(22) 20.5%	(3) 2.8%
Ballot papers are as user friendly as possible for all voters to maximize participation and reduce the number of spoilt ballots	(1) 1.0%	(57) 53.2%	(1) 1.0%	(48) 44.8%	(0) 0.0%
The system allows for the transferring of ballots to enable voters to accumulate diverse and related interests to win representation	(3) 2.8%	(78) 72.9%	(0) 0.0%	(25) 23.3%	(1) 1.0%

Table 11 above presented the responses to the statements relating to the electoral systems used in South Africa for the youth political party representatives in parliament. The respondents were requested to respond to 11 items. They were asked to rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = uncertain; 4 = disagree; and 5 = strongly disagree).

Out of the 107 responses received, 79% of the respondents agreed that the interactive tools, including maps and graphs, allowed users to easily compare regions and sub-regions for voting and that elections systems were wildly inconsistent in the distribution of votes and that ballot papers were too complex for the voters to understand; 78% agreed that the electoral system designed databases provided comparative data in South Africa; 77% agreed that the electoral systems led to greater continuity and stability of policies, whilst making power-sharing between parties and interest groups more visible; and 76% agreed that the system allowed for the transferring of ballots to enable voters to accumulate diverse and related interests to win representation. However, it should be said that the mere presence of an electoral system does not necessarily make a political system democratic.

Returning to the findings, 67% of the respondents disagreed that voter education systems were used effectively, that a plurality system where a majority coalition could not override the election leader was used and, lastly, disagreed with the statement that votes cast were faithfully translated into seats won and thus avoided destabilisation and unfairness.

Referring to voter education (mentioned in the previous paragraph), it is typically focused on a specific election and includes information such as the official date and times; the type of election and an election timetable; the location of voting stations; identification and registration requirements; and the actual voting process (balloting education) (IEC, 2021). As a result, initiatives such as the Schools Democracy Programme (SDP) addressed the profound challenge of increasing youth voting and fostering a voting culture among youth (IEC, 2021)

Table 1229 The table below summarises the responses from the respondents, on the electoral systems used in Namibia, of the youth who are political parties' representatives.

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
The Electoral System Design Database provides comparative data in both countries	(3) 3.0%	(72) 72.0%	(3) 3.0%	(19) 19.0%	(3) 3.0%
A database is the most comprehensive source of information in the elections field	(4) 4.0%	(28) 28.0%	(4) 4.0%	(64) 64.0%	(0) 0%
Interactive tools, including maps and graphs, allow users to easily compare regions and sub-regions for voting	(3) 3.0%	(74) 74.0%	(4) 4.0%	(19) 19.0%	(0) 0%
A voter education system is used	(3) 3.0%	(30) 30.0%	(0) 0.0%	(67) 67.0%	(0) 0.0%

Statement					
The election system is wildly inconsistent in the distribution of votes	(3) 3.0%	(74) 74.0%	(4) 4.0%	(19) 19.0%	(0) 0%
A plurality system, where a majority coalition cannot override the election leader, is used	(2) 2.0%	(29) 29.0%	(2) 2.0%	(67) 67.0%	(0) 0%
Ballot papers are more complex	(2) 2.0%	(73) 73.0%	(3) 3.0%	(19) 19.0%	(3) 3.0%
Faithfully translates votes cast into seats won, and thus avoids destabilisation and 'unfairness'	(1) 1.0%	(29) 29.0%	(2) 2.0%	(67) 67.0%	(1) 1.0%
Leads to greater continuity and stability of policy. Makes power-sharing between parties and interest groups more visible	(1) 1.0%	(75) 75.0%	(1) 1.0%	(20) 20.0%	(3) 3.0%
Ballot papers are as user friendly as possible for all voters to maximize participation and reduce the number of spoilt ballots	(1) 1.0%	(53) 53.0%	(1) 1.0%	(44) 44.0%	(1) 1.0%
The system allows for the transferring of ballots to enable voters to accumulate diverse and related interests to win representation	(1) 1.0%	(72) 72.0%	(1) 1.0%	(24) 24.0%	(2) 2.0%

In Table 12 above the responses to the statements relating to the electoral systems used in Namibia for the youth political party representatives in parliament are presented. The respondents were requested to respond to 11 statements. They were asked to rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = uncertain; 4 = disagree; and 5 = strongly disagree).

Out of the 100 responses received, 80% of the respondents agreed that the interactive tools, including maps and graphs, allowed users to easily compare regions and sub-regions for voting; 77% agreed the elections system was wildly inconsistent in the distribution of votes; 76% of the respondents agreed that the electoral systems led to greater continuity and stability of policies and made power-sharing between parties and interest groups more visible; 75% agreed that the electoral system designed databases provided comparative data and also that ballot papers were complex; 73% agreed that the system allowed for the transferring of ballots to enable voters to accumulate diverse and related interests to win representation.

However, the mere presence of an electoral system did not necessarily make a political system democratic. In 2012, the ECN directed a benchmark overview to quantify the degree of public comprehension of discretionary and popularity-based processes and the viability of its projects (ECN 2012). This was in an effort to further develop its municipal and elector schooling drives, with the goal of expanding citizen turnout in the 2014 elections.

Returning to the findings, 68% of the respondents disagreed that the electoral system faithfully translated votes cast into seats won and thus avoided some of the more destabilising and unfair practices during voting processes; 67% of the respondents disagreed that voter education was used and that the plurality system, where a majority coalition could not override the election leader was used.

Table 6.3 These tables summarise the responses related to factors shaping and defining voter apathy and support in South Africa and Namibia for youth party representatives in both parliaments.

Table 13~~30~~ The table below summarises the responses related to factors shaping and defining voter apathy and support in South Africa for youth party representatives in parliament.

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
Lack of appropriate skills	(3) 2.8%	(41) 38.3%	(3) 2.8%	(59) 55.1%	(1) 1.0%
Low levels of trust in youth by government	(3) 2.8%	(75) 70.0%	(2) 1.8%	(26) 24.4%	(1) 1.0%
No consultation with youth	(3) 2.8%	(30) 28.0%	(4) 3.7%	(70) 65.5%	(0) 0%
The land issue had a huge influence on the way in which young people viewed elections	(7) 6.5%	(74) 69.3%	(0) 0.0%	(26) 24.2%	(0) 0%
A vigorous democracy can be characterised by a high voter turnout	(2) 1.8%	(33) 30.8%	(2) 1.8%	(70) 65.6%	(0) 0%
Young people who are voting for the first time are less likely to vote in the next election based on their previous experience	(7) 6.5%	(75) 70.1%	(0) 0.0%	(25) 23.4%	(0) 0%
The youth support the election even if the outcome does not promise any significant change to their position	(4) 3.7%	(26) 24.3%	(0) 0%	(74) 69.2%	(3) 2.8%
Social media attracts the youth to vote in elections	(4) 3.7%	(76) 71.0%	(1) 1.0%	(24) 22.4%	(2) 1.9%

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Unemployment is a challenge for youth to vote	(0) 0.0%	(71) 66.4%	(1) 1.0%	(28) 26.1%	(7) 6.5%

Table 13 above presented the responses to the statements relating to the factors shaping and defining voter apathy and voter support in South Africa for the youth party representatives in parliament. The respondents were requested to respond to nine statements in this regard. They were asked to rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = uncertain; 4 = disagree; and 5 = strongly disagree).

Out of the 107 responses received, 77% of the respondents agreed that young people who voted for the first time were less likely to vote in the next elections based on their previous experience; 76% of the respondents indicated that the land issue had a huge influence on the way in which young people viewed elections; 75% of the respondents agreed that social media attracted the youth to vote in elections; 73% agreed that there was seriously low levels of trust in the government by the youth; and 66% agreed that unemployment was a challenge for the youth to vote.

According to Essau, Rondganger and Roman (2019), the family environment is critical for encouraging youth interest in politics and shaping their attitudes toward government, given concerns about waning political interest and dwindling trust in government and its institutions among the youth. Another issue that has contributed to people losing faith in the South African government is the government's inability to effectively address the land question. Land reform is not well addressed in the country; all leaders hide behind the Constitution while there is no political will (Mbandlwa and Dorasamy 2021).

There are many reasons why the youth in South Africa are not interested in voting in elections. Hence, many young voters, even those who say they are politically motivated, often fail to turn up at the polls. Disappointment, disillusionment, and confusion are the emotions that drive abstention. Moreover, some potential voters may not understand politics, so they argue that they have no reason to become involved (Adriaansen, Van Praag and De Vreese 2010). Some may simply opt out as they have no faith or trust that the government will listen to them (Nickerson and Rogers 2010). News content could

however reduce political cynicism. Another study found that political cynicism might increase a respondent's likelihood to vote because cynicism does not lead to apathy, but instead to critical thinking about politics (Fu et al. 2011).

Returning to the findings, 72% of the respondents disagreed that the youth supported the election even if the outcome did not promise any significant change to their position, while 66% disagreed that there was no consultation with the youth and that a vigorous democracy was characterised by a high voter turnout; and lastly, 56% disagreed that there was a lack of appropriate skills.

According to Tracey (2014:1), South Africa's youth is often seen as an apathetic generation. Some, however, have opted out of democratic processes such as elections due to the lack of interest of the ruling elite in responding to their needs. Promises of a brighter future are weighed against the lived realities of high levels of unemployment, poverty and inequality. As young people make up such a large proportion of voters in South Africa, understanding their feelings on voting could provide insights into the way they feel about democratic participation.

As referred to above, levels of poverty and unemployment are high among young people. Limited opportunities are available for them, especially for young black South Africans. According to Statistics South Africa (2021), the youth unemployment rate stands at 46.3%.

Table 1431 The table below summarises the responses related to factors shaping and defining voter apathy and support in Namibia for youth party representatives in parliament.

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
Lack of appropriate skills	(3) 3.0%	(39) 39.0%	(2) 2.0%	(55) 55.0%	(1) 1.0%
Low levels of trust in youth by government	(3) 3.0%	(70) 70%	(2) 2.0%	(25) 25.0%	(0) 0.0%
No consultation with youth	(4) 4.0%	(28) 28.0%	(2) 2.0%	(66) 66.0%	(0) 0%
The land issue had a huge influence on the way in which young people viewed elections	(4) 4.0%	(69) 69.0%	(3) 3.0%	(24) 24.0%	(0) 0%
A vigorous democracy can be characterised by a high voter turnout	(3) 3.0%	(30) 30.0%	(2) 2.0%	(65) 65.0%	(0) 0%
Young people who are voting for the first time are less likely to vote in the next election based on their previous experience	(4) 4.0%	(70) 70.0%	(3) 3.0%	(23) 23.0%	(0) 0%
The youth support the election even if the outcome does not promise any significant change to their position	(3) 3.0%	(25) 25.0%	(0) 0%	(69) 69.0%	(3) 3.0%
Social media attracts the youth to vote in elections	(1) 1.0%	(73) 73%	(1) 1.0%	(23) 23.0%	(2) 2.0%
Unemployment is a challenge for youth to vote	(0) 0.0%	(67) 67.0%	(0) 0.0%	(27) 27.0%	(6) 6.0%

Table 14 above presented the responses to the statements relating to factors shaping and defining voter apathy and voter support in Namibia for the youth party representatives in parliament. The respondents were requested to respond to nine statements in this regard. They were asked to rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = uncertain; 4 = disagree; and 5 = strongly disagree).

Of the 100 responses received, 74% of the respondents agreed that young people who voted for the first time were less likely to vote in the next elections based on their previous experience and also that social media attracted the youth to vote in elections; 73% agreed that the land issue had a huge influence on the way in which young people viewed elections and that there were low levels of trust in the youth by the government; and 67% indicated that unemployment presented a challenge for youth to vote.

Hence, many young voters, even those who say they are politically motivated, often fail to turn up at the polls. Disappointment, disillusionment, and confusion drive abstention. Moreover, some potential voters do not understand politics, so they believe that they do not have to become involved (Adriaansen et al. 2010).

Returning to the findings, 72% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that the youth supported the outcome of the elections even if it did not promise any significant change to their position, while 66% disagreed that there was consultation with the youth by politicians. Furthermore, 65% disagreed that a vigorous democracy was characterised by a high voter turnout; and lastly, 56% disagreed that there was a lack of appropriate skills.

Levels of poverty and unemployment are high among young people in Namibia. According to the African Peer Review Mechanism the youth unemployment rate stood at 46.1% in Namibia, as reported by the Labour Force Survey in 2018, of which the majority were females.

Table 1532 below relates to the respondents' views on how the South African government responds to voter apathy among the youth during elections.

Table 15 above presented the responses to the statements relating to how the South African government responded to youth voter apathy during elections. The respondents were requested to respond to seven statements in that regard. They were asked to rate

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
Politicians do not care about the youth	(11) 5.3%	(151) 72.9%	(0) 0%	(45) 21.7%	(0) 0%
The government communicates with the youth on their own terms to allow them to vote	(3) 1.4%	(97) 46.9%	(5) 2.4%	(101) 48.8%	(1) 0.5%
Electoral management bodies promote youth participation	(3) 1.4%	(106) 51.2%	(4) 1.9%	(88) 42.5%	(6) 29%
Becoming involved in pressure groups	(3) 1.4%	(101) 48.8%	(4) 1.9%	(99) 47.8%	(0) 0%
Red tape and unproductive 'talk shops'	(5) 2.4%	(114) 55.1%	(1) 0.5%	(87) 42.0%	(0) 0%
The government labels young people as apathetic and uninterested in the formal democratic processes	(5) 2.4%	(101) 48.8%	(2) 1.0%	(99) 47.8%	(0) 0%
Influencing decision makers	(7) 3.4%	(112) 54.1%	(0) 0%	(86) 41.5%	(2) 1.0%

each item on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = uncertain; 4 = disagree; and 5 = strongly disagree).

Of the 207 responses received, 78% of the respondents agreed that politicians did not care about the youth; 58% agreed that red tape and unproductive 'talk shops' were the trademarks of politicians and political parties, and that youth could influence decision

makers; 53% agreed that electoral management bodies promoted youth participation in the voting process; while 51% agreed that the government labelled young people as apathetic and uninterested in formal democratic processes. A total of 49% of the respondents disagreed that the government communicated with the youth on their own terms to convince them to vote, while 48% did not agree with the statement that the youth were involved in pressure groups, and that the government labelled young people as apathetic and uninterested in formal democratic processes.

