

# Democratic Disconnect? The Youth and Democracy in South Africa

by  
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## Abstract

Democracy requires an active and supportive citizenry. People can be active citizens by providing both attitudinal and behavioural support for democracy. Attitudes are drivers of political behaviour. Without positive attitudes, there can be no positive behaviours. Political participation can be divided into two parts: conventional and unconventional. Voting is essential for any democracy to prevail. However, recently, there has been a shift in electoral participation – voter turnout among young people has been on the decline and they are shifting away from conventional modes of participation, to unconventional modes of participation. Along with this shift, young people have also grown more sceptical of political actors and institutions. They feel unrepresented by political processes and they feel unsatisfied with the current democracy. Globally, this is a growing concern. However, it is an even bigger concern in younger democracies. South Africa is a relatively new democracy, with a growing youth bulge. Young South Africans are also distancing themselves from electoral politics. The fact that young people in South Africa are not participating in politics, means that the future stability and legitimacy of the regime is being put to the test. This study aims to examine whether there are differences in attitudinal and behavioural bases of support for democracy among young people, compared to their older counterparts. Thereafter, the study explores whether or not changes in attitudinal support can account for changes in behavioural bases of support for democracy. The study adopts a quantitative research design to be able to examine and answer the three research questions. Data was obtained from the Afrobarometer Survey Round 7 and the Comparative National Elections Project (CNEP) post-election survey. The results suggest that there are differences in attitudinal bases of support for democracy among young people, compared to their older counterparts. The study also indicates that young people are not participating in conventional forms of political participation. Lastly, the study shows that there are correlations between trust and political participation, which suggests that changes in attitudinal bases of support can account for differences in behavioural bases of support for democracy across age groups.

## Opsomming

Demokrasie vereis 'n aktiewe en ondersteunende burgerskap. Mense kan aktiewe burgers wees deur beide houdings- en gedragsondersteuning vir demokrasie te bied. Houdings is dryfvere van politieke gedrag. Sonder positiewe houdings kan daar geen positiewe gedrag wees nie. Politieke deelname kan in twee dele verdeel word: konvensioneel en onkonvensioneel. Stem is noodsaaklik vir enige demokrasie om te seëvier. Onlangs was daar egter 'n verskuiwing in verkiesingsdeelname – kiesersopkoms onder jongmense was aan die afneem en hulle verskuif weg van konvensionele wyses van deelname, na onkonvensionele wyses van deelname. Saam met hierdie verskuiwing het jongmense ook meer skepties geword oor politieke akteurs en instellings. Hulle voel nie verteenwoordig deur politieke prosesse nie en hulle voel ontevrede met die huidige demokrasie. Wêreldwyd is dit 'n groeiende kommer. Dit is egter selfs 'n groter bekommernis in jonger demokrasieë. Suid-Afrika is 'n relatief nuwe demokrasie, met 'n groeiende jeugbult. Jong Suid-Afrikaners distansieer hulle ook van verkiesingspolitiek. Die feit dat jongmense in Suid-Afrika nie aan die politiek deelneem nie, beteken dat die toekomstige stabiliteit en legitimiteit van die regime op die proef gestel word. Hierdie studie het ten doel om te ondersoek of daar verskille is in houdings- en gedragsbasisse van ondersteuning vir demokrasie onder jongmense, in vergelyking met hul ouer eweknieë. Daarna ondersoek die studie of veranderinge in houdingsondersteuning verantwoordelik kan wees vir veranderinge in gedragsbasisse van ondersteuning vir demokrasie. Die studie neem 'n kwantitatiewe navorsingsontwerp aan om die drie navorsingsvrae te kan ondersoek en beantwoord. Data is verkry uit die 'Afrobarometer Survey Round 7' en die 'Comparative National Elections Project' (CNEP) na-verkiesingsopname. Die resultate dui daarop dat daar verskille in houdingsbasisse van ondersteuning vir demokrasie onder jongmense is, in vergelyking met hul ouer eweknieë. Die studie dui ook aan dat jongmense nie aan konvensionele vorme van politieke deelname deelneem nie. Laastens toon die studie dat daar korrelasies is tussen vertrouwe en politieke deelname, wat daarop dui dat veranderinge in houdingsbasisse van ondersteuning verantwoordelik kan wees vir verskille in gedragsbasisse van ondersteuning vir demokrasie oor ouderdomsgroepe heen.

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## ***Chapter One: Introduction and Overview***

### **1.1 Introduction**

Currently, democracy is at a crossroads as young people are not engaging in formal participatory politics (Norris, 2004; Wattenberg, 2006; Dalton, 2020). The future stability and legitimacy of democracy is being put to the test. This disengagement among the youth is evident in the decline in electoral turnout, “rising anti-party sentiment, and the decay of civic organizations” (Norris, 2004:2). This phenomenon is apparent in established democracies across the globe, such as the United States and Britain. Young people are believed to be “disillusioned about the major institutions of representative democracy, leaving them either apathetic (at best) or alienated (at worst)” (Norris, 2004:2).

Attitudes inform behaviour. Thus, understanding political attitudes can provide a better understanding of behavioural changes. Positive attitudes towards democracy should enforce pro-democratic behaviours (Mattes, 2018:15). Moreover, a democracy requires both a ‘supply’ side – being governmental institutions, political parties and elections – as well as a ‘demand’ side from the public (Nuccio & Prendergast, n.d.). People need to demand democracy, in order to have democracy ‘supplied’ to them. In turn, the quality of the democracy given will either reach or miss the citizens’ expectations, leaving citizens either satisfied or dissatisfied. Additionally, citizens also need to trust that their government will supply the democracy they want. An active and supportive citizenry is at the core of any democracy. According to Dalton (2007:53) “without public involvement in the process, democracy lacks both its legitimacy and its guiding force”.

The future of democracy rests in the hands of contemporary youth. Various bodies of literature suggests that there is a paradox between young people’s demand and support for the principles of democracy, and their levels of satisfaction with democracy which appear to be far lower (Pammett & LeDuc, 2003; Klassen, Wegner & Slade, 2020). Moreover, this is coupled with even lower levels of electoral participation and engagement within democratic regimes (Pammett & LeDuc, 2003; Cammaerts, Bruter, Banaji, Harrison & Anstead, 2014; Bastedo, 2015; Mycock & Tonge, 2011; Dalton, 2020). Young people are turning their heads away from meaningfully engaging in politics (Scott & Makres, 2019). The main concern is that young people “will carry their deep aversion to the political process with them into later life, and, in time, replace the older, more civic-oriented generations, thereby ultimately calling into question the legitimacy of the political system itself” (Henn & Weinstein, 2006:4).

In countries with a growing, youthful population, such as South Africa, the lack of participation in the electoral process poses a challenge to the quality, legitimacy and stability of participatory

democracy. In South Africa, the youth population is numerically dominant, lending them the potential to have a notable impact on the electoral process. However, their levels of registration and voter turnout are disproportionately lower than their older counterparts (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2019b:2). Qualitative studies have shown that “focus group university students reveal heightened levels of political apathy and disaffection towards contemporary democratic politics” (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2019b:12). Young people have become more sceptical of politicians and this negative evaluation of government performance has “led to a significant trust deficit” (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2019b:12) among the youth of South Africa. On the other hand, young people tend to participate in protests and demonstrations in reaction to the failures and in competencies of the government to address certain issues (Oyedemi & Mahlatji, 2016:321). Therefore, they are not completely inactive citizens, they are just choosing to engage in other ways. Nevertheless, the fact that young people remain increasingly reluctant to participate in electoral politics raises concerns about the quality and stability of South Africa’s democracy. Furthermore, a decline in electoral participation is “likely to affect the quality of civic engagement and citizen involvement in democratic politics” (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2019a:140). With this being said, a decline in electoral participation is likely to lead to a decline in the quality of democracy.

## **1.2 Background and Rationale**

According to Mattes and Bratton (2007:193) a “democracy has a low probability of break-down where two conditions are met, namely that large majorities of citizens demand democracy as their preferred political regime, and judge that their leaders have internalized and follow democracy’s institutional rules”. Active citizens’ can offer two bases of ‘support’ in a democracy; attitudinal and behavioural bases of support. Attitudinal and behavioural bases of support for democracy are essential for ensuring the regimes stability and securing its legitimacy.

Attitudes are what drive an individual’s decision-making process (Manheim, 1982). When attitudes toward democracy, such as demand for democracy, declines the regime’s overall legitimacy is threatened. Commitment to democratic values and norms are fundamental for democracy to prevail. People need to ‘want’ democracy as their preferred regime. Demand for democracy is when citizens choose democracy as their preferred regime compared to other alternatives (Mattes & Bratton, 2007:193). In other words, they need to be supportive of democracy, as a regime type, and they need to be supportive of the norms, beliefs and values that are associated with democracy. However, democracy also requires a ‘supply’ side – from governmental institutions, political parties and elections – as well as a ‘demand’ side from the public (Nuccio & Prendergast, n.d.). Citizens hold governments accountable in a democracy and governmental institutions and actors need to reach their

citizens' expectations, in order to gain and maintain their trust and, ultimately, their consistent support (Heyne, 2019:386). Trust is a fragile attitude and it can be easily eroded (Slovic, 1993:7). It is important for political actors and institutions to gain the trust of their citizens, if they want to have their continuous support. According to Norris (1999:2) "if people become disillusioned with the perceived performance of democratic governments, over successive administrations, then in time this might erode their belief in democracy itself. In this perspective failure of performance will flow upwards to undermine democratic values". Essentially, trust influences specific support (support for political actors and institutions) and that can ultimately have an effect on diffuse support (support for the regime and its principles).

What is equally as important for the survival of democracy, are behavioural bases of democratic support. One important behaviour of support is active participation in the democratic process. Voting is considered to be the most fundamental form of participation, although various other conventional and unconventional modes of participation do exist (Dalton, 2020). Older generations consider it to be their civic duty to participate in the democratic process, whereas younger generations are less likely to vote (Wattenberg, 2006). Therefore, attitudinal and behavioural bases of support for democracy differ from generation to generation.

Since attitudes inform behaviours it follows that positive attitudes toward democracy, will in turn lead to positive behaviours towards democracy (Manheim, 1982). Moreover, pro-democratic attitudes and pro-democratic behaviours are important in securing the future stability and legitimacy of democracies (Dalton, 2020; Mattes, 2018). In the past decade there has been a "withdrawal from the traditional channels of political participation" among young people (Norris, 2004:2). On the one side, young people are believed to be distancing themselves from participatory politics, mainly because they seem uninterested in political matters (Norris, 2004:2). Whereas, on the other side, young people are being viewed as creating a new kind of politics, broadening the scope of participation and raising awareness as to what they believe are important issues (Henn & Weinstein, 2006). Yet, participation remains essential to the success of any democracy (Dalton, 2007:53). A fundamental element of a representative democracy "is the practice of regular elections" (Bessant, 2004:398). Citizens have a certain responsibility to vote and a responsibility to hold government accountable for their actions and to participate in the democratic process. According to Dalton (2007:53) "without public involvement in the process, democracy lacks both its legitimacy and its guiding force".

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Globally, research has pointed out that young people are distancing themselves from engaging in electoral politics and that they display a fair amount of apathy towards the democratic system (Norris,

2004; Wattenberg, 2016). Wattenberg (2016) has emphasized throughout his book *'Is Voting for Young People?'* "that low turnout among young adults really makes a difference" (Wattenberg, 2016:143). Young people are giving up important decisions to people who have different opinions and values by not turning out to vote (Wattenberg, 2016:6). Another problem that is that because young people do not believe that it is their civic duty to vote, many of them will be lost as voters in the future (Wattenberg, 2016:130). According to Pammett and DeLuc (2003:3) "declining public participation in a nation's most fundamental democratic exercise may be part of a larger 'democratic deficit' and may have serious implications for the health of its democratic political system". They also argue that if the problems that are causing young people to stay away from the voting polls, "are of a longer-term nature, the problem of low voter participation could continue to plague the political system for years to come" (Pammett & DeLuc, 2003:3). Overall, established democracies have survived a decline in political participation.

The problem is more pronounced in countries with large, youthful populations. South Africa is such a country. A recent South African study shows that young people in South Africa "register and vote at remarkably lower rates than their older counterparts" (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2019b:58). The results from the 2019 elections, when compared to the previous election round in 2014, showcased that "the registration rate of eligible voters in the three youngest categories declined" (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2019c:58). There are various explanations for why young people do not engage in conventional participatory politics. Nonetheless, the declining turnout rates among young people suggest that this group poses the greatest challenge to democratic participation and even the broader democratic system.

Moreover, according to Mattes (2019), Afrobarometer data indicates that South Africans are demanding and supportive of a democracy and this is positive. However, young people in South Africa (often referred to as the 'born free' generation) are less committed to democracy than the older generations (Mattes, 2011:14). This is rather worrying because commitment to democratic norms is narrow and shallow in post-apartheid South Africa" (Seekings, 2014:81). Declining positive attitudes towards democracy has implications for the future of the regime. When young people choose not to vote, they actively choose not to make a difference to a variety of policy outcomes that affect them. On the other hand, young South Africans appear, at least anecdotally, to be actively participating in alternative forms of political participation, such as protest action, as a response to the failures of the government to address certain issue that are important to them (Oyedemi & Mahlatji, 2016, Tracey, 2016). Nevertheless, an active citizenry is important for the longevity of democracy.

This is problematic to South Africa's democracy because lower voter turnout rates among young people are likely to suppress the aggregate turnout rate in the country and it will continue to decline

overtime as a result of a “trickle-up effect of learning the habit of not voting” (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2019c:60). A democracy without the majority of the citizens being represented suggests a low-quality democracy. If less than half of South Africa’s electorate is represented by, or bestows a mandate on the elected government, it will affect the overall quality of democracy and the legitimacy of the government and government institutions. The related question and concern that arises is whether young people are less committed to democracy and this leads to them not wanting to participate in electoral democracy?

The youthful population in South Africa has “fundamentally changed the age composition of the electorate” (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2019b:2) and if young people continue to decline to vote, their inactivity at the polls will “produce additional consequences for an already falling aggregate turnout rate” (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2019b:22). Over the years young people will “replace older cohorts in the electorate, and thereby establish the habit of non-voting as the norm” (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2019b:23). The apathetic youth of South Africa does not only threaten the legitimacy of the democratic system and institutions, but the youth are also doing themselves a disservice. The problem is that as long as young people are not voting, they will remain unseen and unrepresented by the political system and “their policy preferences and political views go largely unnoticed by South Africa’s political elites” (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2019b:23). If this disengagement among young people continues it does not bode well for the future legitimacy and quality of South Africa’s democracy.

This study is therefore motivated by a growing concern about youth disengagement in electoral politics in South Africa. The objective of this study is to examine recent behavioural and attitudinal bases of support for democracy among South Africa’s youth. The argument of the study is that a decline in attitudinal bases of support for democracy leads to a decline in the levels of behavioural bases of support for democracy, such as voting. The motivation of the study underlined by the important role young people have in a democratic society and how their varied and active participation is vital for the survival of democracy.

While international literature on political attitudes and behaviours has contributed to understanding why young people are disengaging from participation in politics globally, very little empirical and theoretical research has been undertaken about this topic in South Africa. Considering the limited literature that is available in South Africa on this topic, this study aims to address this lacuna in the literature by investigating how the attitudes towards democracy of younger South Africans differ from older generations and how these attitudes influence the behaviour of younger South Africans.



## 1.4 Condensed Literature Review

The literature review in Chapter Two discusses the main concepts, various theories and literature on political attitudes, behaviours, democracy, participation and young people and their role in democracy. The first section outlines political attitudes and how they influence political behaviour. Attitudes are drivers of behaviour, in other words, attitudes are what drives an individual's decision-making process (Manheim, 1982). Attitudes serve various functions and have a number of components (the affective, cognitive and conative components). A strong attitude, whether it is a negative or positive attitude towards something, can predict a positive or negative behaviour. Therefore, attitudes are good predictors of behaviour and they motivate people to participate in politics (Dalton, 2014:67).

Dalton (2014) states that people often vote because they see it as a civic duty and because they believe that their "actions can affect the political process" (Dalton, 2014:67). Political attitudes also influence how people view governments and political institutions. Citizens' expectations of government and political institutions and "their evaluations of government performance are core ingredients of democratic systems" (Gouws & Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:7). When the government and political institutions fail to meet the expectations of their citizens, it can be detrimental to democracy (Gouws & Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:8). When citizen's expectations are not met, trust in the political actors and institutions will begin to erode (Norris, 1999). Citizens will become more critical of government performance and "cynicism can lead to political apathy and withdrawal" (Dalton, 2014:67) and people feel that if they cannot really affect the political process, why should they even bother to try? On the one hand, satisfaction with government and political institutions can "increase support for democratic process and encourage participation" (Dalton, 2014:67). On the other hand, dissatisfaction can decrease support for these processes and it can discourage participation. Trust in political institutions and politicians is also important, because when "trust starts to wane and citizens stop respecting the norms and principles of the democratic process, transitions to democracy can stall...leading to a rejection of the democratic regime" (Gouws & Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:7). The link between trust in people and the government is a fragile one because trust in governmental actors and institutions is contingent upon the citizens' evaluations of the quality of their performance (Uslaner, 2003:174). In other words, people have trust in their government when their democracy is working well (Uslaner, 2003:185).

A democratic system is mainly driven by its citizens. Simply put, a democracy is defined as 'rule by the people'. Therefore, a democracy requires the support and commitment of its citizens. With this being said, people have to also possess some degree of political knowledge, in order to make rational, informed decisions (Dalton, 2020). It has been shown that positive attitudes towards democracy



enforce pro-democratic behaviours (Mattes, 2018), and this in turn ensures the stability and legitimacy of democracy (Dalton, 2020).