Table 1633 The table below summarises the responses from the respondents on the new perspectives in the context of youth political participation in electoral processes on the African continent and its impact on democracy.

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
Parties are less likely to put forward female youth for election	(4) 1.9%	(136) 65.7%	(0) 0%	(67) 32.4%	(0) 0%
There is no constituency in the participation of young women	(3) 1.4%	(88) 42.5%	(7) 3.4%	(109) 52.7%	(0) 0%
Young people are excluded from meaningful participation in governance systems	(3) 1.4%	(130) 62.8%	(3) 1.4%	(67) 32.4%	(4) 1.9%
Youth are influenced by pressure groups	(7) 3.4%	(85) 41.1%	(0) 0%	(109) 52.7%	(6) 2.9%
Improved living standards of youth	(2) 1.0%	(128) 61.8%	(4) 1.9%	(65) 31.4%	(8) 3.9%
Influencing decision makers	(1) 0.5%	(82) 39.6%	(6) 2.9%	(112) 54.1%	(67) 2.9%

Young people's actions are important in shaping the continent's political future	(14) 6.8%	(126) 60.9%	(2) 1.0%	(65) 31.4%	(0) 0%

Table 16 above presented the responses to the statements relating to the new perspectives in the context of youth political participation within electoral processes on the African continent and its impact on democracy. The respondents were asked to respond to seven statements in this regard. They were asked to rate each item on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = uncertain; 4 = disagree; and 5 = strongly disagree).

Of the 207 responses received, 68% of the respondents agreed that political parties were less likely to put forward female youth for elections and also that young people's actions were important in shaping the continent's political future; 64% agreed that young people were excluded from meaningful participation in governance systems; and 63% agreed that the living standards of the youth had improved over the years.

Dolan (2011) and Fox (2011) discussed how to overcome the gender gap in voting. They concluded that the socio-political interests of young females could help to overcome this problem. Education could be a solution, as the political participation of females increased when they were aware that political events could directly affect the quality of their lives. To solve the gender gap, females must overcome their psychological belief that equality with men is impossible.

Hayes and Lawless (2016), however, argue that young women are not treated differently than young men by the media during electoral campaigns. It was found that young females generally are not influenced by gender stereotyping, but they do recognise that gender bias happens beyond the awareness of voters and is able to structure voting behaviour. In a survey by the Electoral Commission (2005), 55 percent (i.e. over half) of 18- to 29-year-olds who were questioned reported having been treated with prejudice, compared with about a quarter (24%) of 30- to 39-year-olds. Moreover, the 18- to 29-year-olds were excluded from the high decision-making structures of government..

Returning to the findings, 57% of the respondents disagreed that the youth influenced the decision makers in their countries; 56% disagreed that the youth was influenced by pressure groups; and 53% disagreed with the statement that there was no constituency in the participation of young women in political processes. The statement on youth not influencing the decision makers in the countries stems from the frustration that young people in South Africa face because of age discrimination. According to a study by Chauke (2020:45), youth apathy stems from young people's feelings of exclusion from positions of leadership by the government. This study urges all levels of the South African government to include young people in decision-making positions. This finding is consistent with the findings of Arolowo and Aluko (2010), who established that politics in Africa was dominated by elderly males, while the youth saw no reason to participate in a system in which they were not represented.

6.4 Part 3: Thematic responses from both the government officials and political youth representatives in South Africa and Namibia

This section provides the interviews' thematic responses from both the government officials and political youth representation in both South Africa and Namibia.

Table 1734 Thematic responses from the government officials and political party representatives in South Africa and Namibia.

Thematic responses from the government officials and political party representatives in South Africa and Namibia	
South African and Namibian government officials	**Political party youth representatives in the parliaments of South Africa and Namibia**
Variations in South African and Namibian young people's interests in elections	
According to the responses from all the respondents, there was consensus that there would be variations in terms of the	The respondents from the youth party representatives in both parliaments indicated that because the countries

interest in elections from the youth of both countries, because these are two different countries and the young people in both countries behaved differently when it came to elections. Moreover, the younger people of South Africa and Namibia had different needs and wants; thus, this was the reason for the variations in the level of interest in elections because different factors motivated them to take part in elections.

According to Motsamai (2012), the youth (especially the born-frees) are not interested in politics because they feel alienated by political parties. Consequently, Namibia and South Africa do not fare well in terms of young people participating in politics.

differed the interests of their youth would differ because they held different views. The same applied to the level of interest in politics by the youth, and the involvement of the youth in both countries in politics. Moreover, it is imperative to note that the young people from these two countries had differing motivators to take part in politics, so this would also determine their level of interest and the magnitude of participating in politics in their own country.

This, however, is exacerbated by the historical tendencies of political parties to exclude young people from formal political systems and government structures. In South Africa, for example, youth have only been made part of the representation of political parties in the various government structures in recent national and local elections (United Nations 2017).

From the comments above by the South African and Namibian government officials and the political party youth representatives in the two parliaments, a theme emerged that was considered an impediment in the view of the respondents, namely **varying youth interest in the political and voting environment** in their countries. Current political systems did not interest the youth of both countries because they

felt alienated by the entire process; moreover, politicians only cared about themselves and their families and failed to address the issues affecting the youth, such as unemployment, corruption, and poor service delivery in their respective communities.

According to Statistics South Africa (2021), unemployment in the country in 2021 stood at 34.9%, which is the highest since 2008. Further, Statistics South Africa stated that the youth unemployment rate soared to 46.3% in the first quarter of 2021. Roberts (2019) and Tracey (2016) argued that many issues increased the disinterest of youth in the political and voting systems in their countries, especially South Africa, because of issues such as:

- The burgeoning unemployment crisis in the country;
- The effect corruption has on service delivery in their respective communities;
- The lack of trust in the governing system, and the political and voting process; and
- The lack of access to tertiary education, and the effect drug abuse, as well as crime, has on the lives of young people.

In 2019, the youth in South Africa represented 20.1% of the Electoral Commission's registered voter population, which, if they took part in the voting process, they could force political parties to make the much-needed changes that they wanted to see occur in the country. Because these changes are not happening, the young resort to violent protests to address local government issues because their confidence in local government has worn-off a long time ago. These protests result from the fact that local leaders, ward councillors and community leaders provide ineffective platforms, such as meetings, which are unresponsive and alienating to youth issues in general (Roberts 2019; Tracey 2016).

As in South Africa and other Sub-Saharan countries, Namibia does not fare well when it comes to young people participating in politics and the voting process

(Motsamai 2014). This could be ascribed to the fact that Namibian youth are generally disillusioned with electoral politics, for the following reasons:

- Perceptions that political activism and engagement do not yield results;
- A distrust of political parties; and
- The lack of access to political leadership.

Motsamai (2014) further stated that a 2012 survey conducted by ECN highlighted that the youths' non-participatory behaviour was due to the following factors:

- The limited opportunities afforded the youth to participate in decision-making processes.
- Youth's distrust of the political institutions in Namibia.
- The lack of institutional capacity development for the young women in the country.
- The lack of communication tools that were attractive to the youth; and
- Youth activities that were not linked to the national initiatives.

The South African and Namibian governments address issues of voter apathy among young people

The respondents indicated that the two countries do address the issue of voter apathy among the youth because they are deemed the future leaders of South Africa and Namibia. There was consensus that these future leaders needed to take part in the politics of their respective countries to ensure that the institutional frameworks and mandates of	The political parties' youth representatives in the parliaments indicated that the youth was the future leaders of the South African and Namibian parliaments. However, because of the following reasons, these political youth party representatives indicated that they were not taken seriously:

these countries thrived beyond the older generations.

However, there were respondents who were not certain that their country's government addressed the issue of voter apathy among young people. These respondents were not clear on how it was done as they did not see anything being done to ensure that young people were encouraged to be more involved in politics, voting and elections in South Africa and Namibia.

Consequently, some of them indicated that because of corruption and the lack of capacity and skills in South Africa and Namibia, these two governments were failing, or not doing enough, to encourage the youth to be involved in politics, voting and the election process. Moreover, the respondents indicated that the youth were not recognised in these countries; hence, South African and Namibian politicians were failing to address voter apathy amongst the younger generation.

The major issue of concern was that the governments and politicians in these countries were only interested in their

- As a result of a lack of capacity these governments did not support youth in politics;
- The South African and Namibian governments only cared about themselves, especially politicians;
- Due to the corrupt activities of government officials in South Africa and Namibia they failed to cater for the needs of the youth and failed to involve youth in politics.

Because of the reasons, the youth party representatives in both parliaments indicated that in South Africa and Namibia, the future leaders were not taken seriously; hence, they believed that the governments of both countries were failing to address the issue of voter apathy among the young people in their countries.

It is further important to note that the youth in both countries' parliaments were of the opinion that, because of older government officials who only thought of themselves, they would not be able to address the issues related to voter apathy among younger people.

own interests and not in those associated with their countries' youth.

Lastly, the failure to address youth voter apathy was ascribed to the fact that South African and Namibian politicians and governments were only interested in encouraging the youth to be involved in voting and politics when the election periods approached or during the elections; that was when you would see them approaching younger people and promising them talk shows, and ultimately not delivering on the promises. Thus, they sold out the youth before elections.

The following are raw responses from the respondents, as indicated in the survey:

"Yes, youth are leaders of the future."

"No, the government does not support youth because of a lack of capacity."

"No, government is interested in corruption."

"No, government interested in themselves not youth."

"No, government concentrating on their own politics."

These were some of the major responses, as contained in the survey.

From the comments above by the South African and Namibian government officials and the political parties' youth representatives in the parliaments, there was a recurring theme seen as an impediment in the view of the respondents, namely the

issues of youth voter apathy in their countries. Among the government officials and the youth political party representatives in the parliaments, there was consensus that the youth were the future leaders of South Africa and Namibia; however, political leaders, in addressing the issues of voter apathy among young people, did not take the youth seriously. This was substantiated by the following reasons:

- Increased and escalating corruption in both South Africa and Namibia.
- Political leaders' lack of capacity and skills rendered them unable to cater for the needs of the youth.
- A lack of youth recognition.
- Government officials were only interested in their own agendas and interests.

However, some of the respondents indicated that the South African and Namibian governments did not have the means to address issues of voter apathy among the youth. Lastly, it is imperative to note that the interviewees also indicated that the issue of voter apathy among the youth would be impossible to address because politicians did not engage with the youth during non-election periods, but as soon as elections approached, they entertained the youth. This cannot be regarded as a remedy to addressing issues of voter apathy among the youth. Chauke (2020) argued that the reduction in the participation of youth in the electoral democracy should be regarded as a national conundrum for South Africa. However, the youth have reached a point where they cannot comprehend the importance of casting their votes for their preferred candidates. Moreover, owing to the lack of visibility of the IEC during non-election periods, the youth question their importance in relation to the electoral process and politics in South Africa. During election periods, however, all political parties represented in South Africa try to woo the youth, only to disappear during non-election periods (Chauke 2020).

Alternative methods, apart from voting, that South African and Namibian young non-voters could use to express their political opinions
The respondents (government officials and youth party representatives) indicated that the youth of South Africa and Namibia utilised technology in the form of social media platforms, such as Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp and other platforms, to vent their frustrations about their respective countries' politics and electoral systems. Hence, these countries have published legislation that impeded youth from making their frustrations heard about politicians and electoral processes in their respective countries. Lastly, the respondents indicated that technology enhanced communication and that was why the youth preferred it as a medium of communication.
From the comments by the South African and Namibian government officials and the political parties' youth representatives in the two parliaments, a theme emerged, namely that there are **other methods, apart from voting,** which could be used in the countries. The respondents indicated that South Africa and Namibia should invest in technology through which they could enhance the communication process whereby non-voting youth could express their frustrations concerning the voting systems, the voting process, and politics in their respective countries. Moreover, the countries could adopt new policy directives in relation to how they could entice the youth and non-voters to participate in the electoral process. Through technology, via social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok and WhatsApp, youth participation could be enhanced and encouraged as these platforms were used by the youth daily to communicate. Moreover, political parties should understand the need for technology integration when addressing issues of youth non-participation in the voting process. According to Schulz-Herzenberg (2020), South Africa could adopt the policy directives of automatic voter registration to persuade the escalating number of non-voters to go back to the polls. They should transform the current manual and voluntary registration process to move toward a more automatic process, which will be the responsibility of the government through the IEC, to register all eligible voters in the country. Moreover, this will in turn improve

voter numbers at the polls and reduce the challenges faced by voters to find transport and take time off from work to register to vote. This could also reduce the costs involved in voluntary registration for economically marginalised communities, and lastly, reduce the escalating gap between registered and unregistered voters.

Are voting systems implemented differently in South Africa and Namibia?

The respondents indicated that because the two countries are different in terms of resources and political systems, their voting systems would be different. The South African voting system is based solely on a paper-based balloting system, whilst Namibia introduced an electronic voting system in 2014, which made it the first African country to use such a system (EISA 2014).

From the comments above by the South African and Namibian government officials and the political parties' youth representatives in parliament, a recurring theme emerged regarding the **voting systems** in the two countries. There was consensus among the interviewees that, as these are two different countries in terms of resources, policies, laws, operations and politics, their voting systems would be different. Furthermore, the respondents indicated that the South African voting systems was still a paper-based voting system, whereas the Namibian voting system had evolved and was an electronic voting system, introduced in 2014. According to EISA, Namibia was the first country to move away from a paper-based voting system (EISA 2014). Furthermore, EISA (2014) indicated that South Africa and some other African countries were interested in the use of an electronic voting system; however, they had not yet implemented it, whilst Namibia had already taken a step in this direction. Moreover, the paper-based manual system in South Africa is undertaken through the adopted Proportional Representation (PR) Electoral System, which is based on a closed party list for the National and Provincial Assemblies and a mixed system for local elections (IEC 2008).