For the purpose of this study, only three key political attitudes are going to be discussed and measured, and they are: demand for; supply of; and trust in democracy. A democracy can only survive when it is considered by citizens to be the “only game in town” (Linz & Stepan, 1996:15). In other words, demand for democracy is when it is the preferred form of government over other governing systems (Bratton & Mattes, 1999). When people support the idea that a democratic regime is better than any other regime type, they demand democracy (Teti, Abbott & Cavatorta, 2019:2). Therefore, demand and support for democracy are used interchangeably. Popular support and demand for democracy are both essential for democracy, as “popular support for a political regime is the essence of its consolidation” (Mattes & Bratton, 2007:192). A democracy needs citizens who want democracy and this will only happen when citizens and leaders do not consider alternative regimes and when people are satisfied with the democracy that they receive. According to Mattes and Bratton (2007) a “democracy has a low probability of break-down where two conditions are met, namely that large majorities of citizens demand democracy as their preferred political regime, and judge that their leaders have internalized and follow democracy’s institutional rules” (Mattes & Bratton, 2007:193). For citizens to demand democracy, they need to be ‘supplied’ with democracy.

Supply of democracy refers to how citizens perceive the quality of the democracy that they are receiving from the democratic regime. Democracy can consolidate only if ordinary citizens believe that the democracy that they want or deserve is being supplied them by their government (Mattes & Bratton, 2007:193). Supply can be broken down into two components: the extent of democracy that they citizens believe they getting; and how satisfied they are with the way that democracy functions (Mattes & Bratton, 2007:194). Satisfaction with the way democracy works is an indication of the quality of the democracy that is being supplied (Mattes & Bratton, 2007:194).

Trust, on the other hand, is “the probability... that the political system (or some part of it) will produce preferred outcomes even if left untended (Easton, 1975:447). According to Easton (1975) trust can be linked to political support in that support for democracy will normally represent itself in two forms, being: trust or confidence in them, and in the belief in the legitimacy of these political objects.

Demand and supply of democracy and attitudes about political trust can be tapped by political support. Support can be separated into two parts: diffuse and specific support. Easton (1975) refers to diffuse support as support for what an object is and what it represents. Whereas, specific support is more object-specific and it relates to an individual’s satisfaction with the outputs and performance of political actors and institutions (Easton, 1975:437).

Global literature on democratic attitudes suggest that young people have a high degree of faith in the democratic system itself (Henn & Weinstein, 2006), along with high levels of demand for democracy (Marzęcki & Stach, 2016). Young people have a great deal of interest in political matters (Henn, Weinstein & Wring, 2002; Henn & Weinstein, 2006; Saud, Ida & Mashud, 2020). However, young people believe that they are not receiving the democracy that they deserve, and they feel that their expectations are not being met by their current governing systems (Henn & Foard, 2012). Young people also display low levels of trust in current democratic institutions and actors (Marzęcki & Stach, 2016). Young people in South Africa are also skeptical of the current democratic system and political institutions, and they feel that they are being unrepresented by the current democratic regime (Oyedemi and Mahlatji, 2016). With this being said, according to Oyedemi and Mahlatji (2016) young people are withdrawing from electoral politics as a response to the failures of the current democratic regime.

Thus, the question posed by the volume of literature on democratic attitudes and participation is whether changes in attitudes towards democracy account for the changes in the modes of political participation that we witness globally among young people?

Political participation is essential for any democracy. A democracy needs an active citizenry to hold the democratic system, and all the actors and institutions, accountable. Pateman (1970) states that participation helps to adopt and promote the necessary democratic values and qualities that help to build the foundation of a good, stable democracy. With this being said, there are various ways in which people can participate in politics, also referred to as modes of participation. Verba, Nie and Kim (1978) identify three modes of political participation, being: voting, campaign work and contacting (in Norris, 2004; Dalton, 2014). The first mode of participation is voting. Traditionally, participation is linked to voting because “voting is a significant indicator of democratic engagement” (Print, 2007:328), as well as a useful indicator of the health of a democracy (Franklin, 2004). However, voting is not the only modes in which people can participate. Dalton distinguishes between five different modes of participation, being: voting; campaign activity; directly contacting officials; communal activity; protest and contentious action; and wired activism. Norris (2004) also differentiates between citizen-oriented and cause-oriented actions.

Global bodies of literature point to two sides of political participation among the youth: either seeing them as alienated and disengaged (Norris, 2004; Wattenberg, 2006); or either as creating new pathways to political participation (Farthing, 2010). There are various arguments for why young people are disengaging themselves from electoral politics. Wattenberg (2016) puts forth many reasons, such as: that young people do not consider it to be their civic duty to vote; they are not exposed to news about politics; they are not interested in political matters; and they consider voting to be

something older people do. The fact that young people are shying away from the polls has created an uneasiness among political scientists. However, on the other hand, young people are creating new ways in which people can participate, such as: participating in various forms of collective actions and protests (Resnick & Casale, 2014; Dalton 2020). The definition of political participation has also changed over the years and it does not only mean ‘voting’ any longer (Kitanova, 2020). Young people feel unrepresented by politicians and other political institutions (Harris, Wyn & Younes, 2010). This is why they are more interested in cause-oriented actions – issues that involve them and their immediate environment (Norris, 2004). Nevertheless, young people have certain responsibilities and one of which is to preserve and carry on democratic values on to future generations. The stability and legitimacy of democracy is in their hands (Mycock and Tonge, 2011).

While much research has been done internationally on young people’s attitudes toward democracy and their democratic participation, there is a need to examine young people’s democratic attitudes and the links to their participation in South Africa’s democracy. Political participation is essential to ensure a stable democracy. As discussed above, there are many ways in which people can participate in politics, but voting remains vital to ensure that a majority of a population is always represented via elections.

## 1.5 Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study will investigate three primary research questions. Each research question will have its own separate related hypotheses, as follows:

**1.5.1 Research Question 1:** *“Are there attitudinal differences in demand for; supply of; and trust in democracy among young people, compared to older people in South Africa?”*

For the purpose of Research Question 1, attitudinal differences refers to the following indicators: whether or not the majority of young people are supportive of democracy (demand); whether they perceive that they receive the democracy they believe that they deserve (extent); and whether or not they are satisfied with the democracy they are receiving (supply of democracy), compared to their older counterparts. Differences in trust in various democratic actors and institutions will also be measured among the different age groups.

In relation to research question 1, the following hypotheses expect to find attitudinal differences in demand and support for democracy among young people compared to their older counterparts:

**Hypothesis 1:** Younger people express similar levels of demand for democracy as their older counterparts;

**Hypothesis 2:** Young people are more dissatisfied than older people with the current democratic system;

**Hypothesis 3:** Young people display higher levels of distrust in political actors and institutions, compared to their older counterparts.

**1.5.2 Research Question 2:** *Are there behavioural differences among young people, compared to older people, across different modes of conventional and unconventional participation in South Africa?*

For the purpose of Research Question 2, different modes of conventional and unconventional participation will be examined across age groups. The study will look at three modes of conventional participation: voting, working for a political party and contacting officials. Then, the study will look at unconventional participation: protesting and communal activity.

In relation to Research Question 2, the following hypotheses stand: there are behavioural differences among young people, compared to older people, across different modes of conventional and unconventional participation.

**Hypothesis 4:** Young people are more disconnected from conventional methods of participation, such as voting, compared to older people.

**Hypothesis 5:** Young people are more active in the unconventional methods of participation, such as joining in protests, marches and other new streams of activism, whereas older people are less likely to engage in unconventional channels of political participation.

**1.5.3 Research Question 3:** *Do attitudes towards democracy among young people help to explain differences in modes of political participation?*

From the two research questions above, and their findings, the study then examines any statistically significant relationships between young people's attitudinal and behavioural bases of support for democracy and if these helps to explain why young people are distancing themselves from electoral democracy.

**Hypothesis 6:** Higher levels of mistrust among young people in South Africa towards political actors and institutions partly account for their non-engagement in electoral participation.

## **1.6 Research Objectives**

The main objectives of this study are:

1. To investigate differences in attitudinal bases of demand and supply of democracy among younger people compared to their older counterparts.
2. To examine the behavioural differences in the different modes of participation between younger and older generations.
3. To determine if attitudinal differences towards democracy help to explain behavioural differences in political participation among young people.

## **1.7 Research Methodology and Operationalization**

Political attitudes and behaviours have been studied before using quantitative research methods, such as survey questionnaires. This study is a single case study research design that examines the attitudes of young people in South Africa and the research method is a quantitative approach. In order to answer the main research questions outlined above, this study will adopt a descriptive survey research design and it will use a quantitative method to collect and analyse the data. This study will use publicly available, cross-sectional secondary survey data from two nationally representative public opinion surveys: Afrobarometer Survey Round 7, conducted in 2018, and data from the Comparative National Elections Project (CNEP) post-election survey, conducted in 2019.

A quantitative research method is a popular way of gathering data in the social sciences. A quantitative approach allows the researcher to collect data from social scientific surveys from a large sample of the population which is highly representative of the larger population. Collecting data by using a quantitative approach allows the researcher to present numerical findings visually in the form of a graph in order to draw various accurate conclusions from the findings (Burnham, Lutz, Grant & Layton-Henry, 2008). Using a quantitative approach to data analysis makes it possible to be able to make inferences about the possible relationship between the dependent and independent variables and allows the researcher to extrapolate findings to a larger population. The Afrobarometer and CNEP survey datasets both include the required and appropriate measurements for the chosen independent and dependent variables that are relevant to this study and provide nationally representative samples for extrapolation to the South African population. The analysis of the data will have some comparative elements to show differences or similarities.

### **1.7.1 Independent Variable**

The independent variable in this study is age because political attitudes and behaviours are dependent on the age of respondents. 'Age' will be separated into three categories, as follows:

1. 18-35 (youth)

2. 36-59 (adult)
3. 60-99 (older adult).

The United Nations (UN) (2021) defines ‘youth’ as all people between the ages of 15 and 24. However, in South Africa, ‘youth’ takes on a broader definition. The South African Government defines ‘youth’, in The National Youth Policy of South Africa, as all people between the ages of 15 and 35 years (South African Government, 2020). According to Seekings (2014) ‘youth’ is defined as the “transitional stage between adolescence and adulthood” (Seekings, 2014:83). In South Africa, as in several other countries, the duration of this transition has extended and many people in their 30’s have not reached adulthood when looking at poor education, unemployment, marital status and their levels of political participation (Seekings, 2014:83).

Therefore, for this study, ‘youth’ will include all people between the ages of 18-35 years old, where the natural lower limit will be 18-years old, which is the age where South Africans are eligible to vote (Resnick & Casale, 2014:1174). Dividing age up into three category responses allows the study to group young people together and to distinguish them from older people. It also makes it easier to interpret the results in cross-tabulations in order to answer the research questions.

### 1.7.2 Dependent Variables

The dependent variables in this study will measure a number of political attitudes and behaviours. Using the Afrobarometer Round 7 and CNEP post-election survey data, question items that are related to each dependent variable will be grouped together under attitudes (demand for; supply of; and trust in democracy) and behaviours (conventional and unconventional modes of participation)<sup>1</sup>. A brief summary of how the dependent variables are measured will be discussed below. However, see Chapter 3 and Appendix A for a full outline of the question items and their coding.

#### *Political attitudes*

This study will make use of classic, well-known and widely used variables to measure *demand for democracy*, such as, by asking respondents various questions that determine whether or not they prefer a democratic regime above other regime types. *Supply of democracy* is measured by looking at questions that tap into how satisfied respondents are with the democracy that they current receive, and by asking respondents how much of a democracy they think South Africa is. A wide range of variables will be used to measure *trust in democracy*, to be able to tap into the different degrees of

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<sup>1</sup> The choice of dependent variables is justified in Chapter 3, where a more detailed discussion of their location in the literature is presented.

trust respondents have in various democratic actors and institutions. *Trust in democracy* is measured by asking respondents to indicate to what degree they trust various political actors and institutions.

### ***Political behaviour***

The study will specific question items that tap into different modes of conventional and unconventional political participation. *Conventional modes of participation* are measured by asking respondents whether or not they have voted in the previous elections; if they have contacted an official; or if they have belonged to any party or campaign. *Unconventional modes of participation* are measured by asking respondents whether or not they have partaken in any form of protest activity (physical protest and marches, or online protest support) or if they have engaged in any form of communal activity.

## **1.8 Statistical Procedures and Presentation of Data**

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) will be used to perform bivariate statistical analyses. The techniques that will be used in this study are techniques that are commonly used by social scientists to make inferences about relationships between different variables. Bivariate analyses are used to measure the relationship between two variables, and include cross-tabulations and summary statistics that provide information about the strength and direction of these relationships (de Vaus, 2013:262-263). The analysis and interpretation of the data will be presented in three separate sections, under each research question, and the two survey sets will be used interchangeably.

## **1.9 Significance of the Study**

Contemporary young people are increasingly disconnected from electoral politics. Yet, it is essential for a democracy that its citizens participate, in order to maintain its credibility and legitimacy (Dalton, 2007:53). Young people are vastly different from older generations, in that they are less supportive of democratic political institutions, more skeptical of governmental institutions and they engage in unconventional channels of participation (Wattenberg, 2003; Norris, 2004 and Henn & Weinstein, 2006:15). It is good that young people are participating in politics, although these modes of participation are different form conventional modes of participation (Oyedemi & Mahlatji, 2016:313). It is important “to acknowledge that decreasing voter turnout is worrying in South Africa as it is still a young democracy” (Oyedemi & Mahlatji 2016:312). The demographic make-up of South Africa is different from other countries, in that South Africa has a vastly growing youthful population. It is important to understand how attitudinal and behavioural support bases differ between



younger and older generations, especially in countries with a growing youth bulge. As the younger generations will replace their older cohorts in the future – young people are the voters of tomorrow.

If the study finds some evidence for the various hypotheses that suggest that attitudes towards democracy among young people are more negative than older people, and that their attitudinal differences negatively influence the behavioural differences that can be observed in political participation, there are important but negative implications for the future South Africa's democracy. It suggests as these cohorts increasingly comprise a greater portion of the population over time there are further negative ramifications for electoral democracy. If the habit of not voting continues throughout a young person's whole life into adulthood it may affect the overall legitimacy of South Africa's democracy and to be represented in political decisions.

If young South Africans today are not committed to democracy, its values and the democratic institutions, the future of South Africa's democracy will remain "a democracy at risk from the perspective of political culture" (Stinkdamp, 2017:76). According to Fao and Mounk (2017) democracies run the risk of deconsolidating when "a sizable minority of citizens loses its belief in democratic values, becomes attracted to authoritarian alternatives, and starts voting for 'anti-system' parties, candidates, or movements that flout or oppose constitutive elements of liberal democracy." (Fao & Mounk, 2017:9).

However, the study also allows us to identify where young people do participate, and this allows for possible policy changes to participation modes in the current democratic system to entice young people back into the democratic process. If young people do participate in unconventional channels of participation, rather than turning out to vote, it could mean that democratic participation needs to be rethought and restructured.

### **1.10 Research Limitations**

No research that is undertaken is without limitations. Quantitative research allows researchers to gather data from a highly representative number of the population (Queirós, Faria & Almeida, 2017:382). However, the quality of the results are very dependent on the honesty and the accuracy of the answers which are provided (Queirós, Faria & Almeida, 2017:382). Quantitative research also limits the researcher to make further inferences about the results, as another limitation of quantitative data is that cannot provide explanations for why people behave or have certain attitudes towards political actors and institutions, but it can only provide correlations of the relationships between the variables. This study will be using two datasets which strengthens the study but they only provide



insight into a certain moment in time, only allowing the study to do a cross-sectional analysis of political attitudes and behaviours in 2018 and 2019.

### **1.11 Chapter Outline**

This remainder of this study is divided into four chapters. Chapter Two provides a detailed review of the literature on attitudes towards democracy, and the importance of these attitudes to participation in a democracy. The literature on political attitudes and participation among young people globally and in South Africa will also be discussed, since South Africa is the focus of this study. Chapter Three discusses the research design and methodology that is adopted by this study in order to examine how attitudinal differences can account for behavioural differences in support for democracy among young people, compared to their older counterparts. This chapter will also discuss the independent and dependent variables that will be used in the study. It also provides descriptions of both the Afrobarometer Survey Round 7 in 2018 and CNEP post-election survey round in 2019. Chapter Four and Five will present the data analysis to address the three research questions and discuss the findings. Chapter Four will answer Research Question 1 and Chapter Five will answer Research Questions 2 and 3. The final chapter, Chapter Six, summarises the key findings of the data analysis and provides a conclusion. This chapter also offers several recommendations for further research on this topic.

## ***Chapter Two: Literature Review***

### **2.1 Introduction**

This literature review starts with a brief explanation of what political attitudes are, and the functions attitudes serve. Thereafter, the second section discusses attitudes towards democracy, by focusing on the three attitudes, namely: demand for; supply of; and satisfaction with democracy. These are examined from an international perspective and from a national South African perspective.

The review also deals with attitudinal and behavioural support for democracy, arguing that both are essential in securing a regime's legitimacy and to ensure its future stability (Pateman, 1970; Pammett & DeLuc, 2003; Dalton, 2020). This literature review will also discuss how positive attitudes towards the democratic regime enforces pro-democratic behaviours (Mattes, 2018).

The third section will explore behavioural bases of support for democracy, by briefly examining the role of participation in a democracy and why it is important for a democracy to have an active, involved citizenry. Thereafter, the different modes of participation will be discussed, dedicating a separate section on highlighting what the difference is between citizen- and cause-oriented actions.

The last section will explore the two schools of thought with regards to young people and democracy, discussing both the optimistic and pessimistic view, with a focus on South Africa as the case study in this research.