Should South Africa consider a single election system?
Most of the respondents indicated that a single voting system would enhance the election processes through improved communication, monitoring and control, for better management of the entire voting process, and to enable better accountability. However, some of the respondents were of the opinion that if applied to local government elections or national elections, this would ultimately reduce corruption and enhance communication with all stakeholders whilst allowing for improved accountability, as well as better consultation and reduction in the costs associated with the election process. Below are some raw responses of the respondents: "*Local government election to avoid corruption.*" *"National government elections for better monitoring."* *"Local government elections for control."* *"National government election."* *"Each must have its own system to monitor properly."* *"Local government elections for better consultation and communication."* *"Local government elections for better management."* *Combination is the best, because cost is reduced, and capacity could be met."* *"To avoid repeated national voting as it is intense and voters working situation."* *"Single, elections so that each level is able to be held accountable."*
From the comments above by the South African and Namibian government officials and the political parties' youth representatives in parliament, there was a recurring theme derived from the views of the respondents, namely, a **single voting system** in their countries. The respondents were of the view that such a system would ensure that the following would be realised: • Improved communication amongst the stakeholders.

- Improved monitoring, control, and evaluation.

- Better management of the voting process; and

- Improved accountability by stakeholders.

Some of the respondents indicated that their country could benefit from such a system, of either a national or a local election, as it would reduce duplication of resources, through the enhancement of communication among the different stakeholders, which would encourage transparency, better consultation, and ultimately reduce costs in the process.

Measures implemented during COVID-19 for successful elections

The COVID-19 pandemic devastated the world, with the municipal elections in South Africa in 2021 being no different. The respondents indicated that because of the pandemic, the voting systems needed to evolve and be more dynamic and involve global technologies, as the pandemic did not allow for gatherings of large crowds. They were of the view that the use of technology would enhance the voting and elections process, as people would not have to gather in large crowds; they could vote from wherever they were.

The respondents also recommended the use of social distancing, and the use of sanitisers and masks to ensure that elections were successful. However, the political parties' youth representatives recommended technology as the best measure for successful elections during the COVID-19 pandemic in both countries. Thus, this implied that South Africa and Namibia had to ensure that they integrated technology in their voting and elections processes.

From the comments above by the South African and Namibian government officials and the political parties' youth representatives in parliament, a current theme was derived, namely that **COVID-19 measures must be adopted** in their countries. The respondents indicated that the best way would be to use technology to reduce or avoid crowding so that the risk of the virus spreading would be minimised. Moreover, South Africa and Namibia should evolve and invest in technology to integrate it in their elections processes during the pandemic and beyond. Furthermore, the

adopted measures, such as social distancing and the use of sanitisers and masks, should be maintained to avert further spreads and deaths in their respective countries. This implied that both countries would have to adopt technology as a measure, integrate it in the pandemic voting processes and beyond the pandemic, as this might also entice the youth and non-voters to take part in the processes of elections. Thus, this implied that South Africa and Namibia must ensure that they integrated technology in the voting and elections processes.

Recommended guiding principles for an effective electoral system that will attract youth to vote in South Africa and Namibia

The respondents (government officials and youth party representatives) unanimously agreed that technology would be a better guiding principle for an effective electoral system, as South Africa still used the manual paper-based balloting system. This would enhance the voting process and make it more attractive to the youth of South Africa and Namibia. Moreover, as these countries were preaching the advantages of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, their electoral systems must also evolve so that they could cater for all stakeholders, including the youth. Consequently, technology was considered an appropriate mechanism or tool that could encourage more youth to take part in the voting and political process in South Africa and Namibia. Lastly, the respondents indicated that the use of technology could be another measure that could address issues of voter apathy among the youth and attract the youth to the political and voting spheres in both countries.

From the comments above by the South African and Namibian government officials and the political parties' youth representatives in parliament, a recurring theme is derived, namely **guiding principles for an effective electoral system** in their countries. The respondents recommended that the electoral voting systems' policies should adopt technology to ensure an effective electoral system. The electoral system in these countries should evolve and become more tech-savvy. Moreover, technology would entice the youth and non-voters to participate in the voting processes and politics in these countries. The respondents recommended

technology because it could be a solution to addressing issues related to voter apathy among young people and non-voters in South Africa and Namibia, while improving confidence in the processes of the respective electoral commissions.

6.5 Reliability testing

The solid quality of this study's information depended on probability testing and the researcher picked 5% to decide the degree of significance. The data analysis utilised the strategies referred to before. All estimates are concerned with reliability and validity, and they equally remain aware of how these measures are associated with concepts (Molukanele 2009; Tavakol and Dennick 2011). The extent to which a tool measures what it is meant to measure is concerned with validity, whereas reliability is concerned with an instrument's ability to gauge consistently.

While utilising Likert-type scales, it is essential to compute and report Cronbach's coefficient (Gliem and Gliem 2003). As indicated by Bryman and Ringer (2007:164), Cronbach's Alpha is mostly used to evaluate internal consistency. The Alpha coefficient fluctuates somewhere in the range of 1 and 0, with 1 demonstrating excellent internal consistency and 0 showing no internal dependability. Tavakol and Dennick (2011) recommend a satisfactory quality scope of 0.75 to 0.95. A low Alpha value might be caused by insufficient inquiries, poor interconnectedness among items, or heterogeneous development. Cronbach's measure and the Means Inter item are used to estimate the quality.

Table 18~~35~~ Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics			
	Cronbach's Alpha	**Cronbach's Alpha established on homogenous item**	**N of items**
Instrument measuring government officials' responses	.969	.970	39
Instrument measuring political youth representatives' responses	.961	.962	34

The table above highlights the Cronbach Alpha's coefficients for the two instruments, which were distributed to the government officials and the political youth representatives in the parliaments of South Africa and Namibia. The Cronbach coefficients are in the ranges of .969 and .961 respectively for each instrument used in the research to gather the data. This means that the measuring instruments suggested excellent internal consistency reliability for the scale with this sample.

6.6 Summary

This chapter provided the results on the biographical information of the questionnaire participants for this study on youth voter apathy in South Africa and Namibia. There was consensus among the respondents that the electoral system design database provided comparative data in both countries. Furthermore, it is important to note that both governments faced serious criticism from their population.

The chapter further highlighted that the instruments, comprising maps and graphs, allowed users to compare the regions with ease. It further examined the qualitative responses from the interviews and there was consensus that different countries used

different electoral systems, and lastly, that technology should be integrated into the voting processes in South Africa and Namibia.

The following chapter contains the study's brief overview, findings, suggestions, and the conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the summary, findings, recommendations, and conclusions following the research into political apathy among South African and Namibian youth. The desire to comprehend the role youth involvement plays in politics and voting processes in South Africa and Namibia piqued the interest of the researcher to pursue this research. The main aim of the study was not only to dig deep to comprehend young people's voter apathy, but to also develop a framework that could be used to address the issues of political apathy among young people in South Africa and Namibia.

In the quest to achieve this outcome, the study focused on the electoral systems of South Africa and Namibia, on the factors shaping and defining voter apathy during elections, and lastly, on the theoretical perspectives in the context of political participation in the electoral processes on the African continent and their impact on democracy. These considerations formed the basis of the conceptual framework that culminated in the project design that informed the study.

The study followed a mixed methods approach, which enabled the researcher to dwell on the perspectives of the respondents. The research approach included the use of the quantitative research methodology, followed by the qualitative research approach in exploring the issues of political apathy among young people in South Africa and Namibia. Moreover, the researcher used questionnaires and interviews for the quantitative and qualitative research approaches, respectively.

7.2 Discussion of findings of the quantitative research

7.2.1 Electoral systems used in South Africa and Namibia

The results indicated that an electoral system database provided comparative data for both South Africa and Namibia. Furthermore, the government officials regarded databases as the most comprehensive source of information for the electoral systems in both countries. In addition, the youth political representatives in both parliaments stated that interactive tools, such as maps and graphs, allowed the electoral authorities to compare the results of regions and sub-regions with ease. Moreover, the government officials regarded voter education as a critical tool to enhance the electoral systems in South Africa and Namibia. Voter education is the operation that strives to competently accomplish the general handling of the electorate. To do this successfully, necessitates communicating with underprivileged classes, as well as mainstream voters. For example, voter education should take into consideration issues such as high rates of illiteracy or the use of different languages in a country, even if there is only one official language (Trumm, Sudulich and Townsley 2017). Smaller groups, displaced individuals and other sidelined sections of the community could be particularly affected. Moreover, young adults who qualify to vote for the first time may need special messages explaining how to register and cast a ballot. Voter education should also include publicity encouraging people to vote (Giebler, Banducci and Kritzinger 2017). Competitive elections are differentiated by bigger campaign attempts, indicated in higher spending, which will lead to a higher voter turnout and more informed voters overall (Giebler, Banducci and Kritzinger 2017).

The election systems used in both countries were regarded as highly consistent in the distribution of votes. The systems also made coalitions between political parties and interest groups more visible, which could lead to greater continuity and stability of policies.

Furthermore, the ballots papers were regarded as complex but user-friendly; thus, all voters could understand them, which in turn maximised participation and ensured that the electoral offices (the IEC and the ECN) managed to record and reduce spoilt ballot papers. More importantly, the results showed that the electoral systems allowed for the transferring of ballots for voters to accumulate diverse and related interests to win

representation during the elections. Moreover, South Africa and Namibia used a plurality system, which encouraged a majority coalition of political parties, which could not override the election leader.

Furthermore, some of the respondents indicated that the ballot papers were not as complex as regarded by the youth in South Africa and Namibia; moreover, the election systems used were consistent in the distribution of the votes. The youth in both countries also indicated that voter education was not used in their electoral systems.

In addition, the government officials stated that power sharing did not bring forth visibility, continuity, and stability in either of the countries. Moreover, the youth did not consider databases in the same light as the government officials did, as they did not regard them as a comprehensive source of information. Lastly, the government officials said that the electoral authorities (the IEC and the ECN) could not use maps and graphs to compare the results or data of regions and sub-regions in South Africa and Namibia.

7.2.2 Factors shaping and defining voter apathy and voter support in South Africa and Namibia

It is important from the results to note that South Africa and Namibia received criticism from their population when it came to voter apathy among the youth. Moreover, the results indicated that there was poor voter participation in political activities and the voters feared security threats during the election period. In addition, some potential voters might not understand politics, so they argued that they had no reason to become involved in politics or voting (Adriaansen et al. 2010). Others might simply opt out as they had no faith or trust that the government would listen to them (Nickerson and Rogers 2010).

It is not far-fetched to state that poor infrastructure and poor service delivery could count among the factors that influenced voter apathy in both countries, as both were characterised by such issues. Furthermore, if used correctly, social media could attract the youth to vote during election periods. Social media was considered the most influential factor in the political realm in different countries (Effing, Van Hillegersberg and Huibers 2011); it was also positively associated with citizens' political participation and it was seen as an essential contributor to spread news and related information. News exposure, state

Trepte and Schmitt (2017), is significantly related to political knowledge and discussions on social media influence political participation. According to Kahne and Middaugh (2012:55), "Social media is a phenomenon that could dramatically change how and how many young people participate civically, including voting". Youth consider engagement in participatory politics as engaging in activities such as status updates, tweets, and sharing and posting comments; these are ways to become involved in politics (Potter 2012). Moreover, social media makes young people more tolerant of racial and ethnic issues when discussing different issues with other people. Young people also strive to stay connected with others, in general, and their group, specifically, through social media (Kahne and Middaugh 2012).

Furthermore, the issue of land has become the trademark of both countries, as most of their populations do still not own land, which has a huge influence on the way in which young people viewed elections. Additionally, it was established that the election policies in both countries were clear enough for everyone to understand. It is also important to note that there was still the belief in both countries that women had no knowledge of politics.

Moreover, first-time young voters were to a lesser extent expected to vote in the next elections based on their previous experiences, as there were escalating low levels of trust among the youth in their governments. Furthermore, there were many reasons why South African youth were uninterested in voting in elections. Thus, many young voters, even those who proclaimed to be politically motivated, often failed to turn up at the polls. Disappointment, disillusionment, and confusion were the sentiments that drove abstention. According to the daily *Californian Weekender* (July 13 2022), voter apathy is caused by having no interest at all in considering taking part in elections by certain groups of voters. This has been regarded as one of the most major causes for the low turnout rates in many countries. This is also known as "political depression". There are two crucial factors to voter apathy: alienation and voter fatigue. Most voters experience a sense of alienation from the political system and are of the view that their contributions have no impact at all.

Furthermore, one of the threats and risks in the international, interconnected world is that the inflow of news and topical matters that people utilise or are subjected to daily can make them desensitised to politics on the whole. Communities or citizens may take it for granted that elections are held regularly and they no longer bother about voting. Political depression, therefore, has become a matter of concern for many countries and has put the current political system at risk. Additional causes are that most people do not like what they choose or think that they are not well informed about the process of voting, or come across a number of legal and logistical obstacles in the process of voting. They may also feel too busy or overwhelmed in their personal lives, confused about how the voting system works, and they may not understand how to register or simply disregard or forget the voting deadlines. This results in low voter participation rates in many countries in the world. Another factor contributing to the low rate of voting is voter fatigue, where voters experience being bombarded with political messages through the internet, particularly, social media and this huge amount of publicity may cause fatigue, which turns potential voters away from the voting process (Adriaansen et al. 2010).

Moreover, it is important to note that despite the sky-high unemployment rates in South Africa and Namibia, the government officials disagreed with the statement that there were unemployment issues in the countries. They also said that there was compliance with law and policies. According to Statistics South Africa (2021), the youth unemployment rate stood at 46.3% in 2021, which highlighted the dilemma the country faces when it comes to the youth.

In Namibia, according to Shanghala (2013), the following was required in relation to the voting process: compliance to law and policies; peace and order should always prevail during elections; and refraining from instigating, participating and being involved in any conduct that might infringe upon any other voter's right to participate in elections, without fear or favour. The government officials in both countries indicated that there were not poor education levels; in addition, they did not agree that there was corruption and malfeasance; and, lastly, that religious reasons prevented young women from participating in elections in their respective countries.