### **2.2 Political Attitudes: An Introduction**

There are certain 'drivers' of behaviour – factors that serve as explanations as to why people behave in a certain way. These 'drivers' of behaviour are referred to as attitudes. Political attitudes motivate people's political decision-making process. An attitude is defined as "a predisposition to respond to a particular stimulus in a particular manner" (Manheim:1982:8). In other words, according to Manheim (1982:8-9), "an attitude represents a greater likelihood that a person will react to a given experience or communication one particular way rather than in some other way". In a political environment we choose to let our own personal feelings about, for example, the political system of our country, drive our willingness to participate (Manheim, 1982:9). Manheim (1982:9-10) states that "we respond to political stimuli....in terms of a particular and highly individualized context". An attitude acts as a screen through which an individual perceives reality. An attitude intervenes between a message or a stimulus that an individual receives, and how it is understood by the individual (Manheim, 1982:10). Therefore, attitudes are good predictors of behaviour. With this being said, there are certain attitudes that predict certain behavioural patterns. Strong attitudes – whether it is a

positive or negative attitude – can predict strong positive or negative behaviour, and vis-a-versa (Mattes, 2018). For example, when people choose to participate in protests, it is indicative of their feelings towards their government, as citizens normally choose to participate in protests because they feel that their government is not efficient enough.

### **2.3 The Connection between Attitudes and Behaviour**

Democracy expects a certain level of support and commitment from its citizens (Dalton, 2020:33). Ordinary citizens need some level of political abilities – citizens need to have some degree of knowledge about what a democracy is, what it should offer to its citizens and what it promises to its citizens, in order to be able to provide accurate evaluations of a government's performance. According to political theorists and democratic elitists, citizens should be fully informed about political issues in order to “make rationally calculated political decisions” (Dalton, 2020:33). However, only a proportion of a population have a relatively high degree of knowledge about the democratic regime. Whereas most of the population are relatively ‘uninformed’ about and ‘uninterested’ in politics. However, they still need to have some degree of political knowledge, understanding and interest in politics, if they want to have some degree or influence on how the governing system works (Dalton, 2020:15). The fact that the ordinary citizen cannot meet these high expectations, undermines the democratic process (Dalton, 2020:33).

Attitudes definitely enforce pro-democratic behaviours and it has been shown that political attitudes are usually linked to the stability and quality of the democratic political system (Mattes, 2018:15). Attitudinal support for democracy is essential for the stability and legitimacy of a democracy (Dalton, 2020:15). What citizens expect of governments “and their evaluations of government performance are core ingredients of democratic systems” (Dalton, 2020:7). The attitudes that citizens have towards the democratic process and its values “shape the prospects for regime consolidation through the process of political legitimation” (Mattes & Bratton, 2007:192). It is important to understand how political attitudes can have an impact on the stability of democracy, and how people make decisions based on the performance of political actors and institutions. How the citizens of a country perceive the performance of democratic institutions and political actors “determines the strength of institutionalization and a vibrant democratic culture, and ultimately the extent to which democracy can be consolidated” (Gouws & Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:7). There are many political attitudes and they are all linked to one another. For the purpose of this study three main political attitudes will be discussed below, being: demand for; supply of; and trust in democracy.

### **2.3.1 Demand for Democracy**

Demand for democracy is essential for democracy's consolidation (Mattes & Bratton, 2007:192). A democracy can only survive when it is, as Linz and Stepan (1996:15) put it, considered to be "the only game in town". Democracy can survive as long as two conditions are met, "namely that large majorities of citizens demand democracy as their preferred political regime, and judge that their leaders have internalized and follow democracy's institutional rules" (Mattes & Bratton, 2007:193). People demand democracy when it is preferred over other governing systems. However, other scholars such Klingemann (1999) and Shin and Wells (2005) argued that peoples' preference for democracy is pointless if it does not go together with the rejection of authoritarian alternatives to democracy. For example, a majority of the public must prefer democracy above authoritarian, one-party rule, military rule or a dictatorship.

Democratic demand can also refer to the expectations people have of the political actors and institutions (Heyne, 2019:385). When people's expectations are met then they will be more satisfied with the way democracy works. People have become more critical of government performance and it is often good to hold governments to a high standard. However, high expectations can often lead to high levels of dissatisfaction (Heyne, 2019:386). Moreover, Hooghe, Marien and Oser (2017) found that when people have high democratic ideals, they are more likely to have less trust in democracy.

Not only do citizens need to demand democracy, they also need to support democracy, as support is also essential for democratic consolidation (Bratton & Mattes, 1999:447). Citizens need to be supportive of the regime and its norms, values and beliefs. Demand and support are often used interchangeably as both attitudes are used to measure whether or not democracy is the preferred form of government (Bratton & Mattes, 1999:449). As long as people demand democracy, they are supportive of democracy. It is important to note that there are differences between the political attitudes but that they are closely intertwined with one another.

### **2.3.2 Supply of Democracy**

Democratic consolidation can only happen when the citizens of a country believe that their government is 'supplying' the democracy which they deserve and demand (Colomer, 2001; Fukuyama, 2005; Mattes & Bratton, 2007). Supply of democracy refers to how citizens perceive the democracy that they are receiving. In other words, what their evaluations are of government and its performance (Heyne, 2019:385). The process of institutionalization only "proceeds to the extent that these structures effectively and impartially fulfill their functions, whether to make laws, oversee the executive, prosecute criminals, or deliver public services" (Mattes & Bratton, 2007:192). A good

measuring point of nationalization is ‘supply of democracy’ – “whether citizens believe that their political institutions produce an acceptable degree of democracy” (Mattes & Bratton, 2007:192). Democracy is the form of regime that will only be able to consolidate if the ordinary citizens believe that the democracy that they want or believe they should get, is being supplied them by their government (Mattes & Bratton, 2007:193). There are some limitations to this, as uncritical citizens may not necessarily notice when a government is underperforming and vis-a-versa (Mattes & Bratton, 2007:193). But nonetheless, “citizens’ perceptions of the supply of democracy will be more salient to democracy’s actual prospects than any objective scores ratings compiled by experts” (Mattes & Bratton, 2007:193).

Before supply of democracy can be measured, the concept must be broken down into two components. There are two main components to supply of democracy: the extent of democracy that they citizens believe they getting; and how satisfied they are with the way that democracy functions (Mattes & Bratton, 2007:194). With this being said, supply of and demand for democracy are also both used to explain why people are satisfied or dissatisfied with democracy (Heyne, 2019). In other words, “a citizen is supplied with democracy if he or she both believes that the country is completely or mostly democratic and is very or fairly satisfied with the way democracy works there” (Mattes & Bratton, 2007:194). Satisfaction with democracy can vary from satisfaction with the way democracy as a system works to satisfaction with political actors’ political performance (Mattes & Bratton, 2007). In a formulation, supply of democracy is when people believe that their country is fully democratic or somewhat democratic, and when they are fairly satisfied with the way their democracy works (supply = extent + satisfaction) (Mattes & Bratton, 2007:194). It has been shown that more citizens prefer a democratic regime as their form of government, but they are less likely to “express satisfaction with the way that it actually works” (Bratton & Mattes, 1999:459).

### **2.3.3 Political Trust and Political Support in Democracy**

Trust is essential to ensure the stability of democracy. Trust is defined as “the probability... that the political system (or some part of it) will produce preferred outcomes even if left untended (Easton, 1975:447). In other words, it is the probability of getting preferred outcomes without the group doing anything to bring them about. They or others may do things to influence this probability...” (Gamson, 1968:54). Trust must also be understood in terms of objects, namely, trust in political institutions; trust in regime performance and trust in political actors (Norris, 1999). Political trust influences the degree of political support citizens offer (Norris, 1999). Political trust is an evaluation of an ‘object’ by a ‘subject’, but that there is a missing link between the two: the benchmark – “the standard to which politics is held” (van der Meer, 2017:13). In this manner, trust is linked to satisfaction.

Trust in a democracy is essential for the regime's consolidation. When there is a decline in political trust, the legitimacy of the political institutions and even democracy itself is under threat (Gouws & Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:7). When trust starts to deteriorate and citizens start to lose trust in the principles and values of the democratic process, democracy is being put to the test and it is at risk (Gouws & Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:7). According to Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg (2016:7) "democracies cannot exist without popular trust in its institutions and political actors". Dermody and Hanmer-Lloyd (2005) divide trust up into two separate parts, being: "'specific trust'—satisfaction with government outputs and performance, secondly 'diffuse support'—public attitudes towards regime level objects" (Dermody & Hanmer-Lloyd, 2005:120). Of these two 'types' of trust "specific trust is easier to build because the delivery of policy is very visible. Diffuse support is more difficult because it represents the growing suspicion and cynicism" (Dermody & Hanmer-Lloyd, 2005:120). Once trust starts to fade away, citizens start to enter, what Carothers (2002) refers to as, the 'grey zone' – the space between democracy and authoritarianism. Trust is linked with how people perceive the democracy that they are receiving, "if people become disillusioned with the perceived performance of democratic governments, over successive administrations, then in time this can erode their belief in democracy itself" (Gouws & Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:8). Dermody and Hanmer-Lloyd (2005:120) argue that once trust starts to deteriorate, it makes it challenging for those in power to succeed and, in turn, this will just continue to strengthen the feelings of distrust among citizens. Therefore, it is important to be concerned about political trust – trust in political actors and in political institutions, because trust instills a certain degree of legitimacy into the democratic system.

Trust is closely linked to political support and to legitimacy (Easton, 1975). The relationship between the three concepts can be understood as follows: support for the political authorities or a regime will typically express itself in two forms: trust or confidence in them, and in the belief in the legitimacy of these political objects (Easton, 1975). Legitimacy is present in a political system when the citizens believe:

"That it is right and proper ... to accept and obey the authorities and to abide by the requirements of the regime. It reflects the fact that in some vague or explicit way [a person] sees these objects as conforming to his own moral principles, his own sense of what is right and proper in the political sphere" (Easton, 1965:278)

It can be derived from the definition above, that levels of legitimacy can affect political behaviours. When people have high levels of legitimacy in the political system are more likely to engage in political participation (Booth & Seligson, 2005:546). In other words, "supportive citizens engaged within the system, while critical citizens withdraw (Booth & Seligson, 2005:540)."

Attitudes towards democracy (demand and supply of democracy) and attitudes about political trust can also be tapped through the concept of political support. This is because people need to show support for the democratic regime, its democratic values and norms, and for the political institutions and actors within the democratic regime. Support is a broad concept and it can be measured on various levels.

That is why there are two elements to political support, being, specific and diffuse support. Easton (1975:444) states that diffuse support refers to what an object is, what that object represents, not to what that object does. Easton goes further and states that diffuse support consists out of a reservoir of positive attitudes towards a regime as a whole, its underlying principles and the larger political community (Easton, 1975:444). It is this reservoir of positive attitudes that helps citizens to tolerate poor outputs. In other words, diffuse support is more robust and it cannot be easily changed. Specific support, on the other hand, is object-specific (Easton, 1975:437) – it is directed at political authorities and institutions. Specific support relates to citizen satisfaction with outputs (decisions, policy, actions) and performance of political authorities and actors (incumbents, politicians, institutions) (Easton, 1975:437).

Norris (1999:9-10) goes further and makes a distinction between five objects of political support, “ranging in a continuum from the most diffuse support for the nation-state down through successive levels to the most concrete support for particular politicians” (see diagram below). The section below will provide a brief explanation of Norris’ (1999) five objects of political support (See Figure 2.1 and discussion below).

**Figure 2.1 Five objects of political support – Norris, 1999:10**

<b>Diffuse Support</b>	
<b>Object of Support</b>	<b>Summary of Trends</b>
Political Community	<i>High levels of support.</i>
Regime Principles	<i>High levels of support.</i>
Regime Performance	<i>Varied satisfaction with the workings of the regime.</i>
Regime Institutions	<i>Declining confidence in government institutions; low levels of support in many newer democracies.</i>
Political Actors	<i>Mixed trends in trust in politicians.</i>
<b>Specific Support</b>	

The first level is diffuse support for the political community. This kind of support refers to “a basic attachment to the nation beyond the present institutions of government and a general willingness to co-operate together politically” (Norris, 1999:10).

The second level, regime principles, “represents the values of the political system” (Norris, 1999:11). For example, democratic values such as, freedom; equality before the rule of law; political tolerance and participation. This presents another way to measure demand for democracy by asking about popular support for regime principles.

The third level is regime performance. This level of support is for “how democracy functions in practice” (Norris, 1999:11). This level of support is referred to as ‘middle-level’ support, as it is often difficult to measure in practice (Norris, 1999:11). This presents another way to measure supply of democracy by asking about citizens whether they are satisfied with what democracy delivers.

The fourth level is support for regime institutions and this is defined as citizens’ confidence in political institutions, for example: parliament, presidency, political parties, legal institutions, etc. (Norris, 1999:11). The last level is specific support for political actors. This level of support includes “evaluation of politicians as a class and the performance of particular leaders” (Norris, 1999:12). It is important to understand support as a “multi-dimensional phenomenon” (Norris, 1999:9) because of the different objects of political support. Thus, it is at these two final levels that political support



can also tap trust in institutions and actors. Norris (1999) explains that trust in political institutions and political actors is a form of specific support. If people do not have trust in the political actors and institutions in a democracy, they will be more reluctant to show support for those actors and institutions.

Lately, there has been a rise of what is referred to as ‘critical citizens’. Critical citizens are defined as citizens “who adhere strongly to democratic values but who find the existing structures of representative government...to be wanting as we approach the end of a millennium” (Norris, 1999:3). These critical citizens’ evaluations and expectations create a certain tension between democratic ideal vs. democratic reality. Norris (2011) states that the growing dissatisfaction with the performance of governments and growing public expectations has created the ‘democratic deficit’ – this happens when demand often exceeds supply (Norris, 2011:5). In other words, when citizens have higher expectations of democracy than what it can actually deliver. In the modern era, expectations have been heightened with the rise of development, education, exposure and technology, as people have increased needs and knowledge about what they want and need from their government (Gouws & Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:1010). On the other side, “the development of social capital and the development of social trust and community networks have contributed to undermine faith in democratic governance” (Gouws & Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:10). On the supply side, democratic deficits can be accounted for by citizens’ dissatisfaction with the performance and processes of democratic governments (Gouws & Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:10-11). Citizens have the ability to judge governmental processes and the satisfaction with how these processes work is linked to the quality of the democratic system (Gouws & Schulz-Herzenberg, 2016:11). However, critical citizens are needed in a democracy. While democracy needs the support from its citizens, it also needs a certain degree of criticism from the public to hold the system accountable and to ensure its democratic stability.

This study is mainly concerned with young people’s attitudes towards democracy. Therefore, the next section will explore what the attitudes of young people towards democracy globally. Thereafter, the chapter focuses on young people’s attitudes towards democracy in the South African context.

## **2.4 Global Attitudes of Young People Towards Democracy**

Globally, there has been a widespread dissatisfaction with democracy and how it is performing, as Zakaria (2003) would put it, we are experiencing a ‘crisis of democracy’. According to Dalton (2020:269) “people have grown more critical of political elites, more negative toward political parties, and less confident of political institutions – and their attitudes represent a basic change in the political norms of democratic publics”. According to Bastedo (2014:649) “voter turnout is declining

in most democratic countries as a consequence of youth disengagement” and this continuing pattern of decline among youth people causes a degree of concern for the future of democracy (O’Toole, Marsh & Jones, 2003). Many reasons have been put forth to explain this apathy that is evident in the youth of today and it is a growing concern for democracies across the globe.

Globally, much research has been done with regards to young people and their attitudes towards democracy, especially in Britain and the United States. Sloam (2007) also agrees with Wattenberg (2003), in that young people are isolating themselves from the political sphere, because they “see themselves as individuals distanced from the state and politics” (Sloam, 2007:3). Young people need to be included in political decision-making processes. However, “inclusion also concerns the extent to which such groups are able to play an equal and active role in contributing to everyday life” (Percy-Smith, McMahon & Thomas, 2019:2). The fact that they are distancing themselves from politics, and the fact that they feel that they cannot contribute to political matters, can be used as an explanation as to why they are distancing themselves from the voting polls. They have become “more disillusioned with the political process” (Sloam, 2007:3) and they showcase less confidence in government.

It is also argued by Sloam (2007) and Wattenberg (2016) that young people have different values as opposed to politicians and older generations. Young people are in fact interested in ‘politics’, just not the politics of older people. Young people, are more interested in political issues that have a direct effect on them and that they can change. Young people are more interested in cause-oriented actions than citizen-oriented actions (Norris, 2004). With regards to interest in new-politics and political issues, young people seem to show relatively high levels of interest in politics. Henn, Weinstein and Wring’s (2002) and Henn and Weinstein’s (2006) survey data reveals that the young people in Britain are interested in politics. Henn, Weinstein and Wring (2002) found that 44.8% of young people indicated that they do have some interest in politics, compared to only 11.% who indicated that they have no interest in politics at all (Henn, Weinstein & Wring, 2002:174). Not only are young people interested in politics, but they also believe in democracy.

Young people have a relatively high degree of faith in the democratic process (Henn, Weinstein & Wring, 2002:179), indicating that they do, in fact, demand and support democracy and that they are supportive of democratic norms, values and beliefs. Henn and Weinstein’s (2006) research revealed that not only are young people interested in politics but that they have confidence in the democratic system – “respondents were more likely to be satisfied (31%) than dissatisfied (26%) with the way democracy works in Britain” (Henn & Weinstein, 2006:10). Henn and Foard ‘s (2012) study indicated that more than half of young people (64%) indicated that they are likely to vote in the next UK general election. Marzęcki & Stach’s (2016) comparative study of young people’s attitudes

between EU-countries, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania, found that there were high levels of agreement amongst young people when they were asked whether they agree or disagree with the statement that: “There can be different problems related to democracy, but it is better than any other form of rule” (Marzęcki & Stach, 2016:46). High levels of demand for democracy were also found among all the countries. When respondents were asked what form of government they prefer, all of the countries responded that the democratic political system is the better system compared to its alternatives – EU: 92%; Poland: 85%; Czech Republic: 82%; Slovakia: 91%; Hungary: 75%; and Romania: 85% (Marzęcki & Stach, 2016:48). For 64.6% of Polish students it is also important for them that their country is governed in a democratic way (Marzęcki & Stach, 2016:50). It is clear from the literature above that young people seem to display high levels of demand for democracy.