Moreover, some of the youth disagreed with the statement that youth supported elections even if the outcome did not promise any notable change to their position, and that unemployment was a hurdle preventing the youth from voting. Some of the respondents disagreed that there was no consultation with the youth and that a vigorous democracy could be characterised by a high voter turnout; and lastly, the respondents did not agree with the statement that there was a lack of appropriate skills.

7.2.3 The South African government's response to youth voter apathy during elections

South African and Namibian schools did not cater for politics in their curriculums. Even though this was the case, political organisations for learners, such as Congress of South African Students (COSAS) and the Namibia National Students Organisation (NANSO), engaged in political education for learners. The government officials agreed that voter education programmes provided by their respective governments increased young people's interest in elections; also, that both governments improved living standards; and lastly, that the youth were too lazy to study.

Education has been shown to demonstrate an important and positive influence on youth voter turnout (Howe 2006:137), as well as on protest activities. Moreover, people who are more educated might be better able to process complex political information (Dalton 2008:2) and possess a greater sense of citizen responsibility (Anderson 2007:271). Some empirical research however suggests that education's impact is clearer in some countries than in others (Goldstone 2010:31).

In 2012, the ECN directed a benchmark study to measure the degree of public comprehension of electoral and democratic processes and the viability of its projects (ECN 2012). This was a bid to further develop its community and citizen education drives, with the aim of expanding voter turnout for the 2014 elections. The overview estimated the progress of the ECN's citizen education targets, zeroing in on the degrees of comprehension of a majority-rules democracy and democratic processes; public and citizen trust in the discretionary framework; infringement of fundamental regulations; turnout in public, territorial and neighbourhood decisions; correspondence to deal with citizen training; orientation mainstreaming and individuals with handicaps in election

processes; youth contribution; and the viability and effectiveness of the legitimate structures (ECN 2012).

Returning to the study's findings, the youth indicated that politicians did not care about them, as the leaders of tomorrow, whilst red tape and unproductive 'talk shops' was all they received from politicians and political parties, while they forgot that the youth could influence decision makers if they took part in the political processes in their countries.

It was clearly visible from the findings that the electoral management bodies (the IEC and the ECN) were constantly promoting youth participation in the voting processes in South Africa and Namibia. During previous elections, the ECN's youth empowerment activities were carried out through its voter education programme. As previously stated, the ECN shaped its strategy to youth participation based on the results from its 2012 baseline study, preferring long-term activities over ad hoc ones. The Electoral Cycle Approach refers to an approach to electoral programming in which organisations look further than an electoral event. It splits the electoral process into three major phases: pre-election, electoral, and post-election. The approach views elections as ongoing processes rather than discrete events, and remedies are tailored ahead of time. Thus, the ECN coordinated exchange fairs with town committees as an approach to expand its span. These exchange shows had a high turnout in Namibia and the ECN had the option to lead youth-designated urban and citizen training exercises at these occasions. Furthermore, musicians were enlisted to perform at these shows to draw in more youth and to urge them to cast their ballot.

Regarding the findings, the youth respondents concurred that the public authority called them aloof and uninterested in formal vote-based processes. Furthermore, the government officials made it clear that the youth were allowed to influence decisions but that the level of education of the youth was extremely low. However, the officials disagreed that the government encouraged youth to vote. Back and Westholm (2011) state that there are many ways to participate in political and electoral processes: for example, voting, where people use their vote to choose what candidate or party they want to make decisions for them in parliament; campaigning, which involves many different types of activities including demonstrating, sending letters and emails, and media

campaigns; sending petitions; signing petitions, where people sign petitions to show how strongly they feel about an issue and try to influence decision makers; participating in a political party, where political parties seek to become the government; and, becoming involved in a pressure group, who wants to change policy but does not want to become the government, who focuses on a particular area or areas of concern, and who seeks to influence decision makers.

Additionally, the parliamentary youth representatives disagreed that the government communicated with them on their own terms in a bid to get them to vote. Furthermore, it was clear that the youth were not involved in pressure groups, and that the government labelled young people as apathetic and uninterested in the formal democratic processes.

7.2.4 The new theoretical perspectives in the context of youth political participation within electoral processes on the African continent and its impact on democracy

The results further ascertained that women, minorities and younger citizens have slowly gained recognition of their right to vote and participate in politics and electoral processes on the African continent, which was not the case previously. The situation was however far from perfect as far as young people were concerned because of the historical tendencies of political parties to exclude young people from formal political systems and government structures. In South Africa, for example, only in the past national and local elections youth were made part of the representation of political parties in the various government structures (United Nations 2017).

The government officials, who formed part of the study, made it clear that more youth were knowledgeable about politics, even though red tape and unproductive 'talk shops' were the order of the day in politics in South Africa and Namibia. Regarding gender, the landscape remained unchanged, with political parties less likely to put forward female youth for elections; however, it is vital to note that youth's actions remained important to shape the continent's future political leadership. Youth in both countries could also form and create their own political parties based on their understanding of new party formation. With this intervention, youth will be able to address the high levels of unemployment. According to News24, they need to be well versed on the following factors:

✓ **Party registration**

Creating or forming a new political party is the most important responsibility, and the youth will need support from the ruling government. At the beginning the message should reach those who may be interested to be followers through a broad campaign, such as events, social media, and word of mouth. When there are enough followers, an organizational structure needs to be put in place. Legally there should be enough signatures of support and it is then that there will be proof that the party is organised and active and ready to register with the electoral commission of a particular area. The party will then be ready to participate in the election of political life.

✓ **Organising supporters**

It is important to call meetings to entice and initiate interest for individuals to decide if they want to join. Keen participation and engagement are vital in sustaining and retaining a political party. Members should know that:

- It is important to organise supporters by calling gatherings to evoke interest among members. This could be done by firstly organising a gathering with individuals who are already known in a community hall or at their own homes. If anyone is interested in starting a new political party, tell those individuals to disseminate the information to others.
- There should be a proof that a meeting has been held. If there are candidates who are appealing and energetic, they need to be invited to meetings, where they will be promoted. They will then make presentations and be involved in debates about the new party. They will address certain topical issues.
- Create a platform where the party ethics and morals are established by having discussions.
- Form committees to make decisions and approvals to address certain crucial issues.
- The next stage is to make sure that the donation of funds is in process. This will be followed by a formal request for funds from different organisations.

- Issues which need to be addressed include the following:

  - What aspects of political, social, or economic life would the party like to improve?

  - What would the party want to accomplish if elected to office?

  - What sets the party apart from others?

  - Why would voters want to support the party's candidates?

  - The party needs to start with a constitution which will guide in making laws and regulations and start with the policies and procedures of a political party. Issues that need to be seen to include:

    - Who is the party's leadership? How will they be elected?

    - What committees will be formed?

    - How do members vote on important issues?

    - How will candidates be chosen?

    - How will disagreements be handled?

      - When will meetings be held, and what form will they take?

The party will need a financial committee to ensure that rules are followed and complied with. Financial statements will be required to avoid the mismanagement of funds. The following should be addressed:

- How might contributions be generated?

- What account or accounts might money be held in?

- Which committee may oversee financial affairs?

- Who would also handle the financial reporting for the party?

- What regulations do you wish to establish, such as how much money may be spent on electoral campaigns?

- What processes will you put in place to ensure financial oversight?

- How will you deal with financial disputes or inquiries?

✓ **Categorising the party**

Classifying the party should be in the form of a unique name so that it may be known everywhere:

- Request a list of officially registered political parties from the local electoral commission.
- Choose a name that reflects the core values of the party. Attempt to keep the name as short as possible – no more than a handful of words. This will make it unforgettable and instantly recognisable.

✓ **Create a logo identifying your party.**

Logos are utilised to publicise and recognise ideological groups. They are required while formally enlisting a party. Pick one that is not excessively perplexing, yet is particular:

- For instance, assuming the party underscores moderate standards, you could choose a logo that contains a conventional image of the area.
- Assuming the party should be marked as a innovator, consider a logo that portrays a cutting edge, contemporary image while utilizing conventional tones.

✓ **Establish a website within your own area.**

An ideological group must have a site that people, in general, can visit for more data. Buy a space name that is firmly connected with the party's name. Put the site's location on limited-time materials, and appropriate these at gatherings. Your site's content could incorporate things like:

- A duplicate of the party's pronouncement and centre convictions.
- Life stories and articulations from party pioneers.
- Data about forthcoming occasions and elections.
- Pages for any applicants that are running in elections.
- A connection for data on the best way to contribute.

✓ **Utilise social media to promote the party.**

Spread the news about any occasions that are facilitated by the political party. Video recordings should be made and photographs should be taken to tell the public what is really going on in the party. Make a point to post consistently – you could likewise share news content and different materials that are pertinent to the party.

- Social media services are fundamental to producing and keeping up with interest from the public in the party. Get out there on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and some other significant web-based entertainment destinations.
- Assign a social media team to supervise this part of your party's operations.

✓ **Party registration**

Collect signatures from supporters. A certain number of signatures are usually required to become a political party. This could be a difficult number te reach, such as 1000, or a percentage of registered voters in your area, such as 5%:

- Distribute an online form announcing a petition to form a political party.
- Encourage supporters to sign.
- If your party already has enough members, simply collect their signatures.
- Alternatively, go into the streets, tell passersby about your party, and encourage them to sign a petition in support.

✓ **Meet any specific eligibility requirements.**
- These requirements can fluctuate dependent on the area you live in. Now and again, for example, you would have to do certain things such as:
  o Demonstrate that you have spent the necessary sum on political processes in a year,
  o Show that you have received donations.
  o Have politicians to pronounce affiliations.
  o Arrive at a limited number of individuals.

✓ **File at the right time**

At certain times, you can enlist a new political party. For example, you will most likely be unable to list a new political party short before an election. If you do not know the principles in your area, check with your local electoral commission.

✓ **Submit official filing paperwork.**

To determine what administrative work you want to record, contact the electoral commission in your area. It will typically include the official document as well as copies of supporting documents such as a pronouncement of affiliation, contact information for officials, fundamental points, and a fiscal summary.

- There might be a documenting expense.
- When you are registered, you ought to have the option to have upcoming politicians put on polling forms.

Returning to the findings of this study, some of the respondents agreed that decision makers were influenced when it came to politics in both countries. According to a Report of the Commonwealth Expert Team (2014), the youth in Namibia seemed to be proactively involved in political and electoral issues, both during the campaign period and on election day. For instance, the leader of the South-West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) Youth League spearheaded an unprecedented yet illegal land repossession campaign on the outskirts of Windhoek, citing corruption related to land distribution, which affected the prospects of allocation of land to the youth who comprised most of the voting population in Namibia. Opportunities for youth to take part in governance and political and decision-making practices were heavily influenced by political, socioeconomic, and cultural settings, where social standards in many regions of the world resulted in various forms of prejudice against young people. Moreover, the youth political representatives in both parliaments agreed that young people were excluded from meaningful participation in governance systems; however, the living standards of the youth have improved over the years.

Turning to gender disparities, Dolan (2011) and Fox (2011) deliberated on how to close the gender voting disparity between females and males. They arrived at the conclusion that young females' socio-political aspirations might assist in resolving this dilemma; education may be one of the key mechanisms, as female political involvement continued to increase when they realised that political developments could directly influence their lives. Some women would also have to resolve their mental conviction that they were not equal to men to solve this problem. Hayes and Lawless (2016), however, argued that young women were not treated differently than young men by the media during election campaigns. It was found that young females generally were not influenced by gender stereotyping, but they did recognise that gender bias occurred beyond the awareness of voters and that it could structure their voting behaviour. In a survey by the IEC (2005), 55% of 18- to 29-year-olds reported having been treated with prejudice, compared with about a quarter (24%) of 30- to 39-year-olds. The 18- to 29-year-olds were predominantly excluded from the high decision-making structures of government. Evidence further suggests that the turnout of young people to vote in general elections was lower than the average turnout for the general population.

Moreover, it is important to note from the findings that there was no difference in the level of education between young men and young women in Africa. Lastly, there was resounding consensus from the respondents that African politics had failed to improve the living standards of the youth, and that youth were not becoming more involved in pressure groups in the political cycles of their countries.

7.3 Discussion of the findings of the qualitative research approach

7.3.1 Varying youth interest in the political and voting environment.

The current political systems did not interest the youth of both countries because they felt alienated by the entire process. Moreover, politicians only cared about themselves and their families, and they failed to address the issues affecting the youth, such as unemployment, corruption, and poor service delivery in their respective communities.

According to Statistics South Africa (2021), unemployment in the country stood at 34.9% in 2021, which is the highest rate since 2008. Furthermore, Statistics South Africa indicated that the youth unemployment rate soared to 46.3% in the first quarter of 2021.

Roberts (2019) and Tracey (2016) argued that many issues increased the disinterest of youth in political and voting systems in their countries, especially in South Africa, including the following issues:

- The continued rising unemployment crisis in the country,
- The effect corruption has on service delivery in different communities,
- The lack of trust in the governing system, and the pointless political and voting process, and
- Lastly, the lack of access to tertiary education, and the effect drug abuse, as well as crime, has on the lives of the youth.

In 2019 the youth in South Africa represented 20.1% of the IEC's registered voter population. If they took part in the voting process, they could force political parties to implement the much-needed change that they wanted to see in the country. Instead, young people resort to violent protest to force local government structures to address their concerns because their confidence in local government has petered out. These protests occurred because local leaders, ward councillors and community leaders provided ineffective platforms, such as meetings that were unresponsive and alienating to youth issues in general (Roberts 2019; Tracey 2016).

Like in South Africa and in other Sub-Saharan countries, Namibia did not fare well when it came to young people participating in politics and the voting process (Motsamai 2014). Namibian youth were largely disappointed with the electoral politics, for the following reasons:

- Perceptions that political activism and engagement does not yield results.
- The distrust of political parties; and
- The lack of access to political leadership.

Motsamai (2014) further stated that a 2012 survey conducted by the ECN highlighted that the youths' non-participatory behaviour was linked to the following issues:

- The limited opportunities afforded the youth to participate in decision-making processes.
- Youth's distrust of the political institutions in Namibia.
- The lack of institutional capacity development for the young women in the country.
- The lack of communication tools that were attractive to the youth; and
- Youth activities were not linked to national initiatives.

7.3.2 Issues of youth voter apathy

Among the government officials and youth political party representatives in the parliaments there was consensus that young people were the next generation of leaders in South Africa and Namibia. However, political leaders were failing in addressing the issues of voter apathy among young people because they did not take the youth seriously. This finding was substantiated by the following reasons:

- Increased and escalating corruption in both South Africa and Namibia.
- Political leaders' lack of capacity and skills rendered them unable to cater for the needs of the youth.
- Lack of youth recognition; and
- Government officials who were only interested in their own agendas and interests.

However, some of the respondents indicated that the South African and Namibian governments did not have the means to address issues of voter apathy among young people. The interviewees further indicated that the issue of voter apathy among the youth would be impossible to address because politicians did not engage with the youth during non-election periods, but they entertained the youth closer to the voting period, which could not be regarded as a solution to address issues of voter apathy among the youth.

Chauke (2020) argued that the reduced participation of youth in the electoral democracy should be regarded as a national conundrum for South Africa. However, the youth have reached a point where they cannot grasp the importance of casting their votes for their preferred candidates. Moreover, the IEC's invisibility during non-election periods has exacerbated the situation because the youth question their importance in relation to the electoral process and politics in South Africa because during election periods, political parties in South Africa pay attention to the youth, but during non-election periods, they disappear (Chauke 2020).

7.3.3 Other methods, apart from voting, to be used by non-voters in South Africa and Namibia

A suggestion was made that South Africa and Namibia should invest in technology by which they could enhance the communication process, whereby non-voting youth could express their frustrations regarding the voting systems, processes, and politics in their respective countries. Moreover, the countries should adopt new policy directives in relation to how they could entice the youth and non-voters to participate in the electoral process. Through technology and social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok and WhatsApp, youth participation could be enhanced and encouraged, as these were the platforms used by the youth to communicate. It was also important for political parties to understand the need for technology integration when addressing issues of youth non-participation in the voting process. According to Schulz-Herzenberg (2020), South Africa can adopt the policy directives of automatic voter registration to persuade the rising number of non-voters to return to the polls by transforming the current manual and voluntary registration process to a more automatic process, which would be the role of the government through the IEC to register all eligible voters in the country. Moreover,

this in turn would improve the number of voters at the polls and reduce the challenges faced by voters to find transport and take time off work to register to vote. This should also reduce the costs involved in voluntary registration for economically marginalised communities, and lastly, reduce the growing gap between registered and unregistered voters.

7.3.4 Voting systems for South Africa and Namibia

There was consensus among the interviewees that, as Namibia and South Africa are two different countries in terms of resources, policies, laws, operations and politics, their voting systems would differ. Further, the respondents indicated that the South African voting systems was still a paper-based voting system, whereas the Namibian voting systems had evolved and was now an electronic voting system, which was introduced in 2014. According to EISA, Namibia was the first country to move away from a paper-based voting system (EISA 2014). Furthermore, EISA (2014) indicated that South Africa and some other African countries had been interested in the use of electronic voting systems; however, they had not implemented them yet, while Namibia had taken a step in this direction. Moreover, the paper-based manual system in South Africa operated through the adopted Proportional Representation (PR) Electoral System, which was based on a closed party list for the National and Provincial Assemblies and a mixed system for local elections to promote the electoral inclusiveness, participation, and representation of various stakeholders (IEC 2008).

7.3.5 Single voting systems for South Africa and Namibia

A single voting system, according to the participants, would ensure that the following would be realised:

- Improved communication amongst the stakeholders.
- Improved monitoring, control, and evaluation.
- Better management of the voting process; and
- Improved accountability by stakeholders.

However, some of the respondents indicated that their country could benefit from such a system, in either national or local elections, as it would reduce the duplication of

resources, through the enhancement of communication among the different stakeholders, which would encourage transparency and consultation, and ultimately, reduce costs.

7.3.6 COVID-19 measures to be adopted during the election period

The respondents indicated that the best option regarding COVID-19 measures to be adopted would be to use technology to reduce or avoid crowding so that the risks of the virus spreading would be minimised. Moreover, South Africa and Namibia should evolve and invest in technology to integrate it in their election processes during the pandemic and beyond. Furthermore, the adopted measures, such as social distancing and the use of sanitisers and masks, should be retained to avert further spreads and deaths in their respective countries. This implied that both countries would have to adopt technology and integrate it in the pandemic voting processes and beyond the pandemic, as this might entice the youth and non-voters to take part in the processes of voting and elections.

7.3.7 Guiding principles for an effective electoral system

The recommendation from the respondents was that the electoral voting systems policies should adopt technology as a measure for an effective electoral system. The electoral systems in these countries needed to evolve and become more tech-savvy. Moreover, technology would entice the youth and non-voters to participate in the voting processes and politics in these countries. The respondents further indicated that they recommended technology because it could be a solution to address issues related to voter apathy among young people and non-voting people in South Africa and Namibia, whilst improving confidence in the processes of the electoral commissions in both countries.

7.4 Triangulation of results (mixing quantitative and qualitative results)

This section provides the major conclusions from the analysed quantitative and qualitative data from the respondents and interviewees. The statistical software SPSS 27 was used for the computation of the information in quantitative analysis and thematic content analysis was utilised to analyse the qualitative information from the interviewees.

The section has been divided into two subsections as follows:-

7.4.1 Quantitative research results

• Electoral systems

There was consensus from the youth of both countries that electoral systems databases, voter education, consistent elections systems, simplified ballot papers, and the majority coalitions are key in ensuring that youth participate in the elections. Moreover, this will encourage the youth and non-voters to freely participate in the electoral activities because they understand what is needed from them to be part of the voting process.

• South Africa and Namibia's response to youth voter apathy

There were indications that to enhance voter apathy in South Africa and Namibia, there should be school curricula that cater for the political processes, more voter education programmes should be advocated for the youth, the governments of these two countries should improve the living standards of the youth, there should a caring political system that caters for the needs of the youth to encourage non-voters to take part in political and voting processes. Moreover, the political parties should ensure that they fulfil the promises they make to the youth and further promotion of youth participation in the voting and political processes.

• Shaping and defining voter apathy and voter support

Adequate infrastructure and service provision should be mandated by the political parties. Furthermore, social media usage, improved trust by the youth, improved education systems and reduction in corruption and malfeasance are important to improving voter apathy and voter support. Lastly, the political parties should improve consultation with youth and non-voter population, open communication with the youth, and build a passionate youth with regard to politics.

- New theoretical perspectives

The encouragement of youth, women, and minorities is important in politics, the political parties should build youth and women's knowledge capacity in politics. There is a critical need of encouraging youth participation in governance systems and provide for improved living standards for the youth and women.

7.4.2 Qualitative research results

- Issues of voter apathy

Reduced corruption, skills development for politicians, youth recognition by politicians, improved skills to address voter apathy by the politicians, improved youth engagement, and increased youth participation in political processes can encourage youth voter apathy and political will.

- Alternative methods apart from voting

Politicians in South Africa and Namibia should start looking at alternative voting methods apart from voting to ensure youth and non-voters are encouraged to take part in political and voting processes. Moreover, the increased investment in technology and more policy directives aimed at youth development, and lastly the use of social media as an alternative to the manual voting systems will urge youth to take part in the voting processes.

- Varying youth interests in the political and voting environment

The youth have lost interest in politics because they feel alienated by the political parties. Employment creation, the creation of corrupt free governance, improved service delivery, improved trust with youth, improved access to tertiary education, improved crime prevention, and reduced drug abuse will encourage youth and non-voter participation and interest in the electoral processes. Politicians should encourage youth participation in decision-making and improve communication with the youth. The electoral commissions should adopt communication tools that will attract the youth and ensure that the youth activities are linked with national priorities.

- Guiding principles recommended for the effective electoral system

The electoral commissions of both countries should adopt technology because the electoral population is getting more technology savvy, so this will encourage more participation by the youth in politics and voting.

- Single voting system

There should be improved communication, improved monitoring, control, and evaluation during elections to concertise voters of voting processes. Improved accountability by politicians and better management will encourage youth to take part in elections more. Lastly, a single voting system will ensure transparency, better consultation, and a reduction in costs.

- Voting systems

The two countries electoral commissions are still using the paper-based system, however, the electoral public indicates that a move to a more electronic voting system and more adoption of technology will encourage youth and non-voters to participate more in politics, whilst reducing the costs of the electoral systems in their countries.

- Covid-19 measures

The electoral commissions of both South Africa and Namibia should invest more in technology and integrate it in the voting systems to ensure that youth is enticed to take part in the political voting processes. Moreover, during such pandemics, their health measures such as social distancing and the use of sanitisers should be put n place to ensure safety of the voters.

7.5 Framework formulation (combination of results)

The data collection was conducted concurrently, to ensure that all the participants has been contacted and data is collected speedily to ensure that the research is concluded on time. The concurrent design collects both qualitative and quantitative information during a single phase. Since the overall goal of this approach is to gain a deeper comprehension of the phenomenon under research, information may be gathered from the same respondents or similar target populations. The objective is to gather various but comparable information that will substantiate the overall results (Warfa, 2016:4).

This is diagrammatically represented below:

Adapted from Warfa (2016:3)

7.5.1 Framework of the quantitative and qualitative research paradigms.

The research objectives were addressed and substantiated by the extensive literature provided by the researcher. The framework is based on the findings, which were statistically and thematically analysed, and developed. The government officials and the youth political party representatives in the parliaments indicated that the following elements were critical to reduce political apathy among South African and Namibian youth. The table below illustrates the schematic theoretical framework, as derived from the quantitative and qualitative data analysed. The framework above highlights the need for the governments of the two countries to improve the participation of youth and non-voters in the political and electoral systems in their respective countries. They need to ensure that there is a reduction in corruption and there is improved accountability by the political stakeholders in South Africa and Namibia. Furthermore, open communication and improved consultation with the youth will improve their trust in the system and they might be encouraged to start taking part in the politics and in the elections in their respective countries.

Young people's low level of trust in political institutions is an indication that democracy is in jeopardy. Youth do not trust political institutions, such as parliament, legal systems, and political parties (Kwak, Tomescu-Dubrow, Slomczynski and Dubrow 2020). Factors such as corruption reduce the level of trust in the three institutions mentioned above (Van der Meer and Zmerli 2017; Newton, Stolle and Zmerli 2017). It is argued that the poor execution and quality of activities of a government affect economic equality (Uslaner 2017), cause hostility, and damage the short-term state of the economy (Kettl 2017; Listhaug and Jacobsen 2017). The decline in trust in governments is to be blamed on changing citizen values and expectations. Both political and personal expectations, past experiences, perceived levels of risks, such as unemployment, and financial and economic instability ruins people's trust in governments and institutions (Grimes 2017). Most importantly, the inclusion of politics and election processes in the school curriculum might address youth apathy in elections, as well as voter education throughout the year

to encourage youth to become involved in politics, and lastly, politicians should be reskilled to ensure that they understand the needs and issues of the youth in an effort to enhance their political participation. The diagram highlights the critical issues that, if taken seriously, could address youth voter apathy in South Africa and Namibia, prior to the integration of the results into a single finding for the study.7.5.2 Finalised framework of the quantitative and qualitative research paradigms

Finally, the researcher triangulated the findings of both the quantitative and qualitative data to reach a better understanding of the issues related to youth voter apathy in South Africa and Namibia. The term triangulation is regarded as a measurement technique that is often used by surveyors to locate an object. In mixed methods research, this ideology can be used to integrate qualitative and quantitative results to illustrate a more complete understanding of the issue or problem under study (Mertens and Hesse-Biber 2012). Consequently, a final framework was developed with key factors that could be used to encourage youth to take part in politics and the voting process:

Figure 26 Final framework integrating the results of the study as indicated above: Source: Own compilation

The integrated results indicated that voter apathy among the youth in South Africa and Namibia could be addressed by taking cognisance of the following key elements:

•   Voter education and voter education programmes to be directed at the youth in terms of politics and electoral systems;

•   Ensuring that the electoral system databases are technologically compliant;

•   Reducing youth alienation in politics;

•   Ensuring that the school curriculum caters for youth politics;

•   Improving the living standards of the youth, women, and minority groups;

•   Promoting youth participation in politics and electoral processes at a young age;

•   Politicians should improve their communication with the youth in South Africa and Namibia;

•   Adopting technologies that will improve the communication, accountability, monitoring and evaluation of politicians with the youth;

- Improved accountability, control and monitoring, evaluation and trust by politicians and the respective governments;
- Adoption, investment, and integration of technology for effective voting systems;
- Reduction of corruption among politicians and the governments of South Africa and Namibia;
- Improved transparency is key to the improved participation of youth in politics;
- Politicians' skills should be developed to enable them to address the issues of the youth in politics;
- Youth should be recognised in politics;
- Integration of social media in politics and the electoral processes to entice and attract the youth;
- Improved service delivery and infrastructure provision by the governments of South Africa and Namibia; and
- The enhancement of youth participation in decision-making processes in both countries.

These elements, according to the participants, could partially address the issues of youth voter apathy if taken seriously by the governments of South Africa and Namibia. According to Zvaita and Tshuma (2019), even though the youth are interested in politics and public affairs in South Africa, they are highly unlikely to take part in actual elections because they boycott elections. The reasons cited for this included the following:
- Lack of political party membership;
- Low levels of political participation;
- A disinterest in electoral politics;
- High levels of cynicism about politics; and
- A low level of confidence in the country's democracy.