Yet, young people do not believe that they are getting the democracy they deserve or that they are promised by politicians, indicating that they have some degree of skepticism towards how the democratic system functions. Moreover, young people are rather dissatisfied with the democracy which they are getting. Young people showcase less confidence in democracy because they feel that democratic societies cannot live up to their expectations (Percy-Smith, McMahon & Thomas, 2019:3). Evidence from the 2004 Canadian Election Study suggests that 62.4% of Canadians between the ages of 18 and 25 agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: “Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can’t really understand what is going on” (Archer & Wesley, 2006). Henn and Weinstein’s (2006) survey data revealed that 64% of young people in Britain feel that “there is a big gap between what young people expect out of life and what we actually get” (Henn & Weinstein, 2006:14). More than half of the respondents (60%) agreed with the statement: “Elections allow voters to express their opinions but don’t really change anything” (Henn & Foard, 2012:14). While, 64% agree that “there is a big gap between what young people expect out of life and what we actually get” (Henn & Foard, 2012:14). Marzęcki & Stach (2016) found that a majority of the youth in the EU (58%) and Poland (53%) are satisfied with the way in which democracy works in their country. Whereas, higher levels of dissatisfaction were found in the other countries – Czech Republic: 51%; Slovakia: 60%; Hungary: 67%; and Romania: 73% (Marzęcki & Stach, 2016:46). When Polish students were asked how satisfied they are with the way democracy works in their country, 36.7% responded that they were quite satisfied and 36.1% said that they were quite dissatisfied. However, 11.3% responded that they were absolutely dissatisfied compared to only 1.3% that said that they were absolutely satisfied (Marzęcki & Stach, 2016:52). It is clear that young people feel unrepresented by political actors and institutions. Stoker, Li, Halupka and Evans’ (2018) study in Australia found that more than 30% of young people (born after 1995) were fairly or very dissatisfied with democracy.

Bastedo (2015) found that young people have a very negative opinion of politicians and politics in general. His study found that young people feel that they are unimportant to politicians and they were found to be very skeptical of what politicians' political motives are (Bastedo, 2015:655). A study that was done by O'Toole, Marsh and Jones (2003) echo the findings of Bastedo's (2015) - they found that one of the key reasons for young people not participating is because "they don't feel that anyone in authority, and especially in central government, is listening to them" (O'Toole, Marsh & Jones, 359:2003). O'Toole Marsh and Jones (2003:395) also found that young people feel that they are being left out from the political-decision-making process. Wattenberg (2003:172) concluded that young people in the United States feel that they are not being represented in the political process and that issues that they find are important to them, are being left out of the public agenda. Wattenberg (2003) argues that, young people are not interested in politics, because 'politics' are not interested in them. According to Stroker et al. (2018) young people are more concerned about their lack of representation in the political system than any other generation.

Wattenberg (2016) argues that young people also not consider it to be their civic duty to vote. He argues that "the current generation of young people [have] a relatively weak sense of citizen duty" (Wattenberg, 2016:130). Young people think that voting is only something that older people do. He also argues that it will be impossible to learn young people that it is their duty to vote, but he says that "it is never too late to convince people that politics really matters" (Wattenberg, 2016:130). Hill and Rutledge-Prior (2016) state that some young people have said that they feel less efficacious and knowledgeable about voting, "they also speculate that young people are more likely to use their vote to convey protest and dissatisfaction as a consequence of increased preference for everyday and new forms of participation" (Collin & McCornack, 2020:22). Young people are also considered to be a 'fluid electorate' "whose vote changes according to the ways in which major events and key issues are dealt with by parties and candidates (Collin & McCornack, 2020:23).

When young people's attitudes towards political parties and politicians were measured, evidence shows that young people have a rather pessimistic view of the former and the latter. Henn and Foard (2012) found that a significant proportion of their respondents (75%) agreed with the statement: "there is often a big difference between what a party promises it will do and what it does when it wins an election" (Henn & Foard, 2012:13). Moreover, 57% of the respondents indicated that they have little or no trust in political parties or politicians (Henn & Foard, 2012:14). Henn, Weinstein and Wring (2002:178) found that 38.% of respondents feel that politicians do not care about young people and 57,5% agreed that politicians are more interested in winning elections. Moreover, 62% of young people feel that they do not really have any say in government actions and 71% feel that they have no influence on political parties (Henn & Foard, 2012:14).

Henn and Foard's (2012) findings echo the same findings as Henn, Weinstein and Wring's (2002), and Henn and Weinstein's (2006) findings, as they found that 64% of the respondents felt rather disconnected from political parties, stating that they are not interested in the same issues as young people, and 65% agreed that political parties are more interested and concerned about winning elections than what they are in governing the country (Henn & Foard, 2012:13). The study by Marzęcki & Stach (2016) showed that there are high levels of skepticism towards politicians. The Polish student indicated that politicians are self-interested, 63.7% agree that politicians only take their own interests, opinions and problems into consideration during their decision-making process, compared to 31.2% who agreed that they take the interest of their voters, and shockingly only 11.3% believe that they take all of the citizens interest into consideration (Marzęcki & Stach, 2016:54).

It is evident that there is a growing lack of trust among young people in current democratic systems across the globe. The lack of younger voters turning up to the polls results in a lack of representation. When young people decide not to vote they "aren't taking advantage of all the tools for creating change that have been made available to them" (Fields, 2003:33) and by doing this they are consciously "preventing themselves from being as effective as they could be in their pursuit of better communities and social and political reform" (Fields, 2003:3-4). In turn, candidates and politicians will not recognise their needs and opinions because they are not voting and therefore they are not being represented (Wattenberg, 2006).

## **2.5 Attitudes Towards Democracy: The South African Context**

In older democracies, democratic values and a democratic political culture have been established over time. Whereas in newer democracies, "citizens are more likely to evaluate democracy based on its performance because they have rather limited experience with democracy and no reservoir of democratic values from which to draw" (Steenekamp, 2017:72). This is evident in countries like South Africa. A limitation of the literature on this section is because not much research has been done in South Africa with regards to attitudes towards democracy, especially among the youth. However, it is evident in past research that South Africans display rather low levels of attitudinal support for democracy.

South Africans, as a whole, do not show high levels of commitment to democracy, but they do display high levels of national pride. Bratton and Mattes' (2001) comparative analysis between Zambia, Ghana and South Africa found that South Africans, in general, do not feel a "widespread commitment to democracy" (Bratton & Mattes, 2001:458). Support for democracy also seemed to be weaker in South Africa when compared to other African countries. Mattes and Richmond's (2015) review on longitudinal survey data on South Africa's political culture found that there still seem to be real

problems with democratic citizenship in the country. When it comes to political culture, South Africans present a great sense of national pride. However, when it comes to political regimes “South Africans pay minimal lip service to the idea of democracy, compared to citizens of other sub-Saharan countries” (Mattes & Richmond, 2015:2). In South Africa, only 56,3% feel that democracy is always best and even more surprisingly, 53.8% of respondents are willing to give up democracy for better conditions (Bratton & Mattes, 2001:458). The people of South Africa are far less satisfied with democracy. Bratton and Mattes (2001) found that 56% of South Africans are supportive of democracy, but only 38% are satisfied with the democracy they received (Bratton & Mattes, 2001:461). Therefore, it can be said that South Africans are willing to still be supportive of democracy even if they are less satisfied with the actual regime performance.

Steenekamp’s (2017) more recent study found that from 1995 to 2013 the support for democratic rule had in fact decreased from 90.9% in 1995 to 72.0% in 2013 and this decrease had been coupled with an increase in support for authoritarian rule. While, Leklake’s (2016) review on the Afrobarometer Round 6 surveys (2014-2015) found that “support for democracy has declined by 8% from 72% of South Africans in 2011 to 64% in 2015, which is slightly below the continental average (67%)” (Lekalake, 2016:2). Lekalake (2016) also found that “six in 10 citizens (61%) would be willing to give up regular elections in favour of a non-elected government that could deliver basic services” (Lekalake, 2016:2). Overall, 50% of South Africans believe that their country is “not a democracy at all” or a “democracy with major problems” (Lekalake, 2016:6). Overall satisfaction with democracy declined from 60% in 2011 to 48% in 2015 (Lekalake, 2016:6). Attitudinal support for democracy among the general South African public seems to be unstable.

### **2.5.1 Young South Africans**

This leads to the next concern with regards to the large, growing youthful population in South Africa and the lack of participation in elections among this group. In South Africa, the ‘youth’ is defined as every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years (South African Government, 2020). South Africa is still a relatively young democracy and the country has a growing youth bulge and this “represents a numerically important voting bloc, and their lower participation in elections could undermine the legitimacy of the region’s democratic trajectory (Resnick & Casale, 2014:1172). In the history of the African continent, the youth have always been on the forefront “of many of the region’s significant political transitions” (Resnick & Casale, 2014:1175). For example, in South Africa, the Soweto uprisings against the Apartheid regime and its policies were led by secondary school students (Resnick & Casale, 2014:1175). A more recent example would be the #FeesMustFall movement that was led by a group of university students and it affected all the universities in South Africa (Mlaba,



2021). The young people in South Africa display reasonably high level of interest in politics, echoing the findings in global literature. Mattes and Richmond (2015:5-6) found that 56% of young people have interest in politics and that 67% discuss political matters with their peers. The youth of South Africa are active in the political sphere and they act on matters that are important to them. Young South Africans are actively participating in unconventional channels of political participation, such as, participating in protests, activism actions and other demonstrations (Oyedemi & Mahlatji, 2016:315). However, when it comes to engaging in formal politics, they resemble “other regions of the world in that turnout for Africa’s younger cohorts is lower than for older generations” (Resnick & Casale, 2014:1175). The lower levels of voter turnout among younger people may be because of various different reasons. Young people are very different from the older generations, they have different views, values and needs.

According to Mattes, the born free generation “confront a totally different world than that of their parents (Mattes, 2012:7). The younger generations have been born into the post-apartheid era and they have no official limits to the information they are exposed to, education they receive and where they may work (Mattes, 2012:7). The born frees have a lot more opportunities than the older generations had when they were younger (Mattes, 2012:7). With this being said, the post-apartheid era is characterised by an even larger gap between the rich and the poor and the country faces greater socio-economic and political instability (Mattes, 2012:8). The younger generations face “the same levels of enduring unemployment, poverty, inequality and hopelessness – if not worse so – as their parents” (Mattes, 2012:8). According to data by StatsSA for the first quarter of 2020, South Africa’s unemployment rate is 30.1 per cent, and 63.3 per cent of the unemployed labour force are between the ages of 15-34 years (StatsSA, 2020). Young people still face unemployment challenges and it is one issue that all born frees have in common and it contributes to “their disillusionment with political engagement” (Malila, 2016:174). People of colour still live in underdeveloped and rural areas and only a small minority have access to white schools and universities, while the “majority toil away in increasingly dysfunctional schools with poorly trained teachers who struggle to cope with the new curriculum” (Mattes, 2012:8). Beyond the social barriers that young people face, young people also display low levels of attitudinal support for democracy because of the various social issues that they face. There are still vast inequalities and this is affecting how young people view and evaluate the government’s performance. The government is not providing any solutions to the problems and this causes young people to grow distrustful of the democratic system.

Turning to support for democracy, Mattes’s (2012) study found that only 31% of the born free generation demand democracy, indicating that the born free generation is “less committed to democracy” (Mattes, 2012:144). Mattes and Richmond (2015:17) found that young people are

“somewhat less likely than other age groups to believe that “democracy is preferable to any other kind of government”. Among all the age groups “they are also less likely to reject an alternative regime where “only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office”” (Mattes & Richmond, 2015:17). The younger generations are also more frustrated with the current democratic system and that is why they are less committed to democracy (Resnick & Casale, 2014:1179). This leads to the conclusion that “low political participation among the youth may be driven partially by a perceived lack of faith in the electoral system and low appeal of available political parties” (Resnick & Casale, 2014:1179).

Young South African’s are very cynical of politicians and political institutions. Oyedemi and Mahlatji (2016) found that young people feel that politicians do not engage with them (the youth) and “distrust of government and the political system creates cynicism among the youth” (Oyedemi & Mahlatji, 2016:321). They also feel unrepresented by the current political figures and institutions. Mattes and Richmond’s (2015:16) study found that 72% of young people stated that members of parliament ‘never’ or ‘only sometimes’ listen to people like them. Distrust in the government and politicians seems to be the biggest issue that is causing young South Africans to stray away from participating politically (Malila, 2016:175).

Mattes (2012) used data from a series of nationally representative surveys that were conducted by the Institute for Democracy South Africa (1998) and Afrobarometer (2000) to test the basic characteristics and attitudes toward democracy of the born free generation compared to the older generations (Mattes, 2012:8). Mattes (2012) found that there is no evidence that suggests that born frees are more committed to democracy compared to their older counterparts. In fact, Mattes (2012) found that the born free generation appears to be the least committed to democracy (Mattes, 2012:13). Research that was conducted by Malila, Duncan & Meijer et al. (2013), showed that young people are doubtful of political actors and institutions. Therefore, they have low levels of trust in governmental institutions (Malila et al., 2013:60-61). According to Malila, Duncan & Meijer et al. (2013) only 30.7 per cent of the respondents stated that they trust political parties (Malila, 2016:176). Evidence found by Malila, Duncan & Meijer et al. (2013) indicate that young people in South Africa tend to participate more in social and civic actions and this indicates that young South Africans are “finding alternatives to formal modes of political participation and citizenship activities beyond the formal spaces offered by voting and engaging with members of parliament and local municipalities” (Malila,2016:176). Young people want to be heard and they want create new ways in which they can be heard by political figures.

Young South African’s are distancing themselves from electoral participation because they feel as if nothing has changed and that “not voting is regarded as a generational response to the failures of the



ANC government to address the myriad of challenges facing young people” (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2019b:12). The young people feel that the government and other political institutions fail to meet their expectations, they do not care for their needs and they do not take their issues up seriously – young South Africans feel unrepresented in the political system (Oyedemi & Mahlatji, 2016:321). The fact that they feel unrepresented leads to the issue of declining trust among the youth. Young South Africans do not have a lot of trust in the political system and this results in voter apathy and to them not realising the importance of voting (Oyedemi & Mahlatji, 2016:321).

The issue with the youth distancing themselves from electoral politics raises a concern that as new young South Africans are replacing the older cohorts, they are suppressing the aggregate turnout and, in turn, not carrying over the habits of voting and the fundamental democratic norms and values. The question is: could changes in attitudes towards democracy account for changes in modes of political participation among young people?

## **2.6 Role of Participation in Democracy**

Democracy is built around the assertion that the individuals and the institutions within a democratic system cannot exist in isolation from one another and it is essential for all actors to actively participate in a democracy (and all its processes) for it to be successful (Pateman, 1970:41). A democratic system does not only require of its citizens to demand, support and trust the system but it also requires the active participation of the public, for example, voting. As Dalton (2020:39) states “democracy should be a celebration by an involved public” – the power of a democracy lies within the hands of its people. With this being said, active participation requires much more than merely voting.

A democracy needs an active public as they are the ones who hold the democratic system with all its actors and institutions accountable. People are required to be politically active “because it is through public discussion, deliberation, and involvement that societal goals should be defined and carried out” (Dalton, 2020:39). According to Pateman (1970) participation helps to develop and foster the necessary qualities that are essential to any democracy (Pateman, 1970:41). If people do not actively participate in the democratic process, “democracy loses its legitimacy and its guiding force” (Dalton, 2020:39). Pateman (1970) also goes on to say that participation aids in accepting collective decisions that are made (Pateman, 1970:41). If people participate in democratic decision making and partake in polls, for example, they are able to make better decisions as a collective, representing a bigger majority of the bigger population. Participation allows citizens to have a direct influence on the democratic system; “participation gives citizens a more direct say, it gives a voice to individual citizens and to minorities, it encourages civic skills and civic virtues, it leads to rational decisions based on public reasoning, and it increases support for the outcome and the process” (Michels,

2011:276). Citizen participation is an important feature of democracy because it is “a valuable element of democratic citizenship and democratic decision-making” (Michels, 2011:276). Governments take the opinions of its citizens into account before they make any important political decisions. People also play an active role in the policy making process.

In a democracy people have the freedom and the right to participate in the democratic process and to bring about change in society (Dalton, 2020:39). Participation does require a lot of time and resources and it comes in many different shapes and sizes. Participation can be understood in a narrow and a broader sense. The narrow understanding of participation limits it to voting (that lies at the very core of democracy) and the broader understanding links participation to a broader range of citizen involvement in democratic politics (Forbrig, 2005:20). People are all different and that is why there are many ways in which people can participate in a democracy. The next section will explore and discuss the various different conventional and unconventional modes of political participation, that allows people to engage in the democratic process.

## **2.7 Modes of Participation**

There are multiple different ways (conventional and unconventional) in which citizens can actively participate in the democratic process. Verba, Nie and Kim (1978) identified four types of political participation: voting, campaign activity, contacting officials directly and communal activity. Dalton (2020) added two more to the list: protest and other forms of contentious politics, and internet activism (Dalton, 2020:41). Researchers found that people do not use these different types of participation interchangeably, they chose to rather focus their attention to the “activities that match their motivations and goals” (Dalton, 2020:41). Certain kinds of political activities often seem to ‘cluster’ together, “and a person who performs one act from a particular cluster is likely to perform other acts from the same cluster” (Dalton, 2020:41).

Verba and Nie (1972) labelled the clusters or political activities as ‘modes of democratic participation’ (Dalton, 2020:41). The different modes of democratic participation require different things from individual to individual and these different modes also “differ in the nature of their influence” (Dalton, 2020:41). Verba, Nie and Kim (1978) categorized the different modes of participation in terms of different criteria: “(1) whether the act conveys information about the individual’s political preferences and/or applies pressure for compliance, (2) the potential degree of conflict involved, (3) the amount of effort required, and (4) the amount of cooperation with others required” (Dalton, 2020:41). The point that Verba, Nie and Kim (1978) make is that the different modes of participation involve different kinds of individuals and that the modes “exert different kinds of influence on the political process” (Dalton, 2020:42).