However, it is crucial for the governments of South Africa and Namibia to address these issues because the youth are the future leaders of these countries, and they cannot be left behind in the political processes and decision-making. The Framework above, which was developed in and through this study, could be utilised by political parties and the governments in South Africa and Namibia to understand which issues should be

addressed to encourage youth and non-voter participation in politics and electoral processes in their respective countries, to address the issue of youth voter apathy in a manner that could improve youth voting in the next round of national elections. Furthermore, the Framework can be used by the other countries in Africa to address the issues associated with youth voter apathy in their countries using the same research approach. This, therefore, provides the contextualisation of the contribution of this research to the body of knowledge on the topic under study.**7.6 Framework formulation**

7.6.1 Framework of the quantitative and qualitative research paradigms

The research objectives were addressed and substantiated by the extensive literature provided by the researcher. The framework is based on the findings, which were statistically and thematically analysed, and developed. The government officials and the youth political party representatives in the parliaments indicated that the following elements were critical to reduce political apathy among South African and Namibian youth. The table below illustrates the schematic theoretical framework, as derived from the quantitative and qualitative data analysed:

Electoral systems
- Electoral systems database
- Voter educa ion
- Consistent elections systems
- Simplified ballot papers
- Majority coalitions

SA's response to youth voter apathy
- School curriculum should cater for politics
- Voter education programmes
- Improve living standards of the youth
- Caring political system for the youth
- Fulfilment of promises to the youth
- Promotion of youth participation processes

Varying youth interests in political and voting environment
- Reduce youth alienation in politics
- Employment creation
- Create corrupt free governance
- Improved service delivery
- Improved trust with the youth
- Improved access to tertiary education
- Improved crime prevention
- Reduced drug abuse
- Encourage youth participation in decision making processes
- Improved communication with the youth
- Adopt communication tools that will attract the youth
- Ensure youth activities are linked with national priorities

Quantitative Research results

Voter apathy amongst the youth in South Africa and Namibia

Issues of voter apathy
- Reduced corruption
- Skills development for politicians
- Youth recognition by politicians
- Improved skills to address voter apathy by politicians
- Improved youth engagement
- Increased youth participation politics

Alternative methods apart from voting
- Increased investment in technology
- Policy directives aimed at you h development
- Social media

Shaping and defining voter apathy and voter support
- Infrastructure provision
- Service delivery
- Social media usage
- Improved trust by the youth
- Improved education systems
- Reduction in corruption and malfeasance
- Improved consultation with the youth and non-voters
- Open communication with the youth
- Building a passionate youth about politics

New theoretical perspectives
- Encouragement of youth, women and minorities in politics
- Build youth and women knowledge capacity in politics
- Encourage youth participation in governance systems
- Improved living standards of the youth and women

Qualitative research results

Single voting system
- Improved communication
- Improved monitoring, control and evaluation
- Better management
- Improved accountability by stakeholders
- Transparency
- Better consultation
- Reduction in costs

Covid-19 measures
- Use of technology in elections
- Increased investment in technology
- Social distancing
- Use of sanitisers and masks
- Integration of technology might entice the youth and non-voter to participate in elections

Guiding principles recommended for effective electoral system
- Adoption of technology
- Tech savvy electoral offices

Voting systems
- Paper-based voting systems
- Electronic voting systems
- Adoption and use of technology

Figure 25 Framework of the quantitative and qualitative research paradigms

Source: Own compilation

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The framework above highlights the need for the governments of the two countries to improve the participation of youth and non-voters in the political and electoral systems in their respective countries. They need to ensure that there is a reduction in corruption and there is improved accountability by the political stakeholders in South Africa and Namibia. Furthermore, open communication and improved consultation with the youth will improve their trust in the system and they might be encouraged to start taking part in the politics and in the elections in their respective countries.

Young people's low level of trust in political institutions in an indication that democracy is in jeopardy. Youth do not trust political institutions, such as parliament, legal systems, and political parties (Kwak, Tomescu-Dubrow, Slomczynski and Dubrow 2020). Factors such as corruption reduce the level of trust in the three institutions mentioned above (Van der Meer and Zmerli 2017; Newton, Stolle and Zmerli 2017). It is argued that the poor execution and quality of activities of a government affect economic equality (Uslaner 2017), cause hostility, and damage the short-term state of the economy (Kettl 2017; Listhaug and Jacobsen 2017). The decline in trust in governments is to be blamed on changing citizen values and expectations. Both political and personal expectations, past experiences, perceived levels of risks, such as unemployment, and financial and economic instability ruins people's trust in governments and institutions (Grimes 2017).

Most importantly, the inclusion of politics and election processes in the school curriculum might address youth apathy in elections, as well as voter education throughout the year to encourage youth to become involved in politics, and lastly, politicians should be reskilled to ensure that they understand the needs and issues of the youth in an effort to enhance their political participation. The diagram highlights the critical issues that, if taken seriously, could address youth voter apathy in South Africa and Namibia, prior to the integration of the results into a single finding for the study.

7.6.2 Finalised framework of the quantitative and qualitative research paradigms

Finally, the researcher triangulated the findings of both the quantitative and qualitative data to reach a better understanding of the issues related to youth voter apathy in South Africa and Namibia. The term triangulation is regarded as a measurement technique that is often used by surveyors to locate an object. In mixed methods research, this ideology can be used to integrate qualitative and quantitative results to illustrate a more complete understanding of the issue or problem under study (Mertens and Hesse-Biber 2012). Consequently, a final framework was developed with key factors that could be used to encourage youth to take part in politics and the voting process:

Electoral systems
- Electoral systems database
- Voter education
- Consistent elections systems
- Simplified ballot papers
- Majority coalitions

SA's response to youth voter apathy
- School curriculum should cater for politics
- Voter education programmes
- Improve living standards of the youth
- Caring political system for the youth
- Fulfilment of promises to the youth
- Promotion of youth participation processes

Varying youth interests in political and voting environment
- Reduce youth alienation in politics
- Employment creation
- Create corrupt free governance
- Improved service delivery
- Improved trust with the youth
- Improved access to tertiary education
- Improved crime prevention
- Reduced drug abuse
- Encourage youth participation in decision making processes
- Improved communication with the youth
- Adopt communication tools that will attract the youth
- Ensure youth activities are linked with national priorities

Shaping and defining voter apathy and voter support
- Infrastructure provision
- Service delivery
- Social media usage
- Improved trust by the youth
- Improved education systems
- Reduction in corruption and malfeasance
- Improved consultation with the youth and non-voters
- Open communication with the youth
- Building a passionate youth about politics

Alternative methods apart from voting
- Increased investment in technology
- Policy directives aimed at youth development
- Social media

Voter apathy amongst the youth in South Africa and Namibia

New theoretical perspectives
- Encouragement of youth, women and minorities in politics
- Build youth and women knowledge capacity in politics
- Encourage youth participation in governance systems
- Improved living standards of the youth and women

Single voting system
- Improved communication
- Improved monitoring, control and evaluation
- Better management
- Improved accountability by stakeholders
- Transparency
- Better consultation
- Reduction in costs

Issues of voter apathy
- Reduced corruption
- Skills development for politicians
- Youth recognition by politicians
- Improved skills to address voter apathy by politicians
- Improved youth engagement
- Increased youth participation politics

Voting systems
- Paper-based voting systems
- Electronic voting systems
- Adoption and use of technology

Covid-19 measures
- Use of technology in elections
- Increased investment in technology
- Social distancing
- Use of sanitisers and masks
- Integration of technology might entice the youth and non-voter to participate in elections

Guiding principles recommended for effective electoral system
- Adoption of technology
- Tech savvy electoral offices

Figure 26 Final framework integrating the results of the study

Source: Own compilation

The integrated results indicated that voter apathy among the youth in South Africa and Namibia could be addressed by taking cognisance of the following key elements:

- Voter education and voter education programmes to be directed at the youth in terms of politics and electoral systems;
- Ensuring that the electoral system databases are technologically compliant.
- Reducing youth alienation in politics.
- Ensuring that the school curriculum caters for youth politics.
- Improving the living standards of the youth, women, and minority groups;
- Promoting youth participation in politics and electoral processes at a young age.
- Politicians should improve their communication with the youth in South Africa and Namibia;
- Adopting technologies that will improve the communication, accountability, monitoring and evaluation of politicians with the youth;
- Improved accountability, control and monitoring, evaluation and trust by politicians and the respective governments;
- Adoption, investment, and integration of technology for effective voting systems;
- Reduction of corruption among politicians and the governments of South Africa and Namibia.
- Improved transparency is key to the improved participation of youth in politics.
- Politicians' skills should be developed to enable them to address the issues of the youth in politics;
- Youth should be recognised in politics.
- Integration of social media in politics and the electoral processes to entice and attract the youth;
- Improved service delivery and infrastructure provision by the governments of South Africa and Namibia; and
- The enhancement of youth participation in decision-making processes in both countries.

These elements, according to the participants, could partially address the issues of youth voter apathy if taken seriously by the governments of South Africa and Namibia. According to Zvaita and Tshuma (2019), even though the youth are interested in politics and public affairs in South Africa, they are highly unlikely to take part in actual elections because they boycott elections. The reasons cited for this included the following:

- Lack of political party membership.
- Low levels of political participation.
- A disinterest in electoral politics.
- High levels of cynicism about politics; and
- A low level of confidence in the country's democracy.

However, it is crucial for the governments of South Africa and Namibia to address these issues because the youth are the future leaders of these countries, and they cannot be left behind in the political processes and decision-making. The Framework above, which was developed in and through this study, could be utilised by political parties and the governments in South Africa and Namibia to understand which issues should be addressed to encourage youth and non-voter participation in politics and electoral processes in their respective countries, to address the issue of youth voter apathy in a manner that could improve youth voting in the next round of national elections. Furthermore, the Framework can be used by the other countries in Africa to address the issues associated with youth voter apathy in their countries using the same research approach. This, therefore, provides the contextualisation of the contribution of this research to the body of knowledge on the topic under study.

7.7 Summary

The study calls upon members of the respective National Assemblies and Provincial Legislatures to rethink youth voter apathy in an electoral democracy, by assisting the youth to improve the core and status of Namibia and South Africa. This should be done while being cognisant of the fact that equality in respect of skills, qualifications, age and gender should be maintained. What should be kept in mind here is that young people feel unrepresented in the different spheres of government.

The following recommendations based on the triangulated framework of the results need to be taken into consideration to reduce the apathy of youth in voting for all sphere of governments:

- ✓ **The role of civic education to engagement paradigms in reinforcing both youth and the enabling environment**

Citizenship education should be a priority and it should be provided for everyone. The Sustainable Development Goals are about the quality of education provided, which puts emphasis on youth involvement in quality education to improve the core of every country, and which provides for lifelong learning opportunities (Chen 2021). There is also a need for leaders to positively influence others in the complicated and new environment, and to thoroughly assess specific programmes in education, their impacts, and their relative costs (Ng 2019b). Many young people have limited access to citizenship education, and it plays a minor role in many educational systems. Moreover, if there is no desire for education, the youth will miss a great opportunity to improve their skills (Nurgiansah 2021).

Shifting an entire generation's behaviour requires a population-level approach and a population level investment. No matter how effective an individual method or programme of education is, if it cannot be delivered affordably to a substantial number of young people, consistently, it is unlikely to create significant shifts in youth democratic behaviour. This means that a key part of the research and development of citizenship education needs to be testing and evaluating the impact of programmes and methods, with strong consideration of their cost effectiveness and their ability to deliver at scale. Education is frequently suggested as a way of addressing youth disengagement, but it should at least be recognised that much more specific and inspiring forms of citizenship education are required to address this goal (Ohana 2020).

Education starts with income categories, from poverty-affected to wealth at home, and plays a considerable part in the empowerment of young people in the entire community. Education can open healthier and brighter prospects for young people, provide for a

better and more fulfilled way of living, and allow them to make a better world in which they live by their positive motivation and inspiration.

Moreover, education is the path leader of the youth to assist them in cognitive and creative thinking so that they can make the right choices, which will positively impact on their lives. In this way, they are able to develop their own goals and make efforts to achieve these through their own efforts. The youth will also be able to predict future situations more accurately and be better at decision-making (Shepherd, Gauley, Krauss, Kornbluh and Collur 2017). When youth learn more now, they will be able to lead or teach others in future to motivate and inspire them. Taking this into consideration, this process will be passed on from one generation to the next (Nawawi, Ali, Irawan, Ahmad, Mukramin, Marsuki and Kaya 2020). Young people are the beneficiaries and the aspiration of a prosperous nation if they understand and recognise the ethics and morals of the nation. They are required to be able to change people's views and become the foundation for generations to come, and to develop a nation with ideas that are knowledgeable, have broad insight, and are based on the values and norms existing in the society (Marsuki, Ismail and Mukramin 2019).

Through education young people will be given an opportunity to function as managers and administrators, and be able to plan, organise, control and lead, even in bigger organisations. Their voice and opinions will play a constructive and meaningful role in political decision making. Moreover, young people are more inclined to exhibit their enthusiasm when they are taught how to think out of the box, which will encourage their ability to foster positive, lasting change. They also become more likely to petition and protect democracy, while becoming responsible and accountable citizens.

Youth communication activities should also be built on youth-centric practices. This means that the programmes should incorporate representation, which means a varied and wide-ranging membership, with leadership empowering youth to take ownership of activities; where appropriate guidance and training is provided where required; and where young people are allowed to change the direction of the planned programmes, as well as the decision-making (Augsberger, Collins and Gecker 2018). All the activities must ensure

consistent and systematic participation in order that both provide honest long-term impact and build the skills of the participants.

✓ **Youth Education in social life**

Societal education can be improved in several ways. These include acting in a socially responsible manner, including respect for the principle of justice and human rights; respect for other human beings, for other cultures and other religions; developing a sense of belonging; and understanding issues relating to the environment and sustainability (De Coster and Sigalas 2017).

Education is being implemented differently than in the past. However, this transition and revolution must be accomplished in new ways. This is due to improvements in social life. Children, for example, are now brought up in the same way, and culture and conventional ways of doing things have changed.

It is critical to strengthen public channels of communication and more inclusive involvement, with a focus on those whose voices were previously unheard. Invention and scientific studies should encourage broad social deployment to reshape and improve education.

Education must become a global responsibility, with universal collaboration expanded and made fairer in a spirit of solidarity that fosters trust at all levels. A new social contract for education would then necessitate difficult shifts in power dynamics among states, social movements, citizen groups, professional associations, business, and other actors. Amidst the inspiring and empowering work of many in recent decades, things must be done differently to meet the difficulties we face. Participating in this essential and crucial undertaking together will result in changing the cultural traditions into sustainable futures (Nur Wardhani 2018).