When distinguishing between the different modes of participation, this paper will use Dalton's framework of the different modes of participation that he discusses in his book *Citizen Politics*. The first mode of participation is voting (Dalton, 2020:42). Voting is considered to be a formal mode of political participation. There are many ways in which citizens can influence government. Voting is considered to be the most traditional form of participation and it is probably the mode of participation that carries the most value. The form of participation that is considered to be the most powerful form of engagement is voting (Print, 2007:328). The main assumption is that participation is equated to the act of voting (Dalton, 2007:55). Voting is a collective action, as you go to the polls with your fellow citizens and to cast your vote. After all the votes have been cast, the votes are counted and the outcomes are made public – this is democracy in action (Dalton, 2020:43). A lot of power lies in a vote and it is representative of the people. For a long time, voting was the only form of being represented in the political process.

The second mode of participation is campaign activity. Campaign activity takes place as soon as elections approach (Dalton, 2020:47). Political campaigns are also often called 'retail politics' (Dalton, 2020:47). There are many ways in which campaign activities can take place, depending on the type of electoral system that a country has. Campaign activity also requires a lot of work and effort and it is "important to parties and candidates" (Dalton, 2020:47). Campaign activity itself can be divided into different sorts of activities. Most campaign activities today involve more individualist forms of participation, for example, "giving money to a campaign, displaying a button sticker, or trying to persuade other how to vote" (Dalton, 2020:47). More recent forms of campaign activity involve the internet and people are now able to 'follow' political parties and candidates on Facebook, Twitter or on other social media platforms, and in doing so candidates and parties are able to connect with their 'followers' directly (Dalton, 2020:47).

The third mode of participation is found in contacting officials directly, also referred to as 'contact activities'. This is one of the most direct ways in which people can 'participate'. People are able to express their support or opposition to, for example, a new policy, directly by writing a letter or sending an email to the representative directly (Dalton, 2020:52). Citizens can also attend city council meetings or talk to representatives in person (Dalton, 2020:52). Direct contacting through email has also made it easier "for political groups to mobilize their supporters to write" (Dalton, 2020:52). In doing so, people also feel like they have a sense of belonging to a specific political group or organization because of the direct, personal contact they have with the representative. Direct contacting can also "expand the potential influence of the public" (Dalton, 2020:52). People can also choose when and where they would like to raise a certain issue, instead of having to wait for the next

election to highlight specific issues (Dalton, 2020:52). Direct contacting is also another form of how people are changing the ways in which they participate.

The fourth mode of participation is communal activity. Communal activity is “the essence of grassroots democracy” as it “is when people get together to collectively address their needs” (Dalton, 2020:52). Communal activity is when communities or people in communities get together to deal with various issues (social or community problems) that they find are important, “ranging from school issues to improving the roads to protecting the local environment” (Dalton, 2020:52). Communal activity is referred to ‘democracy in action’ (Dalton, 2020:52).

Protest and contentious action is the fifth mode of political participation and it “arose from feelings of frustration and deprivation’ (Dalton, 2020:54). Protest action “was seen as an outlet for those who lacked access through conventional channels” (Dalton, 2020:55), such socially disadvantaged, minority groups, or groups that have been isolated from the established political order (Dalton, 2020:55). However. The nature of protest action has changed in democratic societies. Protest action has broadened from just including previously disadvantaged, minority groups to include a wider spectrum of groups in society (Dalton, 2020:55). Instead of wanting to overthrow the established political order, protest actions are aimed at raising certain issues and are normally planned and organised (Dalton, 2020:55). Protest action is considered to be another “political resource for mobilizing public opinion and influencing policymakers” (Dalton, 2020:55). There are different levels of protest action, such as, signing a petition, partaking in boycotts or demonstrations, etc. (Dalton, 2020:55). Another new form of protest action is political consumerism. Political consumerism involves “buying or boycotting products for a political, ethical, or environmental reason” (Dalton, 2020:57). Many protest groups use this form of political action to “pressure businesses and governments to change their behaviour” (Dalton, 2020:57). Protest activity has become more common than any other forms of conventional political participation methods (Dalton, 2020:57). With this being said, there are positives and negative to protest and contentious action. Some protests are prone to become violent if people’s goals are not reached and some protest actions go far beyond the tolerable bounds of politics. Democracy does allow citizens the space to participate in protest and contentious actions, because the aim of a democracy is to allow citizens “to protest the actions of their government, not destroy them” (Dalton, 2020:59).

The last mode of participation is wired activism. The internet has broadened the scope of political participation and created multiple new ways in which people are able to carry on traditional political activities and re-invent them (Dalton, 2020:59). People are able “to connect with others, to gather and share information, and attempt to influence the political process” (Dalton, 2020:59), but on a larger and faster scale. The internet has completely changed the way in which citizens, candidates, political

parties and groups connect with one another. The internet has created various opportunities that did not previously exist, such as, online petitions, it has created a new platform for freedom of speech and it has completely liberalized the availability of information (Dalton, 2020:59). Young people are particularly active on the internet and online social media platforms and internet activism is growing among the young people of today (Dalton, 2020:60). It allows people, especially young people, a free and safe space to voice their opinions and to raise matters that are important to them.

The different modes of participation can also be categorized into two groups, namely: conventional and unconventional channels of participation. Conventional channels of participation are “political activities including voting, party membership and participation in a political rally are actions that intend to influence the political process through the electoral arena” (Stockemer, 2014:202). According to Bourne (2010:196) “conventional participation addresses involvements that are embedded in the norms and traditions of the country”. These involve action such as voting and contacting officials, politicians and political parties.

Unconventional channels of political participation are the activities that are aimed at influencing “politics through non-institutionalized means. For example, holding a demonstration, participating in a boycott and signing a petition are all forms of unconventional political activities” (Stockemer, 2014:202; Dalton 2014). Unconventional participation activities “defined as all sorts of protest behaviours that do not deliberately involve physical force” (Stockemer, 2014:202). Unconventional political participation addresses “involvements that are outside of the norm (the traditional approach)” and these approaches are “more aggressive, more assertive, and may even break the law” (Munroe, 2002 in Bourne, 2014). These approaches include actions such as roadblocks, marches, protests and other demonstrations (Bourne, 2014:196).

## **2.8 From Citizen-oriented to Cause-Oriented Actions.**

This section will draw on Norris’s (2004) explanation of citizen- and cause-oriented politics. Young people seem to distance themselves from traditional channels of political participation, like voting, and they tend to be drawn towards unconventional channels of politics. Rather than distinguishing between conventional and unconventional channels of political participation, according to Norris (2004) one must rather distinguish between cause-oriented and citizen-oriented actions (Norris, 2004:4). Young people are more active in cause-oriented political participation, whereas older generations are more active in citizen-oriented actions. Citizen-oriented politics relate mainly to elections (voting) and political parties. Whereas cause-oriented actions focus its “attention upon specific issues and policy concerns, exemplified by consumer politics (buying or boycotting certain products for political or ethical reasons), petitioning, demonstrations, and protests. The distinction is

not water-tight, for example political parties can organize mass demonstrations, and elected representatives can be contacted by constituents about specific policy issues and community concerns, as much as for individual constituency service” (Norris, 2004:4)

Various new social movements adopt a mixed-strategy approach, where they use conventional and unconventional methods, such as, “lobbying representatives, with a variety of alternative modes such as online networking, street protests, and consumer boycotts” (Norris, 2004:4). A main feature of cause-oriented actions, that distinguishes it from citizen-oriented actions, is that cause-oriented actions are used to “pursue [a] specific arena” (Norris, 2004:4). Of course, many of the techniques that are used by cause-oriented activists are not all peaceful, some actions tend to become violent and aggressive (Norris, 2004:4). Social movements have also expanded over the years, especially those concerned about gender equality, nuclear power, anti-war, climate change, gay rights and gender-based violence (Norris, 2004:4). An example of how cause-oriented actions were used to bring about change is when the people who were oppressed by the Apartheid regime used economic boycotts that were directed against the Apartheid regime (Norris, 2004:4). These cause-oriented actions include the “adoption of more aggressive industrial action by trade unions, including strikes, occupations, and blockades, occasionally accompanied by arson, damage and violence, directed against Western governments” (Norris, 2004:4). However, over the last few decades, collective actions through protests and marches have become more widely accepted as a way for people “to express political grievances, voice opposition, and challenge authorities” (Norris, 2004:4).

Cause-oriented actions have also extended to include consumer and life-style politics and this has blurred the line between social and political (Norris, 2004:5). Cause-oriented activities are also exemplifying of “volunteer work at recycling cooperatives, helping at battered women’s shelters, or fundraising for a local school, as well as protesting at sites for timber logging, boycotting goods made by companies using sweat shop labour, and purchasing cosmetic products which avoid the use of animal testing” (Norris, 2004:5) and these are all actions that fall outside of the political arena. Cause-oriented actions are actions that are aimed at reforming and influencing, whether it be the law or policymaking process (Norris, 2004:5). These activities are also directed towards, government, parliament and various actors in the public, private and non-profit sectors (Norris, 2004:5). These organizations and movements include “international human rights organizations, women’s NGOs, transnational environmental organizations, the anti-sweatshop and anti-land mines networks, the peace movement, and anti-globalization and anti-capitalism forces” (Norris, 2004:5) and they are usually targeted towards major multi-national corporations (Norris, 2004:5).

The concern is that with a decline in conventional channels of political participation, and the rise in unconventional channels of political participation, democracy is slowly losing its legitimacy. Young



people are engaging in political matters that are important to them and they are creating new, creative channels of participation. However, when it comes to democracy, they claim that they are not receiving the democracy they deserve, but they are not voting to get the democracy they want.

## **2.9 Young people and Democracy – Two Schools of Thought**

The youth and their involvement in politics is a topic that is often full of debates and contradictions. In democracies today, young people “are often chastised as the apolitical harbingers of an incipient ‘crisis of democracy’” (Farthing, 2010:181), and at the same time they are praised for creating new creative pathways for political participation (Farthing, 2010:181). All the literature on the youth and political participation falls on either side of the two paradigms: “either a disengaged paradigm – which sees young people as passive and devoid of political interest – or engaged paradigm – which sees young people as actively political in new forms” (Farthing, 2010:181).

### **2.9.1 Disengaged Youth**

In the eyes of the people who are concerned about the future of democracy, according to Fields (2003:1) “we have a crisis on our hands” – a crisis of democracy. Established democracies are experiencing a decline of participation, especially among the youth. Young people are not participating in the electoral process, whilst they make up a substantial proportion of the electorate. Young people represent a great strength in numbers, but still they choose to distance themselves from the voting polls (Fields, 2003:1). There are many explanations as to why young people are not engaging in conventional politics.

Wattenberg (2016) argues in his book, *Is Voting for Young People?*, that politics has become a field for the elderly and that this is evident not just in the United States, but also in some of the world’s most advanced democracies (Farthing, 2010:182). The fact that this phenomenon is evident across various countries, indicates that this is not just a ‘country specific’ issue and that young people in general are distancing themselves from politics, but why and what are the implications for the future of these democracies? There are many explanations that are offered up by various different scholars to explain this alienation of young people from politics.

Young people are exposed to a different world when it comes to media. Older generations had limited access to media sources, such as newspapers, radio stations and only later on tv networks. Whereas today, young people have access to a wide variety of social media platforms. Wattenberg (2016) argues in his book that generational changes in media habits have led to young people becoming more and more disengaged from politics as “young people are far less likely to be exposed to news about public affairs than their elders” (Wattenberg, 2016:3). Because of this, the apathy towards politics

that young people have “stems from being tuned out from political news” (Wattenberg, 2016:3) and because of this it will be rather tricky to reverse the ‘problem’. In saying this, Wattenberg (2016) argues that young people have not consciously chosen to disengage themselves from politics, but rather that they have “been socialized in a markedly different communications environment” (Wattenberg, 2016:3) and they have not learnt the same media habits as their elderlies. For example, Wattenberg argues that young people are more likely to source political information from other media sources, than the newspaper. The habit of reading the newspaper has become something that is more for the elderly population (Wattenberg, 2016:23). No, this does not necessarily mean that young people just do not read, it simply means that the age of picking up a newspaper and reading it has changed, taking a digital form. However, digital, online newspapers still have a long way to go if they want to reach as big of an audience that traditional newspapers have managed to reach among older citizens (Wattenberg, 2016:27). Nonetheless, young people are more technologically advanced and they have all the information at their fingertips, but that does not necessarily mean that they are constantly reading up about politics.

The same goes for political news that is aired on the television. Young people are not interested in tuning into traditional news broadcasts (Wattenberg, 2016:55). Young people are more interested in being entertained, therefore they will be more interested in shows that provide them with the entertainment that they want. The television network business has adapted to this issue by adapting to the idea of producing news shows that have been “designed primarily for the purpose of entertainment rather than providing information” (Wattenberg, 2016:55). People refer to this as ‘soft news’ and an example would be the American talk-show *The Daily Show*, hosted by Trevor Noah. It is a late-night talk and news satire/comedy television program. The show presents current political issues, political actors and other news in an entertaining, laughable manner. TV shows of this nature have the potential to expose the ordinary citizen to information about political issues and events that involve scandals, acts of terrorism or violence, or various other forms of sensational drama (Wattenberg, 2016:56). In this way, young people are being exposed to political news in an entertaining way. Television shows have the ability to “save the day by making young people aware of at least some aspects of current events” (Wattenberg, 2016:56). However, not all-important news will be covered and whether or not the important news will ever be absorbed by the young person’s mind (Wattenberg, 2016:56). Wattenberg illustrates in his book that young people (in the United States and elsewhere) do not follow public affairs and they possess little knowledge of politics in general, when compared to their older counterparts (Wattenberg, 2016:78). The problem is not only how the youth generation has become so uniformed, but rather what the impact of this will be on democracies across the world, whether it be a young democracy or a well-established democracy. The lack of informed future citizens will definitely not go without any consequences. Wattenberg



argues that if young people do not follow politics or current affairs, they will not be interested in participating in politics, such as turning out to the polls to cast a vote and that may be an explanation as to why young people do not vote (Wattenberg, 2016:90).

According to Wattenberg (2016) young people also view voting as something older people do, and this links to the generational change theory. In 2002 a nationwide study was done in the United States by the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, only 22% of the respondents responded that they agree that ‘most people vote’, and 74% of respondents stated that ‘voting is something older people do’ (Wattenberg, 2016:4). The findings that were found in this study clearly indicates that there is a generation gap between older and younger people, with regards to their attitudes towards voting. Young people also seem to think that politicians only care about the votes of older people than what they care about those of younger people (Wattenberg, 2016:4). The act of voting is often described as being a responsibility or an obligation. This is a view that many older generations would associate voting to. However, young people do not seem to hold that same association to voting. It has been proven that young people do not consider voting to be a civic duty and that young people are less likely to vote than older people. this is troubling for many reasons. The problem is that young people will not simply learn the habit of voting as they get older. It is more likely that the current generation with a relatively weak sense of civic duty will continue throughout their lifetime (Wattenberg, 2016:130). Fields (2003:3) argues that young people will not grow into the habit of voting and that they will rather “continue the pattern as they grow older”.

A CIRCLE survey that was conducted in the United State in 2002 found that only 9% of Americans between that ages of 15 and 25 responded that they considered voting to be a responsibility and only 20% responded that they considered it to be responsibility. Compare to the 34% that said that they saw voting as a choice and 31% responded that voting was a right. (Wattenberg, 2016:212-122). The fact that young people do not consider it to be civic duty to vote means that the “current poor turnout rates may well be a constant state of affairs throughout their lifetimes” (Wattenberg, 2016:130). Wattenberg sums it up clearly: “a generation who is relatively unlikely to see voting as an important civic responsibility is one who may well have many of its members lost as voters for the rest of its duration” (Wattenberg, 2016:130).

The main problem of the lack of interest in politics among young people is with the declining turnout rates among young people. it might seem like a minor issue that will eventually resolve itself, but “young people’s lack of electoral participation has ramifications for the overall future of our democracy” (Fields,2003:3). A recent study that was done by Schulz-Herzenberg (2019c) indicated how levels of voter turnout among young South African have declined. In 2014 only 33% of all eligible 18-19-year-olds registered to vote and of the 33% and of all who were eligible to vote only

27% turned out to vote. Of the eligible voters between the ages of 20-29-year-old 64% were registered to vote and only 46% turned out to vote. Of the citizens between the ages of 30-39-year-olds, 79% were registered to vote and only 55% turned out to vote. By 2019 the percentages of registered voters who turned out to vote decreased. In 2019, the registered eligible 18-19-year-olds dropped from 33% to 19%. Of all eligible voters in this age group turnout dropped from 27% to 15%. Of the eligible voters between the ages of 20-29-year-olds, 54% were registered and 39% turned out to vote. Between the ages of 30-39-year-olds, 74% eligible voters registered to vote and only 52% turned out to vote. By comparison, among the oldest cohorts over 70% of all eligible voters cast a vote. The evidence put forth by Schulz-Herzenberg (2019c) indicates that young people do register and vote at far lower rates than their older counterparts.

The fact that young people are not turning out to the polls has created a “sense of unease amongst politicians and officials that young people...have a dissatisfaction that is deeply entrenched” (Henn & Foard, 2012:49) and that it may become a long-term problem, that the civic-oriented older generations will eventually be replaced by a younger skeptical and protest oriented generation (Henn & Foard, 2012:49). If young people are as apathetic and disengaged as they are said to be, it is “a social problem that calls for urgent interventions to ensure the sustainability of democratic politics” (Farthing, 2010:182). It is rather worrisome if more than half of the future citizens in democracies are uninformed, uninterested and disengaged from politics (Farthing, 2010:182). From this point of view, “a serious democratic deficit is imminent – the future of...democracy is under threat” (Farthing, 2010:183). Various authors found that low levels of voter turnout “were accompanied by high levels of collective action and protest behaviour” (Resnick & Casale, 2014:1176). Young people are active in the informal, unconventional channels of political participation. They choose to “channel their energy into other forms of political participation” (Resnick & Casale, 2014:1176). Young people do display a great interest in politics and that is why they turn to the more unconventional channels of political engagement.