Schools and other educational establishments ought not to be environments where students compete for limited resources. Schools should be reformed, but they should also be shielded as distinctive social and educational sites because they promote equality, fairness, and individual and collective well-being. Beyond the classroom, it is critical to

ensure that all aspects of education work to disseminate knowledge and expertise equally, rather than place it entirely in the hands of a few. This transformation of educational systems will be critical in fostering the broad social participation required to build a just and sustainable future. It will aid in mobilising the necessary changes outside of the realm of education.

Sophisticated programmes focus on shaping education instead of categorising it, promoting multidisciplinary, cross-cultural, and environmental strategies in and outside of formal education. The syllabi must facilitate access to knowledge, while also controlling it by enabling children, youth and adults to think about what is exempted and what assumptions are made. While initial skills remain critical, it is essential to encourage a school curriculum that fosters creativity, involvement, and a broadness of skills across the lifespan. What is required is a setting that encourages the intercultural and multidisciplinary study of people-relevant issues and contemporary challenges through community-engaged, problem-based, and project-based education. Curriculum transition in these directions will result in learners of all ages being more capable of comprehending and behaving in the interrelations, imbalances, irregularities, and connections that influence today's world.

By investing in teaching that fosters cooperation and solidarity, you can help teachers develop transformative education. Teachers must have dignified employment conditions and ongoing professional support that recognises teaching as a collaborative profession to encourage people's intellectual, social, and moral abilities to work with others to alter the world with empathy and understanding. This includes fair and open pay, healthy and safe workplaces, and systems that allow teachers to effectively use their judgement and competence in creating student learning that extends far beyond the limitations of conventional 'lessons' and 'classrooms'. Increase the value of education as a worldwide collective welfare by promoting more equal and fair collaboration both within and throughout countries. It is becoming abundantly evident that greater global collective responsibility for education is required to resolve the historical wrongs and reshape the future. Education is now expanding beyond national boundaries.

The other overwhelming component of training for social advancement is the improvement of municipal life and dynamic cooperation in a democratic society through the down-to-earth insight of living and working with others in the school climate and local area administration. Knowledgeable people are meant to be educated, dependable, and connected with residents, better ready to comprehend and take part in the expansive endeavours of making, keeping up with, and working on the institutions of contemporary social orders.

Community participation helps youth become sympathetic and compassionate citizens who could conduct related work when they become adults. Additionally, youth who give back to their communities develop leadership skills, learn the importance of helping, and gain work experience.

A new social contract for education, according to the International Commission on the Futures of Education (2022), provides both the view and steps for improving education so that knowledge and learning best support the intergenerational work of building just, peaceful, and self-sustaining hopes and dreams for humanity and the world. It is critical to maintain education as a human right throughout the lifespan by doing more of the same. Unsustainable social development patterns endanger humanity and the planet's future. Education is both a component of the issue and a piece of the answer in this case. The educational system must be protected, and development models that are both environmentally sustainable and socially just must be supported. However, considerable work must be done for education to do what needs to be done; the difficulties we face now and, in the future, will necessitate collective action. Governments alone cannot solve them. On the other hand, everyone must be empowered and encouraged to take part in effecting change. Nonetheless, education for these reasons remains lacking around the world.

✓ **Youth Education in economic life**

Education is the leading cause of economic growth, employment, and better earnings. Disregarding the economic aspect of education would jeopardise or compromise the success and wealth of future generations, with widespread consequences for poverty, social exclusion, and the sustainability of social security systems.

Economic efficiency is achieved by education and ought to give people scholarly and practical abilities that make them useful and improve their day-to-day environments; additionally, social orders with an educated citizenship will often be more valuable.

Higher education adds to financial progress both as a general rule, by empowering the populace to participate completely and uniformly as makers and purchasers in the complex modern society, and, all the more explicitly, by providing the talented staff required by various areas of the modern, information-driven economy.

Designing and producing products, selling services, paying taxes, making consumer choices, and saving money are some of the ways young people affect the economy. Through education, action and empowerment, young people and the economy can lead to social transformation and engagement in a range of ways. The level of education of the youth determines their ability to comprehend the concepts involved in business operations including production, management, and marketing. In general, therefore, for a country to promote economic growth, it must increase the level of capital creation.

✓ **Youth Education in political life**

Political participation can be defined as any lawful activity undertaken by citizens that aims to influence, change, or affect the government, or how institutions are run (Kitanova 2019). In other words, political participation includes all citizens' actions which aim to influence the decisions regarding their lives and their communities. With the changing definition of political participation, some recent studies argue that young people are not apathetic and disengaged from political processes (Acuña-Duarte 2017). Rather, they prefer alternative forms of political engagements such as protesting, demonstrating, being part of organisations, signing petitions, volunteering, and engaging online. Furthermore,

youth also find it difficult to adjust their lifestyle and work to political education in the old way and feel that politics is not compatible with their daily lives. They are more interested in informal forms of politics, such as the politics of social issues (Al Faza et al. 2020).

Political participation has different methods and systems, and this is done differently in various parts of the world. It can be usual or unusual, as well as activities such as voting, being members of political parties, serving on a local youth council, engaging through a youth organisation, or taking part in online political activism, boycotts, or a protest movement. The nature and extent of this participation are rapidly changing and progressing within the context of a shrinking space for civil society.

Moreover, there is compelling evidence that an open classroom method of learning, which would be considered as an inherently participatory approach, is associated with political engagement, positive attitudes towards political engagement, critical thinking, citizenship skills, political knowledge (Hoskins et al. 2021), and political efficacy.

✓ **Distinctions in policies and effective implementation in fragile versus stable environments**

The National Youth Policy is a framework for youth development across South Africa. It endeavours to ensure all young women and men are given meaningful opportunities to reach their full potential, both as individuals and as active participants in society. The National Youth Policy is specifically aimed at closing the identified gaps, addressing the challenges, and recommending new measures to improve and accelerate implementation thereby making major strides in the development of young people by ensuring that they assume their rightful place in their own community.

Guaranteeing that the youth are effectively participating in open government methodologies and initiatives is essential in building dynamic citizenship and in developing programmes that mirror the requirements and concerns of the youth. Encouraging this environment of commitment and cooperation is reliant upon the creation and execution of compelling and custom-made communication. This could empower governments to involve a different group of young people and can be especially compelling in building good relationships with disadvantaged youth, who may not feel

open to participating in conventional designs, for example, youth committees, and who might have restricted access to computers (Liebenberg 2017).

For policy developers, more and better education ought to be the first concern since it engages young people to help themselves and, in this manner, assists with further developing leadership.

Policies must entrench the envisaged economic effects into the broader potential influences of education and they should consider innovative economic approaches. Traditional growth theory and market-led thinking give much less weight to education for economic growth and competitiveness than the new growth theory and more institutional and innovation-oriented approaches.

✓ **Youth Voter Education**

The Voter Awareness Forum (VAF) is an informal forum for generating discussions and awareness around the electoral process, on the how, what, and where of registration and voting, through the medium of real-time activities. Youth apathy in politics should be motivated by civic education, particularly in rural settlements. Civic education takes into consideration people's post-election rights with which the electorate can ensure that elected representatives are held accountable for delivering on their promises. As a result, it is essential to include youth, beginning from their pre-casting a ballot and then empowering them to cast a ballot. This is one of the open doors' youth pass through in the democratic process. Start youth on a smaller scale with neighbourhood decisions and prepare them for bigger elections. This will show them how the democratic process produces results on issues that are close to them.

For young voters, start with the major considerations that are known to affect voter turnout to decide their unmistakable impact, or identify the gaps in this regard. Moreover, foster an engagement structure by reflecting on the unique mental, social and innovative perspectives for this age group and on what would promote youth participation. It is also essential to design appropriate methodologies at the outset that are totally different from those focused on the general population. If one hopes to win young voters' support, one needs to understand all the ideological groups or associations they support.

These kinds of efforts for future voters, together with perseverance and consistency, will further increase political participation.

- ✓ **The role of technology in shaping opportunities and strategies for youth engagement**

Understanding how young people use innovation and mirror their utilization of conventional and new media into custom-made methodologies assumes a pivotal part for governments looking to productively draw them in. Innovation and specifically web-based entertainment has turned into a significant part of young people's regular day to day existence (OECD 2017).

By creating open-access content, and public platforms, and being devoted to democratic involvement of all stakeholders, digital technologies link countries as well as individuals. This necessitates new learning practices that view digital technologies as a force for social inclusion rather than political representatives or self-promotion. Technological interventions should be modest and young people should be involved in defining the blueprint and the appropriate and sufficient variety or series of solutions. A new technological model or pattern that is consistent with democratic ideals and inclusive, participatory practices will best serve this purpose.

Technological modernisation and mechanisation are rapidly changing the nature and context of work for the young people of the world. Advances in ICT have increased the productivity of workers and enabled the creation of new jobs and industries. Youth are particularly well-positioned to benefit from these developments, given their early familiarity with digital technologies and their openness to exploring their application in an ever-widening range of new and existing contexts. Technological innovation is responsible for creating new employment opportunities, but it also represents a threat to more traditional forms and sources of work. While youth are better positioned than older people, more established workers to navigate the challenges of skills development and retraining that may be required to secure a role in the new economy, many youths remain excluded from such opportunities.

In political science, political apathy is described as a lack of interest or apathy towards politics. It can consist of interest apathy, voter apathy, and information apathy. It can also be categorized as the indifference of an individual and a lack of interest in participating in political activities.

In political science, voter apathy is a lack of interest among voters in the elections of representative democracies. Voter apathy or lack of interest is often cited as a cause of low turnout among eligible voters in jurisdictions where voting is optional, and the donkey vote where voting is compulsory.

Countless people, including youth, endorsed the matter movement on various social media platforms, such as by creating art or insightful posts on Instagram providing education about the movement. These good message posts were extremely influential and particularly effective in reaching teenagers. If prospective and young voters are the target audience, social media ads and communications should resolve actual topics and positions on issues rather than simply lauding political personalities without evidence to back it up.

Technology must be utilised responsibly because it is an essential component of our daily lives and, in recent years, a highly contentious focal point in South Africa's political scene. It is becoming increasingly linked to elections and campaigns, necessitating the collaboration of legislative bodies, regulators, advocacy groups, and technology companies. It has also made it possible to disseminate information from original sources with a single click. Social media, mass emailing, and online advertisements are all effective ways to reach many citizens, especially young people.

As a first step, it is critical that the leading technology companies and multidisciplinary scientists recognise and acknowledge this issue. They must collaborate to resolve the issue for the sake of future generations and the country. They should create civic technology that is accessible, trustworthy, and up to date. Throughout the history of human evolution, technology has always been an enabler, and it should again be an enabler to get young people back to the polling booth.

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✓ **A Single Election System**

Two political parties, the ANC and the EFF, suggested a single election to be implemented by 2024 (*News 24* October 2020). This will take long as it needs the South African Constitution to be amended. Should this happen every citizen in the country will need thorough training to avoid opposition to the system.

Elections during any a pandemic internationally and nationally

Recommendations for electoral administrators

• A discussion is necessary for the authorities to be engaged with vulnerable groups during election preparations (Bonevski, Randell, Paul, Chapman, Twyman, Bryant, Brozek and Hughes 2014).

• It is the responsibility of authorities to ensure that complaints systems are readily accessible to citizens and electoral stakeholders to report problems during the process (Report on Election Dispute Resolution 2020).

• Parliamentary committees should be instructed to manage and administer the electoral process (Siebrits 2017).

• The Electoral Management Bodies (EMBs) must use their websites and social media presence to provide accurate information about the voting process and should monitor social media for misinformation campaigns (Election Management Bodies in Southern Africa 2016).

• EMBs ought to become involved in their areas of strengths to address disinformation and scorn discourse during political decision periods that could hurt electoral participants (Subramanian 2018).

• EMBs should provide clear records of their meetings held to be ready for decisions during any pandemic (Serrat 2017).

• The administration and protection of survey workers requires preparation. A rapidly developing pandemic might well require measures custom made to neighbourhood needs, contingent upon the seriousness of lockdowns and contaminations (Garrett 2019).

• Contaminated and non-contaminated people from various geographic regions should not come into contact with one another; this could at times require that fewer people visit a particular venue (Garrett 2019).

• EMBs and public teams who manage pandemics ought to guarantee that all establishment's activities and commitments connected with giving direction, arranging, and carrying out preventive measures are clear (Pyrzyńska and Skoczylas 2920).

• No matter what their involvement, EMBs should convey straightforward information to residents (Bonevski et al. 2014).

• As it is eventually their obligation to hold safe elections, EMBs should cooperate with doctors and nurses in regard to preventive measures to be taken, and take a firm stand against those who could be a risk for voters as these people are only interested in promoting their own agendas.

General recommendations

• Electoral authorities ought to, where possible, expand on approaches that have proactively been utilised in the setting being referred to, as opposed to carrying out new strategies without any preparation.

• In regions of the world with a background marked by electoral struggles, elections might be dangerous during a pandemic, and authorities ought to guarantee that actions will be taken to upgrade electoral security in settings where problems are expected before, during, and after polling day.

Areas for future research

- Further research is needed to understand the impact of voter education programmes that are adopted with a youth focus.
- Research needs to be undertaken on the upskilling of politicians so that they can deal with issues of youth voter apathy.
- Research should be undertaken to benchmark what other countries outside Sub-Saharan Africa are doing to address issues of youth voter apathy and political involvement in their respective countries.

7.7 Limitations of the study

The research was dedicated to two election periods, namely 2014 and 2019, for South Africa and Namibia, but the applicability could be tested by applying the methodology in other countries and during other election periods. The questionnaire and interviews were conducted online, which did not allow the researcher to engage face-to-face (meeting physically) with the participants.

Furthermore, many of the study's limitations stemmed from the sampling. Prospective respondents often were overlooked or declined to respond to questions about one particular study.