Young people are changing the way in which people participate and they are creating a new ‘type’ of citizenry. The role of young people on the political process is more important than people think. Young people have a unique yet strategic place in society, especially in the “future development of citizenship and national community” (Mycock & Tonge, 2011:4). Young people are also responsible for preserving and carrying on democratic values to the future generations, as young people are considered “‘citizens in the making’ and they have the “potential to embrace or subvert established modes of citizenship” (Mycock & Tonge, 2011:4). The legitimacy, stability and future of a democratic regime is dependent on the youth of today.

## 2.9.2 Engaged Youth

Young people are creating a new 'type' of citizenship. The youth community is vibrant, loud and everywhere. They are constantly changing and challenging the traditional ways and values of politics. Young people have a lot of potential to create new creative ways in which people can participate in politics and they have "the potential to embrace or subvert established modes of citizenship" (Mycock & Tonge, 2011:4). They are referred to as 'citizens in the making' and therefore "they are in need of appropriate discipline and training before they may become full citizens" (Mycock & Tonge, 2011:4). However, their position in society leaves them "usually positioned as the passive recipients of citizenship policy rather than as active citizens shaping their political realities" (Mycock & Tonge, 2011:4). It is important for young people to be encouraged to embrace their rights and to become active citizens.

Young people are characterized as people who display "dynamic identities, open, weak-tie relationships and more fluid, short-lived commitments in informal preambles institutions and associations" (Vinken, 2005:155). On the one side of the paradigm, it is argued that young people are active citizens. With this being, they are rather active and represented in the unconventional, informal participatory politics, such as signing a petition, participating in protest actions and online activism, to name a few. Harris, Wyn and Younes (2010) found that young people participate in activities that help to "shape the society they want to live in" (Harris, Wyn & Younes, 2010:23). They found that a majority of their respondents were involved in activities such as recycling a donating money, and over a third of the respondents were involved in "signing petitions, discussing social and political issues and making statements through art, music and writing" (Harris, Wyn & Younes, 2010:23). All of these political activities are considered to be more personal and that is why young people are drawn more towards these unconventional forms of political participation (Harris, Wyn & Younes, 2010:23). With this being said, young people are still not involving themselves in "stronger forms of consumer politics" (Harris, Wyn & Younes, 2010:23).

Harris, Wyn and Younes (2010) also found that young people want to be heard and that they are more interested in having discussions (Harris, Wyn & Younes, 2010:24). They found that although people rarely, almost never discuss political issues outside their inner circle of friend and family, they do feel that it is important to have these discussions with government representatives, in order to get more young people involved (Harris, Wyn & Younes, 2010:25). Their study shows that 83% of young people feel that they seldom or never feel that they can have a say in the local council or in the electorate, and more than 30% feel like they do not want in the local council or in the electorate (Harris, Wyn & Younes, 2010:25). This low level of interest is due to the fact that young people have

little faith in political actors and they do not feel as if they will even listen to their concerns (Harris, Wyn & Younes, 2010:25).

When it comes to political participation and the internet, young people are active on various online platforms. For young people, “the internet functions as a space for social connections and self-expression” (Harris, Wyn & Younes, 2010:27). Young people are constantly looking for ways to connect with one another to “create a sense of community with who they can share political and social concerns” (Harris, Wyn & Younes, 2010:27). The internet creates a safe space for people to be able to voice their opinions and to have their voices heard. However, we seem to have entered an era that is marked by “lack of meaningful public engagement” (Scott & Makres, 2019:76). Scott and Makres (2019) argue that instead of engaging in meaningful ways, online social media platforms “rob us of the impetus to engage meaningfully in politics by providing a false outlet for our frustrations” (Scott & Makres, 2019:76). They argue that people have become too caught up in the drama and entertainment that the internet causes, and that while some people have been too busy signing petitions and marching in protests, “other have mentally ‘checked out’ and retreated to private spaces” (Scott & Makres, 2019:76). Scott and Makres (2019:76) claim that “the latter is the death knell of civic engagement and, ultimately of democracy”.

Participation has changed over the years and it has become much more than voting. Participation has “adopted a diverse range of activities” (Kitanova, 2020:120), for example, signing petitions, protesting and participation in boycotts. Young people engage in different types of political activities, compared to the older generations. Norris (2004) argues that young people choose to engage in other alternative forms of political engagement, and they are not just steered away from politics, as other scholars have argued. Young people participate in cause-oriented forms of political activities and they are more concerned about issues that involve them and their immediate environment (Norris, 2004). Because young people often feel excluded from traditional, mainstream politics, they choose to resort to different channels of participation, where they are able to bring about changes and where they feel that they are being heard. Engaging in protest politics, boycotts and attending marches are all ways in which young people are able to shed light onto the issues that are important to them (O’Toole, et al.,2003). It is said “that youth participation ‘enhances citizenship’ while tackling a range of social problems” (Bessant, 2004:387).

There are various explanations that have been offered as to why young people are distancing themselves from electoral politics and how they are creating new creative avenues of participation. Dalton (2007) states that “educational and generational patterns show how social change is re-shaping political action” (Dalton, 2007:72). These social changes change the very norms of citizenship and, in effect, that causes people to adopt different styles of participation (Dalton, 2007:72). Young people

have been brought up in a vastly different generation than their parents and they have been socialized differently, because they have been exposed to different sources of information. For example, older generations feel that voting is a duty that one has (Dalton, 2007:72). Whereas younger people associate participation with various other activities, such as protests and online activism, and not just voting. The shift from traditional channels of participation to more unconventional forms of participation highlights how “different images of citizenship...are transforming the patterns of political action” (Dalton, 2007:75). These changes in participation “may be a continuing feature of democratic politics” (Dalton, 2007:75).

Young people are changing the way in which people participate and they are creating a new ‘type’ of citizenry. The role of young people on the political process is more important than people think. Young people have a unique yet strategic place in society, especially in the “future development of citizenship and national community” (Mycock & Tonge, 2011:4). Young people are also responsible for preserving and carrying on democratic values to the future generations, as young people are considered “‘citizens in the making’ and they have the “potential to embrace or subvert established modes of citizenship” (Mycock & Tonge, 2011:4). Therefore, it follows that in a country with a large, youthful population, the credibility and legitimacy of a democratic regime is dependent on an involved, active and informed contemporary youth.

## **2.10 Summary**

The literature that was reviewed in the sections above explores how complex attitudes are, how they are all interlinked, and how attitudes enforce behaviours. It is also made clear from the start that participation lies at the very foundation of democracy and that without attitudinal and behavioural bases of support, democracy cannot cease to exist. However, voting lies at the very core of democracy. There has been a decline in electoral participation among young people and it is evident in even the most established democracies. Young people seem to show interest in democracy, they have faith in the democratic system and they demand democracy. However, there are low levels of trust among young people and they do not think that they are getting the quality democracy they believe they deserve. Therefore, young people display low levels of attitudinal support for democracy. Alongside this, they are also not turning out to vote. However, they are engaging in unconventional forms of political participation. From the literature, it can be assumed that this phenomenon is concerning for democracies but even more concerning for young democracies, with growing youth populations. South Africa is such a country. The growing apathy and disengagement from formal electoral politics among young people is putting South Africa’s democracy to the test.

## ***Chapter 3: Methodology***

### **3.1 Introduction**

This study will use a quantitative study that uses cross-sectional, secondary survey data to explore three research questions about the differences between attitudinal and behavioural bases of support for democracy between younger and older people. First, the quantitative method of a research design will be discussed, highlighting its advantages and disadvantages as a research method. The next section will provide a brief overview of the two surveys, Afrobarometer and the Comparative National Elections Project (CNEP), that are used to answer the research questions. The fourth section will briefly outline the research questions, and the associated hypotheses. The fifth section will examine how previous authors have operationalized their independent and dependent variables in order to measure the attitudinal and behavioural bases of support for democracy, and how the study operationalizes its independent and dependent variables.

### **3.2 Research Design**

As it was stated in Chapter One the main objectives of this study is to examine the differences between the attitudinal and behavioural bases of support for democracy among the youth of South Africa, compared to their older cohorts. Secondly, the study aims to examine what attitudes are linked to why young people are not participating in electoral politics. In order to be able to attain the research objectives, the appropriate research design and methodology is required.

A research design lies at the core of any research process, as it is considered to be the structure of the whole research process (Akhtar, 2016:68). After a research question is developed, the research design follows. A research design is “a set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing the research problem” (Mounon, 2002:107). In the research process researchers are confronted with various different research strategies and methods (Burnham, Lutz, Grant & Layton-Henry, 2008:40). A research design focusses on what type of study is planned in order to obtain certain results (Akhtar, 2016:68). The appropriate research design is chosen based on the research question(s) because the main purpose of a research design is to make sure that the data that is gathered throughout the research process answers the research question correctly.

Given that this study seeks to examine what influence different attitudes have on behaviour, it only seems appropriate that this study adopts a descriptive research design. The study is a single case study research design that examines the attitudes of young people in South Africa. The research method is a quantitative approach. The study examines the attitudes of young people in South Africa and how these attitudes inform certain behaviours. Thus, the analysis of the data will have some comparative elements to show difference or similarities.



### **3.3 Research Methodology**

In order for researchers to answer their research questions correctly, they can use either a qualitative or quantitative research methodology, or sometimes they can use both when they choose to adopt a mixed-methods approach (Burnham, Lutz, Grant & Layton-Henry, 2008:40). For the purpose of this paper, the quantitative research method will be discussed. The analysis of the data will have some comparative elements to show differences or similarities. This section will also discuss some of the strengths and weaknesses of using a quantitative research methodology.

A quantitative research method is a widely used method when researchers want to collect numerical data, analyse and present the large amounts of data, in order to draw various conclusions from the findings (Burnham, Lutz, Grant & Layton-Henry, 2008). In quantitative data analysis, data is obtained by sending out multiple survey questions out into the public sphere to a relatively large sample of respondents whom represent a large proportion of the population. All the answers in the survey are each given a numerical value and then they are “analysed using mathematically based methods (...statistics)” (Muijs, 2010:1). Quantitative data is primarily about collecting numerical data in order to be able to explain a certain phenomenon. When using quantitative data analysis, researchers take a deductive approach to analysis. In other words, a hypothesis or various hypotheses are formed, data is collected and analyzed and from that the hypotheses can be proven correct or incorrect (Muijs, 2010:8). Not all data is already available in a numerical form, but quantitative data analysis enables researchers to collect data in a quantitative manner (Muijs, 2010:2). The questions that are asked in quantitative research methods are direct and quantifiable as quantitative research is focused on answering the ‘what’ and/or ‘how’ of any given situation (Goertzen, 2017:12). Goertzen (2017) identified six key characteristics of quantitative research: “it deals with numbers to assess information; data can be measured and quantified; it aims to be objective; findings can be evaluated using statistical analysis; it represents complex problems through variables; and results can be summarized, compared, or generalized” (Goertzen, 2017:12-13). Goertzen (2017) also identifies various advantages and disadvantages of quantitative research.

#### **3.3.1 Advantages and Disadvantages of a Quantitative Research Method**

The advantages of quantitative research are that the findings can be generalized to the broader population. When a sampling technique is used the “aim is to get a sample that is as representative as possible of the target population” (Mounton, 2002:110). Representativeness is the core criterion of a ‘valid’ sample. This leads to the next advantage being that quantitative data collection allows researchers to generate data that is representative of a larger group or population because the data sets are large. Another advantage is that the research methods or questions can be replicated. The fact that researchers are able to use the same methods overtime and still get the same data from situation to



situation, it contributes to the reliability of the research process. Reliability is equal to stability over time (Mouton, 2002:111).

However, there are also some disadvantages of using a quantitative research approach. Using a quantitative research approach does not allow the researcher to explain why people react in certain ways. Researchers are not able to come to clear-cut answers as one would get when performing experiments and it is more “difficult to come to deeper understanding of processes and contextual differences through questionnaires” (Muijs, 2010:45). Another disadvantage is that some demographic groups may be difficult to reach and people may also be reluctant to participate (Goertzen, 2017:13). The last disadvantage is that collecting data by using quantitative methods can be very time consuming as the data collection process takes place over a long period of time (Goertzen, 2017:13).

In quantitative research hypotheses are developed to test the relationship between two or more variables (Muijs, 2010:8). Variables are the units or cases that researchers are interested in (Muijs, 2010:8). Using quantitative research methods allows quantitative researchers to design specific studies that allows them to test a hypothesis by testing the relationships between dependent and independent variables. This allows the researcher to decide whether or not to accept or reject the hypothesis. However, researchers must keep in mind that when a hypothesis is accepted, it can only be provisionally accepted, as new data may emerge that may cause the hypothesis to be rejected in subsequent research (Muijs, 2010:8). Using a quantitative approach to data analysis makes it possible to make inferences about the possible relationships between the dependent and independent variables.

### **3.3.2 Descriptive Survey Research Design**

Survey research is a widely used method of collecting data in the social sciences. Survey research is considered to be “the gold standard for measuring citizen opinions that are at the heart of democratic deliberation and they provide a powerful technique for ensuring the openness and transparency of the democratic process through studies of democratic institutions” (Brady, Verba & Schlozman, 1995:3). The process of measuring political attitudes and behaviours can be a complex process, but that is where “public opinion surveys provide a valuable tool for researchers” (Dalton, 2002: 2). Survey research can be done by sending out surveys or questionnaires to a selected sample of a population to gather in-depth data, that can be applied to the general population (Mouton, 2001; Saunders et al., 2012). A survey research design, along with the random sampling technique, can be used to ensure that the results are representative of the broader population and that the results are unbiased (Brady, Verba & Schlozman, 1995).

Data that is obtained through survey research is reliable and this makes the data analysis and interpretation of the findings relatively straightforward (Mouton, 2001). One of the limitations of

using a survey research design is that the standardized nature of the questionnaires do not allow the researcher to do any further examinations beyond the given answer, to clarify ambiguity and to assess non-verbal behaviour of the respondents (Babbie, 2011). Surveys do not enable researchers to explore topics in-depth and the questions are fixed, meaning that the research design remains unchanged throughout the entire duration of the research process (Babbie, 2011). Another limitation is that the data is dependent on self-reported data. In other words, the answers are based on each respondent's beliefs and perceptions (Leedy and Ormrod, 2016). Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that some respondents may occasionally give the researcher the socially desirable answers and the researcher must be aware of this (Neuman, 2007).

### **3.4 Afrobarometer and Comparative National Elections Project (CNEP) Surveys**

This study uses secondary (existing) survey data from two surveys, the 2018 Afrobarometer survey and the 2019 post-election Comparative National Elections Project (CNEP) survey round.

Afrobarometer ([www.afrobarometer.org](http://www.afrobarometer.org)) is a “non-partisan, pan-African research institution” (Afrobarometer, 2020). The first round of surveys that were conducted only include 12 countries (Botswana, Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe) and today the surveys cover more than 35 countries. The data that is collected by Afrobarometer is done so by conducting face-to-face interviews “with a randomly selected sample of 1 200 or 2 400 people in each country” (Afrobarometer, 2020). The samples of each country are generated to represent the whole population, “a sample that is a representative cross-section of all citizens of voting age in a given country” (Afrobarometer, 2020). The sample design is a “clustered, stratified, multi-stage, area probability sample” (Afrobarometer, 2020) to ensure that all groups of a population are included in the sample. The interviews are conducted in the all the main local languages of the sample area and the responses are strictly confidential.

Afrobarometer taps a range of contemporary issues including perceptions about the quality of democracy and governance; level of political participation, youth and democracy, media and freedom of speech, gender equality and identity (Afrobarometer, 2020). Afrobarometer is considered to be a suitable source of secondary data analysis because the institution is “the world's most reliable source of high-quality, reliable data on what Africans are thinking” (Afrobarometer, 2020). The surveys are conducted in an ethical manner and they follow all the necessary steps to ensure that the data that is collected is reliable, valid and representative of the larger population.

This study will use the Afrobarometer Round survey that measured the quality of democracy and governance in South Africa. The Round 7 surveys were conducted from between 2016 and 2018. The samples are designed to include “a sample that is a representative cross-section of all citizens of voting age in a given country” (Afrobarometer, 2020). Afrobarometer uses a random sampling

method and the sample size includes citizens who are 18 years and older (Afrobarometer, 2020). The samples sizes either include 1 200 or 2 400 cases, depending on the population size of each country (Afrobarometer, 2020). The sample design is a “clustered, stratified, multi-stage, probability sample design” (Afrobarometer, 2020) as this allows an equal opportunity for each individual to have a chance to be chosen to participate (Afrobarometer, 2020). Afrobarometer uses a multi-stage sampling approach, having either 4 or 5 stages.

The Afrobarometer survey provides the necessary data that is needed to accurately answer the research questions and because Afrobarometer is a pan-African organization, the questions relate to issues that African countries face, and there are country specific questions as well, to be able to gather specific data related to each country (Afrobarometer, 2020). The Round 7 questionnaire contains the data that is needed to measure the attitudinal and behavioural bases of support for democracy in South Africa.

The Comparative National Elections Project (CNEP) (<https://u.osu.edu/cnep/>) was founded in the late 1980s and it is coordinated by the Mershon Centre for International Security Studies at Ohio State University. CNEP is a “partnership among scholars who have conducted election surveys on five continents” (OSU, 2020). The project has grown and now includes 59 surveys in 30 different countries, along with multiple election surveys in 16 countries (OSU, 2020). The geographical scope and theoretical concerns of the project have developed and expanded over the years. The surveys are designed to cover various core issues and topics, varying from “aspects of democratic consolidation processes and attitudes relevant to democratic participation.... measuring socio-political value orientations and other social cleavages that have commonly served as objects of political conflict and vehicles for electoral mobilization in many political systems” (OSU, 2020) to the rise of populism, fake news and the influence of the internet in politics. each round of surveys that are done in the respective countries are made publicly available after five years that they were conducted (OSU, 2020). The surveys are publicly available on the Ohio State University website – the university is a host for the CNEP website – under the Mershon Centre for International Security Studies. All of the CNEP surveys “include a common core of questionnaire items dealing with the research themes that unify this project” (OSU, 2020). CNEP is a suitable secondary source of quantitative data analysis as it is a well-known project and “numerous publications...have resulted from the individual country studies and from cross-national analyses of their data” (OSU, 2020).

This study will make use of the CNEP questionnaire that was conducted in South Africa in 2019, after the last national elections. The data was collected through face-to-face interviews and they used a multi-stage stratified area cluster sampling method, covering a nationally representative sample of adults (OSU, 2020). The questions in the questionnaire tap into various issues from governance to

the quality of democracy in South Africa. By using the data from both of the chosen questionnaire, this research paper will be able to do an accurate analysis of the data that was provided between 2018 and 2019 in order to capture what the attitudinal and behavioural bases of support for democracy were among the citizens of South Africa between those years and how these attitudes and behaviours differ between the younger generation and their older counterparts.

### 3.5 Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study explores the following three research questions and their associated hypotheses, as listed below:

**3.5.1 Research Question 1:** *Are there attitudinal differences in demand for; supply of; and trust in democracy among young people, compared to older people in South Africa?*

For the purpose of Research Question 1 attitudinal differences refers to the following indicators: whether or not young people are supportive of democracy (demand); whether or not young people believe that they are receiving the democracy they believe that they deserve (extent); and whether or not they are satisfied with the democracy they are receiving (supply of democracy), compared to their older counterparts. In relation to Research Question 1, the following hypotheses stand and are broadly captured as such: there are attitudinal differences in demand and support for democracy among young people compared to their older counterparts:

**Hypothesis 1:** Younger people express similar levels of demand for democracy as their older counterparts;

**Hypothesis 2:** However, young people are more dissatisfied than older people with the current democratic system;

**Hypothesis 3:** Young people display higher levels of distrust in political actors and institutions, compared to their older counterparts.

**3.5.2 Research Question 2:** *Are there behavioural differences among young people, compared to older people, across different modes of conventional and unconventional participation in South Africa?*

In relation to Research Question 2, the following hypotheses stand, which is broadly captured as follows: there are behavioural differences among young people, compared to older people, across different modes of conventional and unconventional participation:

**Hypothesis 4:** Young people are more disconnected from conventional methods of participation such as voting compared to older people.

**Hypothesis 5:** Young people are more active in the unconventional methods of participation, such as joining in protests, marches and other new streams of activism, whereas older people are less likely to engage in unconventional channels of political participation.

**3.5.3 Research Question 3:** *Do attitudes towards democracy among young people help to explain differences in modes of political participation?*

**Hypothesis 6:** Higher levels of mistrust among young people in South Africa towards political actors and institutions partly account for their non-engagement in electoral participation.

### 3.6 Operationalisation of Core Variables

In quantitative research the research questions need to be operationalized in order for researchers to be able to make the data quantifiable. Operationalization can be defined as “the development of a measuring instrument by means of which accurate data about specific phenomena can be obtained” (Mouton, 2002:125). The process involves “compiling, for the purpose of measurement, a list of characteristics denoted by the concept” (Mouton, 2002:126). After the measuring instrument is constructed “the questions are regarded as indicators of the list of denoted characteristics” (Mouton, 2002:126). Therefore, specific questions can be asked to measure specific attitudes. By doing this, researchers are able to represent attitudes in numerical values.

#### 3.6.1 Independent Variable

An independent variable is the unit of analysis that stays constant throughout the whole study. This study seeks to explore how age influences behavioural and attitudinal support for democracy. Therefore, age is the independent variable in this study. Age is usually measured as a scale or ratio variable with a full range from 18 years to the last recorded age (e.g. 99 years old). For the purpose of this study the age variable will be re-coded as a categorical variable with three different categories: youth (ages 18-35); adults (ages 36-59) and older adults (ages 60-99). This grouping allows the analysis to isolate and group young people together and to observe differences across age groups more easily. The African Union (AU) defines the youth, in the African Youth Charter, as individuals between the ages of 15 to 35 years of age (African Youth Charter, 2006:3). The National Youth Policy of South Africa, also defines the ‘youth’ as every person between the ages of 15 and 35 years (South African Government, 2020). This study acknowledges that international definitions of ‘youth’ have a narrower definition in terms of years. According to the UN (2021) ‘youth’ is defined as individuals between the ages of 15 and 24. However, this study will take a

broader definition of ‘youth’ that was adopted by the above-mentioned South African government policy paper.

### **3.6.2 Dependent Variables**

The dependent variable is the unit of analysis that is affected by and therefore dependent on the independent variable. Therefore, the independent variable causes the dependent variable to change. The dependent variables measure different political attitudes and behaviours. There are many different ways in which democratic attitudes can be measured. Various cross-national research surveys and regional barometers have “extended scholarly abilities to explore democratic attitudes” (Ariely & Davidov, 2011:3). Comparative survey research allows “scholars to test cross-national variations in attitudes toward democracy and the extent to which these differences may be explained” (Ariely & Davidov, 2011:3). These studies have expanded people’s “understanding of democratic values and democratization” (Ariely & Davido, 2011:3). Survey research also allows researchers to make comparisons between mass support for democratic values across various cultures (Ariely & Davidov, 2011:4).

For the purpose of this study political attitudes have been grouped together in three main categories, namely: demand and support for; supply and satisfaction with; and trust in democracy. Appendix A provides a detailed overview of all the variables used in the study and also includes the response categories and the coding.

Table 3.1 below briefly outlines how these attitudes have been measured by other scholars while the last column shows the choice of measurement variable for this study. The choice of operationalisation of variables replicates choices made in other established studies, which justifies this study’s choices.

**Table 3.1 Measuring Attitudes to Democracy**

<b>Attitudes</b>	<b>How other authors have operationalized attitudes to democracy</b>		<b>This study's operationalization</b>
<b>Demand and Support for Democracy</b>	Demand: Preference for democracy (Mattes & Bratton, 2007); and rejection of other regime types (such as one-party rule; military rule and dictatorship) (Mattes & Bratton, 2016)	Support for authorities; support for democracy'; and system support (Canache, Mondak & Seligson, 2001)	Demand and support: preference for democracy (whether respondents generally prefer democracy to other regime types)
<b>Supply and Satisfaction with Democracy</b>	Supply: How respondents perceive the democracy they are getting – measuring the extent of democracy (Mattes & Bratton, 2007)	Satisfaction: the level of satisfaction with how democracy works (expectations and evaluations of democracy) (Heyne, 2019 )	Supply: how they perceive the democracy that they are currently receiving and what direction they think the country is heading in.
<b>Trust in democratic institutions and actors</b>	The extent or degree of trust citizens have in the democratic system, political institutions and actors (Norris, 1999)  - Asking respondents to indicate their level of trust towards the political objects on a 5-point or 10-point scale.		Trust: measuring the levels of trust respondents have in political institutions and actors

Table 3.2 below briefly outlines how different modes of participation have been measured by other scholars while the last column shows the choice of measurement for each variable for this study.



**Table 3.2 Measuring Political Participation**

	<b>Modes of participation</b>	<b>How other authors have operationalized participation</b>		<b>This study's operationalization</b>
<b>Conventional</b>	<b>Voting</b>	Asking respondents to indicate whether or not they were registered to vote in the previous local and/or national elections, and whether they voted in the previous local and/or national elections (Keeter, Zukin, Andolina & Jenkins, 2002).	Asking respondents to indicate how likely they are to vote in the next elections (Levin & Alvarez, 2009).	Asking respondents whether or not they were registered to vote in the previous elections; and whether or not they voted in the previous elections.
	<b>Contacted an official</b>	Asking respondents to indicate whether or not they have contacted an official (Persson & Solvid, 2013).		Asking respondents whether or not they have contacted an official to make a complaint or ask for help.
<b>Unconventional</b>	<b>Protest/online protest</b>	Asking respondents to indicate whether or not they have engaged in different forms of political participation, such as: demonstrating, boycotting, petition signing, etc. (Persson & Solvid, 2013)		Asking respondents whether or not they have participated in any form of communal activity, protest or online protest.
	<b>Communal Activity</b>	Asking respondents whether or not they have		Asking respondents whether or not they have joined others in your community to request action from government?

### 3.7 Statistical Procedures and Data Analysis

Firstly, the level of measurement must be identified to be able to perform the correct statistical method of analysis. There are three categories: nominal, ordinal and scale variables. Nominal variables are the answers where each numeric value represents a category. For example, the sex of respondent: (1)

Male; (2) Female. Ordinal variables are the variables where the numeric values represent ranked or ordered information. For example, attending a political party campaign rally is important when deciding which political party to vote for? (1) Strongly agree; (2) Agree; (3) Neither agree nor disagree; (4) Disagree; (5) Strongly disagree. Lastly, scale variables are true numeric values and they quantify the exact difference between categories. (Fields, 2009).

To be able to study the possible relationships between the dependent and independent variables, this study will make use of two ‘sets’ of statistical analysis. First, the study will use a bivariate analysis to examine if there are different age effects on attitudinal (demand for; supply of; and trust in democracy) and behavioural (active participation in unconventional and conventional modes of participation) bases of support for democracy. A bivariate analysis, in the form of crosstabulations, are provided and show the direction and strength of the relationship between age (the independent variable) and the various attitudes and behaviours (the dependent variables).

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) is used to perform the necessary statistical tests. SPSS is a common statistical data analysis software package that is used across the social sciences (Muijs, 2010:85). This program allows researchers to analyze and interpret quantitative data in order to test hypotheses.

In order to be able to select the appropriate statistic to determine the different relationships between the dependent and independent variables, the data must be inspected to be able to see whether it is normally distributed. This needs to be done before any analysis can begin to take place, because the appropriate measures of correlation are dependent on the distribution of the data (De Vaus, 2013:258; Pallant, 2016:55). The choice of correlation coefficients, also known as summary statistics, is based on the levels of measurement of the different variable. Correlation coefficients determine the strength of the relationship between variables.

For this study, the independent variable (age) has been recoded as both a scale and categorical variable and will be used dependent on the type of statistical test employed. The dependent variables are either ordinal or nominal variables and they will be re-coded into less response categories, for interpretation purposes (see Appendix A for question items and re-coded response categories).

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical considerations are fundamental in any research study. Ethical considerations are ‘guidelines’ for researchers to follow, in order for their research to be held to a certain standard. Ethical considerations vary from the researcher’s intentions with the study which they seek to undertake to the dignity and protection of the respondents who choose to partake in the research process. A high

standard of ethics was maintained throughout the whole study and the research proposal was approved by the Ethical Clearance Committee of the University of Stellenbosch. The research was conducted with existing, secondary data which is publicly available data from Afrobarometer 2018 and CNEP 2019 survey rounds. Both of the survey rounds were done under strict compliance to high ethical standards and all the responses and personal information of the respondents remain confidential.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

This chapter provides an overview of the quantitative research methodology that will be used to measure the relationship between the attitudinal and behavioral bases of support. The chapter briefly provides an overview of what a quantitative approach to data analysis entails, highlighting some of the advantages and disadvantages of using this method. Thereafter, the chapter explores survey research as a quantitative method, also discussing the advantages and disadvantages of using surveys as a tool to collect and analyze data. Furthermore, the chapter explains which survey question items, from both the Afrobarometer and CNEP questionnaires, will be used to test respondents' attitudes and behaviours and provides justification for the choices based on other established studies.

## ***Chapter 4: Data results: Attitudinal Bases of Support for Democracy***

### **4.1 Introduction**

The main objective of this study is to examine the different attitudinal and behavioural bases of support towards democracy amongst young people in South Africa, by employing quantitative measures to explore various correlations between the dependent and independent variables. The statistical analysis will be divided into two separate chapters. Chapter Four addresses Research Question 1 by examining the findings on attitudinal bases of support for democracy while Chapter Five addresses Research Question 2 and Research Question 3. Thereafter the findings will be discussed in relation to the literature that was outlined earlier in Chapter Two.

This chapter therefore explores the different attitudes toward democracy across age groups and presents the statistical data analysis and the interpretation of the results. Two sets of surveys, Afrobarometer and CNEP, are used in this study and their results will be presented simultaneously.

### **4.2 Bivariate Analysis**

The cross-tabulations provide the Gamma-statistic and the p-value to illustrate the strength and direction of the relationships, and whether or not there is a statistically significant relationship between two ordinal variables (De Vaus, 2013:258), in this case, age and the different attitudes toward democracy.

The Gamma-statistic can range from -1 (indicating a perfect negative association) to 1 (indicating a perfect positive association). The closer the value is to 1, the stronger the correlations becomes, and vice versa (see Table 4.1).

**Table 4.1 Guideline for Interpreting the Strength of Association**

<b>Coefficient</b> (if the value is)	<b>Strength of the Relationship</b>
0.00	No association
0.01 – 0.09	Trivial (linear)
0.10 – 0.29	Low to moderate
0.30 – 0.49	Moderate to substantial
0.50 – 0.69	Substantial to very strong

0.70 – 0.89	Very strong
0.90 +	Near perfect

Source: De Vaus (2013:259)

In other cases, the Cramer's V statistic will be used to measure the strength between two nominal variables (De Vaus, 2013:258). The same guidelines are used to interpret the strength of association for the Gamma-statistic are used for the Cramer's V-statistic. The p-value is used to indicate whether or not a relationship is statistically significant. Any relationship that has a p-values that is greater than 0.05 is statistically significant.

### 4.3 Afrobarometer Survey Round 7 and CNEP

The Afrobarometer Survey Round 7 had a nationally representative sample size of 1892 (n) respondents. The CNEP post-election survey round had a nationally representative sample of 1600 (n) respondents. Both of the survey rounds had ages ranging from the youngest (minimum) age of 18 and the oldest (maximum) age of 94. For the purpose of this study the ages will be recoded into three categories: youth – 18-35 (1); adult – 36-59 (2); and older adult – 60-99 (3). As was mentioned above, the different attitudes and modes of participation are re-coded to simplify the data for interpretation purposes.

### 4.4 Research Question 1

Research Question 1 asks: "*Are there attitudinal differences in demand for; supply of; and trust in democracy among young people, compared to older people in South Africa?*".

In order to be able to answer Research Question 1, this study will analyse and test the relationship between age and demand for; supply of; and trust in democracy. The discussion of the results will be discussed above each table. Only the results that are statistically significant (as indicated by the \* p-value) will be discussed.

#### 4.4.1 Demand for Democracy

The analysis commences with cross-tabulations for the different questions items that were used to measure demand for democracy across the three different age groups. When respondents were asked: "*There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives...*", table 4.2 indicates that the response 'Elections and Parliament are abolished so that the president can decide everything' shows a statistically significant association. 70% of young people disapprove of this way of governance, compared to 73% of adults and 71% of older adults. However, 24% of young people approve of this alternative form of governance, compared to only

18% of adults and 20% of older adults. The Gamma (-.071) indicates that there is a weak, inverse relationship between age and demand for democracy by approving of an alternative form of governance. In other words, the younger people are, the more likely they are to approve of alternative forms of governance (elections and parliament are abolished so that the president can decide everything) and visa versa.

**Table 4.2 Demand for democracy by age: *There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives?*<sup>2</sup>**

Afrobarometer		18-35	36-59	60-99
<b>Only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office.</b>	Disapprove	64.3%	63.6%	58.7%
	Neither	2.2%	4.5%	6.5%
	Approve	33.5%	31.9%	34.8%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: .044, p-value: .174</b>				
<b>The army comes in to govern the country.</b>	Disapprove	57.6%	61%	59.3%
	Neither	5.3%	5.5%	8.9%
	Approve	37.1%	33.5%	31.8%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: -.033, p-value: .298</b>				
<b>Elections and Parliament are abolished so that the president can decide everything.</b>	Disapprove	69.5%	72.9%	71.2%
	Neither	6.2%	9.6%	8.4%
	Approve	24.3%	17.5%	20.4%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: -.071*, p-value: .030</b>				
<b>If the country returned to the old Apartheid system.</b>	Strongly disapprove/Disapprove	77.6%	73.6%	71%
	Neither	4.9%	7.3%	6.2%
	Strongly approve/ Approve	17.5%	19.1%	22.9%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: .059 - p-value: .094</b>				

<sup>2</sup> There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives?

- Only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office.
- The army comes in to govern the country.
- Elections and Parliament are abolished so that the president can decide everything.
- If the country returned to the old system we had under Apartheid.

(1) Disapprove; (2) Neither; (3) Approve

When respondents were asked whether they approve or disapprove of being under military rule (the army comes in to govern the country), just a little over the majority of young people (54%) disapprove of this, compared to 58% of adults and 60% of older adults. Interestingly enough, 39% of young people approve of being under military rule, compared to 36% of adults and 32% of older adults (see Table 4.3). The Gamma (.077) indicates that there is a weak but statistically significant relationship between age and preference to be under military rule: the younger people are, the more likely they are to approve of being under military rule. The p-value is .030, indicating that the relationship is statistically significant.

**Table 4.3 Demand for democracy by age:** *There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives?*<sup>3</sup>

CNEP		18-35	36-59	60-99
<b>Only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office.</b>	Disapprove	50.6%	51.2%	48.7%
	Neither	6%	5.8%	9.1%
	Approve	43.4%	43%	51.2%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: .012, p-value: .171</b>				
<b>Elections and the National Assembly should be abolished so that we can have a strong leader running the country.</b>	Disapprove	50.1%	49.5%	41.4%
	Neither	9.7%	9.1%	12.3%
	Approve	49.2%	41.4%	47.6%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: .026, p-value: .414</b>				
<b>The army comes in to govern the country.</b>	Disapprove	53.9%	57.6%	60.4%
	Neither	7%	6.9%	7.5%
	Approve	39.1%	35.5%	32.1%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: .077*, p-value: .020</b>				

<sup>3</sup> There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives?