7.8 "Findings, Recommendations and Conclusions"

The aims and objectives of the study were addressed, and a framework (Figure 7.1 and Figure 7.2) emanated from them, which provided the key elements that could be taken into consideration to address the issues of youth voter apathy. However, it is crucial for the governments of South Africa and Namibia to address these issues because the youth are the future leaders of these countries, and they should not be left behind in the political processes and decision-making. The Framework, which was developed by the researcher, could be utilised by political parties and the governments of South Africa and Namibia to understand which issues should be addressed to encourage youth and non-voter participation in politics and electoral processes in their respective countries and to address the issues of youth voter apathy in a manner that could improve youth voting in the next round of national elections. The application of a proper framework could assist the South African and Namibian governments to address issues associated with youth voter apathy, such as the distrust of political parties, the lack of access to political leadership, the lack of communication with the youth, and most importantly, issues such as corruption, transparency and accountability; and political parties could attract the youth to more progressive and effective political participation in the electoral processes, as well as the decision-making processes in their respective countries, with the youth as the cornerstone of the political and electoral movement.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire and the interview questions

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SOUTH AFRICAN AND NAMIBIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

I am **Mbahare Johannes Kekana,** a PhD student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and I am conducting a research study on the topic below:

POLITICAL APATHY AMONG SOUTH AFRICAN AND NAMIBIAN YOUTH: A CASE STUDY OF THE 2014 AND 2019 NATIONAL ELECTIONS

Kindly assist in the completion of this study by furnishing the information as requested in the questionnaire. Confidentiality of the information provided is for the University only. Your honest response will contribute to addressing the challenges of apathy among South African and Namibian youth.

Please read the statements carefully and mark with a cross (X) in the appropriate block.

SECTION A:

1. Demographic Information

    1.1   Gender

Male	
Female	

1.2   Age group

Less than 25 years	
26 – 40 years	
41 – 55 years	
56 – more	

1.3   Job status

Policy Director	
Deputy Director General	
Administrator	
Secretary & Youth	
Minister & Deputy Minister	

1.4   Highest qualification

Some high school	
Matric	
Certificate	
Bachelor's degree	
Honours degree	
Master's degree	
Doctoral degree	

1.5   Number of years employed at your organisation

0 – 5 years	
6 – 10 years	
11 – 15 years	
16 – 20 years	
21 years or more	

1.6   Which section are you working in?

Youth Unit	
Community Services	
Finance & Engineering	
Development Services	
Other	

SECTION B:

This section analyses the election systems of both countries. Please put a cross (X) or tick (√) in the applicable box to rate your level of agreement or disagreement. Mark one box only per statement.

What are the electoral systems used in South Africa and Namibia?

No	Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
2.1	The Electoral System Design Database that provides comparative data in both countries					
2.2	The database is the most comprehensive source of information in the elections field					
2.3	Interactive tools, including maps and graphs, allow users to easily compare regions and sub-regions for voting					
2.4	Voter education system is used					

2.5	Elections systems are wildly inconsistent in distribution of votes					
2.6	Plurality system where a majority coalition cannot override the election leader is used					
2.7	Ballot papers are more complex					
2.8	Faithfully translate votes cast into seats won, and thus avoid some of the more destabilizing and 'unfair' practices					
2.9	Lead to greater continuity and stability of policy					
	Make power-sharing between parties and interest groups more visible					
2.10	Ballot papers are as user friendly as possible to all voters to maximize participation and					

	reduce the number of spoilt ballots					
2.11	The system allows for transferring ballots to enable voters to accumulate diverse and related interests to win representation					

SECTION C:

This section analyses the factors shaping and defining voter apathy and voter support in South Africa and Namibia, respectively. Please put a cross (X) or tick (√) in the applicable box to rate your level of agreement or disagreement. Mark one box only per statement.

What factors shape and define voter apathy and voter support in South Africa and Namibia respectively?

No	Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
2.12	Government faces criticism from the population					
2.13	Government experiences poor participation in political activities					
2.14	Low levels of trust in government					
2.15	Belief that women have no knowledge of politics					
2.16	Unemployment					
2.17	Government experiences challenges of land issues					

2.18	Poor education					
2.19	Poor infrastructure and service delivery					
2.20	Corruption and malfeasance					
2.21	Election policy is clear enough for everyone to understand					
2.22	Religious reasons prevent young women from participating in elections					
2.23	Social media attracts the youth to vote in elections					
2.24	There is compliance to law and policies					
2.25	Fear of threats in voting					

SECTION D:

This section analyses the South African government's response to youth apathy during elections. Please put a cross (X) or tick (√) in the applicable box to rate your level of agreement or disagreement. Mark one box only per statement**.**

How does the South African government respond to the youth apathy during elections?

No	Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
2.26	Voter education programmes provided by government increase young people's interest in election					
2.27	Government encourages youth to vote					
2.28	Government improved living standards					
2.29	Youth are allowed to influence decision making in voting					
2.30	The youth are too lazy to study					

2.31	The level of education among the youth is very low					
2.32	The curriculum in schools does not include politics					

SECTION E:

This section analyses the new theoretical perspectives in the context of youth political participation within electoral processes within the African continent and its impact on democracy. Please put a cross (X) or tick (√) in the applicable box to rate your level of agreement or disagreement. Mark one box only per statement**.**

What are the new theoretical perspectives in the context of youth political participation within electoral processes within the African continent and its impact on democracy?

No	Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
2.33	More youth are knowledgeable on politics					
2.34	Young men are more educated than young women					
2.35	Women, minorities and younger citizens have slowly gained recognition of their rights					
2.36	Becoming involved in a pressure group					

2.37	Red tape and unproductive 'talk shops'					
2.38	Improved living standards					
2.39	Influencing decision makers					

SECTION F:

3. Do South African and Namibian young people's interest in elections vary? If so, in what ways and to what degree?

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4. Do the South African and Namibian governments address the issue of poor voter apathy amongst young people? If so, in what ways and to what degree?

If you answered YES, please explain.

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If you answered NO, please explain.

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5. Apart from voting, are there any other alternative methods whereby young non-voters of South Africa and Namibia express their political opinions? If so, how effective are these methods?

If you answered YES, please explain.

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If you answered NO, please explain.

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6. Are the voting systems implemented in South Africa and Namibia differently? If so, in what ways and to what extent?
If you answered YES, please explain.

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If you answered NO, please explain.

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7. What is your response on whether South Africa should consider having single elections (whereby local government, provincial and national elections are combined)?

If you agree, please explain.

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If you answer disagree, please explain.

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8. Kindly offer recommended guiding principles for an effective electoral system that will attract the South African youth to register for elections and vote.

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND CO-OPERATION

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR YOUTH OF POLITICAL PARTIES REPRESENTED IN BOTH THE SOUTH AFRICAN AND NAMIBIAN PARLIAMENTS

I am **Mbahare Johannes Kekana,** a PhD student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and I am conducting a research study on the topic below:

POLITICAL APATHY AMONG SOUTH AFRICAN AND NAMIBIAN YOUTH: A CASE STUDY OF THE 2014 AND 2019 NATIONAL ELECTIONS

Kindly assist in the completion of this study by furnishing the information as requested in the questionnaire. Confidentiality of the information provided is for the University only. Your honest responses will contribute to addressing the challenges of apathy among South African and Namibian youth.

Please read the statements carefully and mark with a cross (X) in the appropriate block.

SECTION A:

2. Demographic Information

    2.1 Gender

Male	
Female	

2.2   Age group

Less than 25 years	
26 – 40 years	
41 – 55 years	
56 – more	

2.3   Job   status

Unemployed	
Clerk & Administration	
Teaching	
IT	
Assistant Directors	
Other, please specify	

2.4   Highest qualification

Less than Matric	
Matric	
Certificate	
Bachelor's Degree	
Honours Degree	
Master's Degree	
Doctoral Degree	

2.5   Number of years employed at your organisation

0 – 5 years	
6 – 10 years	
11 – 15 years	
16 – 20 years	
21 years or more	

2.6   Which section are you working in?

Youth Unit	
Community Services	
Finance & Engineering	
Development Services	
Other	

SECTION B:

This section analyses the election systems. Please put a cross (X) or tick (√) in the applicable box to rate your level of agreement or disagreement. Mark one box only per statement.

What electoral systems are used in South Africa and Namibia?

No	Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2.1	The Electoral System Design Database that provides comparative data in both countries					
2.2	The database is the most comprehensive source of information in the elections field					
2.3	Interactive tools, including maps and graphs, allow users to easily compare regions and sub-regions for voting					
2.4	Voter education system is used					

2.5	Elections system is wildly inconsistent in the distribution of votes					
2.6	Plurality system where a majority coalition cannot override the election leader is used					
2.7	Ballot papers are more complex					
2.8	Faithfully translates votes cast into seats won, and thus avoid some of the more destabilizing and 'unfair' practices					
2.9	Lead to greater continuity and stability of policy					
	Make power-sharing between parties and interest groups more visible					
2.10	Ballot papers are as user friendly as possible for all voters in order to maximize participation and reduce the number of spoilt ballots					
2.11	The system allows for the transferring of ballots to enable voters to					

	accumulate diverse and related interests to win representation					

SECTION C:

This section analyses the factors shaping and defining voter apathy and voter support in South Africa and Namibia, respectively. Please put a cross (X) or tick (√) in the applicable box to rate your level of agreement or disagreement. Mark one box only per statement**.**

What factors shape and define voter apathy and voter support in South Africa and Namibia respectively?

No	Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2.12	Lack of appropriate skills					
2.13	Low levels of trust in youth by government					
2.14	No consultation with youth					
2.15	The land issue had a huge influence on the way in which young people viewed elections					
2.16	A vigorous democracy can be characterised by high voter turnout					
2.17	Young people who are voting for the first time					

	are less likely to vote in the next election based on their previous experience					
2.18	The youth support the election even if outcome does not promise any significant change to their position					
2.19	Social media attracts the youth to vote in elections					
2.20	Unemployment is a challenge for youth to vote					

SECTION D:

This section analyses the South African government's response to youth apathy during elections. Please put a cross (X) or tick (√) in the applicable box to rate your level of agreement or disagreement. Mark one box only per statement.

How does the South African government respond to the youth apathy during elections?

No	Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2.21	Politicians do not care about the youth					
2.22	Government is communicating with youth on their own terms to allow them to vote					
2.23	Electoral management bodies promote youth participation					
2.24	Becoming involved in a pressure group					
2.25	Red tape and unproductive 'talk shops'					
2.26	The government labelled young people as apathetic and uninterested in formal democratic processes					

2.27	Influencing decision makers					

SECTION E:

This section analyses the new theoretical perspectives in the context of youth political participation within electoral processes within the African continent and its impact on democracy. Please put a cross (X) or tick (√) in the applicable box to rate your level of agreement or disagreement. Mark one box only per statement.

What are the new theoretical perspectives in the context of youth political participation within electoral processes within the African continent and its impact on democracy?

No	Item	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
2.28	Parties are less likely to put forward female youth for election					
2.29	There is no constituency in the participation of young women					
2.30	Young people are excluded from meaningful participation in governance systems					
2.31	Youth are influenced by pressure groups					
2.32	Improved living standards of youth					

2.33	Influencing decision makers					
2.34	Young people's actions are important in shaping the continent's political future					

SECTION F:

3. Does South African and Namibian young people's interest in elections vary? If so, in what ways and to what degree?

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4. Do the South African and Namibian governments address the issue of poor voter apathy amongst young people? If so, in what ways and to what degree?

If you answered YES, please explain.

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If you answered NO, please explain.

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5. Apart from voting, are there any other alternative methods whereby young non-voters of South Africa and Namibia express their political opinions? If so, how effective are these methods?

If you answered YES, please explain.

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If you answered NO, please explain.

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6. What is your response on whether South Africa should consider having single elections (whereby local government, provincial and national elections are combined)?

If you agree, please explain.

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If you answer disagree, please explain.

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7. During this time of Covid-19, what measures can the government take in order to conduct elections successfully?

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8. Kindly offer recommended guiding principles for an effective electoral system that will attract the South African youth just like their counterparts in Namibian to register for elections and vote.

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THANK YOU FOR

YOUR TIME

AND

CO-OPERATION

Appendix B: Ethics Approval Letter

UNIVERSITY OF ™
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

04 May 2021

Mr Mbahare Kekana (217080473)
School Of Social Sciences
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Mr Kekana,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00002367/2021
Project title: POLITICAL APATHY AMONG SOUTH AFRICAN AND NAMIBIAN YOUTH: A CASE STUDY OF THE 2014 AND 2019 NATIONAL ELECTIONS
Degree: PhD

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 07 December 2020 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted FULL APPROVAL.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

This approval is valid until 04 May 2022.
To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

All research conducted during the COVID-19 period must adhere to the national and UKZN guidelines.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,
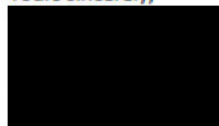
Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 8350/4557/3587 **Email:** hssrec@ukzn.ac.za **Website:** http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

Appendix C: Proof of Registration

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

2022 Mid-Year Examination Results

Last Name	: **Kekana**	Campus	:	**Pietermaritzburg**
First Name	: **Mbahare**	Full/Part	:	**Full Time**
Student Number	: **217080473**	Faculty	:	**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES**
Degree/Diploma	: **Doctor of Philosophy (Human Sciences)**			
Academic Year	: **2**			

Name of Course	Course Code	Grade	Codes
JUNE EXAMINATIONS			
Doctoral Thesis: Political Science Subseq Yr	POLS9DS	F/	Continuing

Appendix D: Language editing letter

MARGARET LINSTRÖM

LANGUAGE PRACTITIONER

Honours degree in Language Practice (Editing and Translating) (UFS)

Master's degree (Journalism and Media Studies) (UFS)

30 October 2022

CONFIRMATION OF EDITING

I, Margaret Linström, hereby confirm that I language edited the doctoral thesis of Mbahare Johannes Kekana entitled *Political apathy among South African and Namibian youth: a case study of the 2014 and 2019 national elections.*

The editing was done electronically, using Track Changes, to enable the candidate to accept or reject the suggested changes.

Appendix E: Turn-it-in report

PhD Thesis

ORIGINALITY REPORT

11%	10%	3%	%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	repository.nwu.ac.za Internet Source	1%
2	en.unesco.org Internet Source	<1%
3	www.degruyter.com Internet Source	<1%
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17	thecommonwealth.org Internet Source	<1%
18	Claire Zhu. "A Study for Improving Youth Voter Participation", Cambridge University Press (CUP), 2021 Publication	<1%
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