- Only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office.
- Elections and the National Assembly should be abolished so that we can have a strong leader running the country.
- The army comes in to govern the country.

Recorded: (1)Disapprove; (2) Neither; (3) Approve



When respondents were asked: *Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion/do you agree with: democracy is preferable to any other kind of government; only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office; or for someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have?* Just under a majority of young people (48%), 56% of adults; and 62% of older adults indicated that: *“Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government”*. Surprisingly, 38% of young people agreed that: *For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have*”, compared to 30% of adults and 25% of older adults who agreed with that statement. The Cramer's V (.079) indicates that there is a weak relationship and the p-value is .002, which indicates that the relationship is statistically significant.

**Table 4.4 Demand for democracy by age:** *Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion/do you agree with?*<sup>4</sup>

CNEP	18-35	36-59	60-99
<b>Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government.</b>	47.6%	56%	62.3%
<b>Only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office.</b>	14.6%	14.6%	12.3%
<b>For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have.</b>	37.8%	29.5%	25.3%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Cramer's V: .079*, p-value: .002			

Table 4.5 shows that a vast majority (69%) of young people are willing to give up regular elections *If a non-elected government or leader could impose law and order, and deliver houses and jobs*, compared to 60% of adults and 53% of older adults. The Gamma (.123) indicates that there is a low to moderate positive relationship between age and willingness to give up regular elections. In other words, the younger a person is the more willing they will be to give up regular elections. The p-value is .000, indicating that the relationship is highly statistically significant.

<sup>4</sup> Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion?

- Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government
- In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable
- For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have

**Table 4.5 Demand for democracy by age : *If a non-elected government or leader could impose law and order, and deliver houses and jobs: How willing or unwilling would you be to give up regular elections and live under such a government?***<sup>5</sup>

Afrobarometer	18-35	36-59	60-99
<b>Willing</b>	68.9	60.2	53.2
<b>Unwilling</b>	31.1	39.8	46.8
	100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: .123*, p-value: .000</b>			

It is evident from the findings above that demand for democracy is lower among younger people, compared to adults and older adults. Thus, this data runs contrary to international literature, that found that young people demand democracy as much as their older counterparts (Henn, Weinstein & Wring, 2002:1790. Thus, Hypothesis 1 is rejected: “*Younger people express similar levels of demand democracy as their older counterparts*”.

The South African literature has pointed to the fact that young people in South Africa are the least committed to democracy, when compared to their older counterparts (Mattes, 2012). This is a growing concern that lays a foundation for further research and development. Low levels of demand for democracy can have important implications for South Africa’s democracy in the future, as this means that young people are less committed to democratic norms, values and beliefs.

#### 4.4.2 Supply of Democracy

With regards to satisfaction with democracy, the Afrobarometer data in Table 4.6 indicates that 34% of young people think South Africa is a democracy, but with minor problems, compared to 27% of adults and 27% of older adults. The Gamma (-.085) indicates that there is a negative relationship between age and supply of democracy (how much of a democracy respondents think South Africa is). In other words, the younger respondents are, the more likely they are to think that South Africa is not a full democracy or a democracy with minor problems. The p-value is .012, meaning that the relationship is statistically significant. The CNEP data in Table 4.7 is not significant.

<sup>5</sup> If a non-elected government or leader could impose law and order, and deliver houses and jobs: How willing or unwilling would you be to give up regular elections and live under such a government?

Recorded: (1)Willing (2) Unwilling

**Table 4.6 Supply of democracy by age: *In your opinion, how much of a democracy is South Africa?***<sup>6</sup>

Afrobarometer	18-35	36-59	60-99
A full democracy	15.4%	15.4%	15.9%
A democracy, but with minor problems	34.4%	27%	26.7%
A democracy, with major problems	42%	48.1%	45.1%
Not a democracy	8.2%	9.5%	12.3%
	100%	100%	100%
Gamma: -.085*, p-value: .012			

**Table 4.7 Supply of democracy by age: *In your opinion, how much of a democracy is South Africa today?***

CNEP	18-35	36-59	60-99
A full democracy	24.2%	26.5%	29.5%
A democracy, but with minor problems	28.8%	27.3%	28.4%
A democracy, with major problems	37.1%	38.3%	35.8%
Not a democracy	9.9%	8%	6.3%
	100%	100%	100%
Gamma: .057, p-value: .102			

Table 4.8 indicates that while the Afrobarometer data is not significant, the CNEP data shows the p-value of .006 indicating statistically significant results, which can be generalized to the broader South African population. Only 45% of young respondents are satisfied with the way democracy works in South Africa while 47% of adults and 57% of older adults are satisfied with way democracy way works in South Africa. The Gamma (.091) indicates that there is a weak, inverse relationship between age and democracy, meaning that the younger an individual is, the more unsatisfied they are with the way democracy works.

<sup>6</sup> In your opinion, how much of a democracy is South Africa today?

(4) A full democracy (3) A democracy, but with minor problems (2) A democracy, with major problems (1) Not a democracy

**Table 4.8 Supply of democracy by age: Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in South Africa? Are you:<sup>7</sup>**

Afrobarometer	18-35	36-59	60-99
SA is not a democracy	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%
Not satisfied	55.8%	59.3%	55.5%
Satisfied	43.7%	40.3%	44%
Total	100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: .001, p-value: .983</b>			
CNEP			
SA is not a democracy	0.8%	0.2%	0,5%
Not satisfied	54.7%	53.3%	42.9%
Satisfied	44.5%	46.5%	56.5%
Total	100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: .091*, p-value: .006</b>			

Thus, the data provides some evidence that supports Hypothesis 2: “*Young people are more dissatisfied than their older with the current democratic system*”. This result is in line with international literature that has found that young people are less satisfied with the democracy they are getting compared to older people (Henn & Weinstein, 2006; Henn & Foard, 2012; Marzęcki & Stach, 2016). When people believe that they are not being supplied with the democracy they think they deserve, they are not going to have a great deal of trust in their democracy to meet their expectations, as trust is linked to political support (Easton, 1975), which is what the study now investigates.

#### 4.4.3 Trust in Democracy

Table 4.9 shows the Afrobarometer data and indicates that, when respondents were asked how much trust they have in the president, a vast majority (77%) of young people, 62% of adults, and 50% of older adults said that they do not trust the president. The Gamma (.209) indicates that there is a moderate positive relationship between age and trust in the president. In other words, the younger people are, they more likely they are to show distrust in the president. Again, a large majority (80%) of young people, 73% of adults, and 71% of older adults do not trust the Parliament or the National Assembly. The Gamma (.170) indicates that there is a positive relationship between age and trust in the Parliament and National Assembly.

<sup>7</sup> Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in South Africa? Are you:  
Recorded: (1) Not satisfied; (2) Satisfied

This pattern in distrust across age, which shows far lower trust levels among younger people, extends to all the political objects measured and include the Electoral Commission, the Premiers of the respondent's province, local government officials, and the ruling African National Congress (ANC), but exclude opposition parties. All the summary statistics are significant.

**Table 4.9 Trust in democratic institutions by age groups: How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say?<sup>8</sup>**

<b>Afrobarometer</b>		<b>18-35</b>	<b>36-59</b>	<b>60-99</b>
<b>The President</b>	Do not trust	76.6%	62.4%	50.4%
	Trust	23.4%	37.6%	49.6%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: .209*, p-value: .000</b>				
<b>The Parliament/National Assembly</b>	Do not trust	80.2%	73.2%	70.5%
	Trust	19.8%	26.8%	29.5%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: .127*, p-value: .000</b>				
<b>The National Electoral Commission</b>	Do not trust	71.9%	65.6%	54.1%
	Trust	28.1%	34.4%	45.9%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: .170*, p-value: .000</b>				
<b>The premier of this province</b>	Do not trust	78.1%	70.9%	59.6%
	Trust	21.9%	29.1%	40.4%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: .156*, p-value: .000</b>				
<b>Your elected local government</b>	Do not trust	76.5%	71.3%	67.7%
	Trust	23.5%	28.7%	32.3%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: .138*, p-value: .000</b>				
<b>The ruling party (ANC)</b>	Do not trust	66.2%	60.6%	43.9%
	Trust	33.8%	39.4%	56.1%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: .163*, p-value: .000</b>				
	Do not trust	80.6%	78.8%	80.3%

<sup>8</sup> How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say?

- The President
- The Parliament
- The National Electoral Commission
- The premier of this province
- Your elected local government
- The ruling party
- Opposition political parties.

Recorded: (1) Do not trust; (2) Trust

<b>Opposition political</b>	Trust	19.4%	21.2%	19.7%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: -.027, p-value: .429</b>				

Table 4.10 shows similar trust CNEP data and indicates that, when respondents were asked how much trust they have in the South African government, a majority (76%) of young people; 74% of adults; and 72% of older adults indicated that they do not trust the South African government. The Gamma (.112) indicates that there is a low to moderate positive relationship between age and trust in the South African government. This means that the younger people are the more likely they are to have no trust in the government. When they were asked how much trust they have in the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), 77% of young people; 76% of adults; and 73% of older adults have no trust in the IEC. Again, the Gamma (.144) indicates that there is a low to moderate relationship between age and trust in the IEC.

Interestingly enough, when respondents were asked how much trust they have in social media, such as: Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, 22% of young people; 17% of adults; and 13% of older adults indicated that they have trust in these sources of social media. The Gamma (-.112) indicates that there is a low to moderate inverse relationship between age and trust in social media. However, this means that the younger people are more likely they are to trust various sources of social media compared to older people.

The same phenomena can be seen in the results for when respondents were asked how much trust they have in the EFF. Of the young people, 22% trust the EFF, compared to 16% of adults and 19% of older adults who trust the EFF. The Gamma (-.134) indicates that there is a low to moderate inverse relationship between age and trust in the EFF. This means that the younger people are, the more likely they are to have trust in the EFF.

**Table 4.10 Trust in democracy by age: How much do you trust each of the following:<sup>9</sup>**

CNEP		18-35	36-59	60-99
The government of SA	Do not trust	76.3%	74%	71.9%
	Trust	23.7%	26%	28.1%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: .112*, p-value: .001</b>				
The Independent Electoral Commission	Do not trust	77%	75.8%	72.9%
	Trust	23%	24.2%	27.1%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: .144*, p-value: .000</b>				
The media such as: TV, newspapers or radio	Do not trust	71.9%	76.7%	78.2%
	Trust	28.1%	23.3%	21.8%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: .053, p-value: .111</b>				
Social media, such as: Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp	Do not trust	78.3%	83.5%	86.8%
	Trust	21.7%	16.5%	13.2%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: -.112*, p-value: .003</b>				
The ANC	Do not trust	67.2%	72.4%	63.7%
	Trust	32.8%	27.6%	36.3%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: .034, p-value: .323</b>				
The DA	Do not trust	80.3%	81.4%	80.2%
	Trust	19.7%	18.6%	19.8%

<sup>9</sup> How much do you trust each of the following?

- The government of SA
- The independent electoral commission
- The media such as: TV, newspapers or radio
- Social media, such as: Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp
- The ANC
- The DA
- The EFF

Recorded: Do not trust (1); Trust (2)



Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: .060, p-value: .086</b>				
<b>The EFF</b>	Do not trust	78.2%	84.2%	81.4%
	Trust	21.8%	15.8%	18.6%
Total		100%	100%	100%
<b>Gamma: -.134*, p-value: .000</b>				

Overall, there is ample evidence to support Hypothesis 3: “*Young people display higher levels of distrust in political actors and institutions, compared to their older counterparts*”. The results point to higher levels of distrust among young people in the various democratic actors and institutions. It is unsurprising that young people display even lower levels of trust in current democratic actors and institutions, because they lived through the Zuma-presidency, when President Jacob Zuma was the president. The Zuma-administration was characterized by corruption, poor governance and abuse of power (Basson & Du Toit, 2017). The fall in levels of trust is an example of what poor governance can do to a country. Not only did the ANC lose support as a political party, but democracy in general. These results are concerning because without trust in democracy there will be no demand for democracy and this in turn will hinder supply, because supply is shaped by trust (Easton, 1975). From the literature in Chapter Two, it is clear that political attitudes enforce political behaviours. Without pro-democratic attitudes (demand, supply and trust), democracy will cease to exist and the legitimacy and the stability of South Africa’s democracy will be put to the test.

#### 4.5 Conclusion

The data results from Chapter Four, that are based on findings from the Afrobarometer Survey round 7 and the CNEP survey, are:

1. Demand for democracy is lower among younger people, compared to older people;
2. Supply of democracy results show that young people are less satisfied with the way in which democracy is working, compared to older people;
3. Young people display high levels of distrust in political actors and institutions.

The literature on political attitudes of young people in South Africa indicates that young South Africans have lower levels of trust in the current political system (Oyedemi & Mahlatji, 2016). They also do not believe that they are being delivered the quality of democracy that they think they deserve, and they feel unrepresented in the current democratic system (Richmond, 2015). These findings may

support the argument that poor governance have consequences for trust (Easton 1975; Norris 1999). It is possible that the lower attitudinal bases of support for democracy among young people may be due in part to the poor governance during the Zuma-presidency which comprises a large part of young people lived experiences. As Basson and Du Toit (2017) state, Zuma's presidency may have deprived South Africa's democracy of its support system.

## ***Chapter 5: Data Results: Behavioural Bases of Support for Democracy***

### **5.1 Introduction**

Chapter Five will address Research Question 2 and Research Question 3. Bivariate analysis are again provided to test relationships between age and conventional and unconventional modes of political participation. Lastly, to answer Research Question 3, a second round of bivariate analyses are done, to explore relationships between trust and political participation. Trust is selected because it shows the strongest relationships with age in Chapter Four.

### **5.2 Research Question 2**

Research Question 2 of this study asks: *“Are there behavioural differences among young people, compared to older people, across different modes of conventional and unconventional participation in South Africa?”*

#### **5.2.1 Conventional Modes of Participation**

##### **A – Voting and Registration**

The Afrobarometer data shows that, with regards to voting and registration, when respondents were asked whether or not they voted in the 2014 National Election, 48% of young people, 26% of adults; and 17% of older adults did not vote. The Cramer’s V (.218) indicates that there is a moderate relationship between the age and voter participation of respondents. This means that the younger respondents are, the more likely they are not to vote. The p-value is .000, meaning that this relationship is statistically significant.

**Table 5.1 Behavioural support for democracy by age groups: Voter Turnout 2014<sup>10</sup>**

Afobarometer	18-35	36-59	60-99
<b>Did not vote</b>	47.7%	25.7%	16.5%
<b>Voted</b>	52.3%	74.3%	83.5%
Total	100%	100%	100%
<b>Cramer's V: .218*, p-value: .000</b>			

When respondents were asked: “*Were you registered in the recent national elections?*”, 41% of young people; 20% of adults; and 8% of older adults were not registered to vote. The Cramer’s V (.274) indicates that there is a low to moderate positive relationship between age and whether or not people registered to vote. This means that young people are less likely to register than older generations. The p-value is .000, meaning that the relationship is statistically significant and it can be applied to the broader population.

**Table 5.2 Behavioural support for democracy by age groups: Registration 2019<sup>11</sup>**

CNEP	18-35	36-59	60-99
<b>Not registered</b>	41.1%	20.3%	8%
<b>Registered</b>	58.2%	79.7%	92%
Total	100%	100%	100%
<b>Cramer's V: .274*, p-value: .000</b>			

<sup>10</sup> Understanding that some people were unable to vote in the most recent national election in 2014, which of the following statements is true for you?

- You were not registered to vote
- You voted in the elections
- You decided not to vote
- You could not find the polling station
- You were prevented from voting
- You did not have time to vote
- You did not vote because your name was not in the register
- Did not vote for some other reasons
- You were too young to vote

Recorded: Did not vote (1); Voted (2)

<sup>11</sup> Were you registered in the recent national elections? (0)Not registered; (1) Registered

Again, using CNEP, when respondents were asked if they voted in the 2019 general elections, only 49% of young people indicated that they voted. Whereas, 78% of adults and 83% of older adults indicated that they voted. The Cramer's V (.316) indicates that there is a moderate to substantial positive relationship between age and voting. This means that the older people are, the more likely they are to vote and visa versa. The p-value is .000, meaning that the results are statistically significant and can be generalized to the broader South African population.

**Table 5.3 Behavioural support for democracy by age groups: Voter turnout, 2019?<sup>12</sup>**

<b>CNEP</b>	<b>18-35</b>	<b>36-59</b>	<b>60-99</b>
<b>Did not vote</b>	51.2%	22.4%	16.6%
<b>Voted</b>	48.8%	77.6%	83.4%
Total	100%	100%	100%
<b>Cramer's V: .316*; p-value: .000</b>			

#### B – Contacting Officials

When respondents were asked whether or not they have contacted a government official to ask for help or make a complaint, Table 5.4 indicates that 74% of young people; 70% of adults and 79% older adults said that they have not contacted a government official for help. The Cramer's V (.086) indicates that there is a weak, positive relationship between age and contacting officials. In other words, the older people are, the more likely they are to have contacted and official to ask for help or to log a complaint.

<sup>12</sup> Did you vote in the 2019 general election? Recoded to: (1) Did not vote; (2) Voted

**Table 5.4 Behavioural support for democracy by age groups:** *Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens when they are dissatisfied with government performance. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year?*

Afrobarometer		18-35	36-59	60-99
Contacted a government official to ask for help or make a complaint?	No	73.7%	69.6%	78.9%
	Yes	26.3%	30.4%	21.1%
Total		100%	100%	100%
Cramer's V: .086*, p-value: .001				

#### C – Working for a Party or Candidate

**Table 5.5 Behavioural support for democracy by age groups:** *Did you work for any party or candidate during the election campaign?*

CNEP	18-35	36-59	60-99
No	93%	93.5%	96.8%
Yes	7%	6.5%	3.2%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Cramer's V: .048; p-value: .158			

From the results above, there is evidence that supports Hypothesis 4: *Young people are more disconnected from conventional methods of participation such as voting compared to older people.* This supports the findings in the international literature which finds voter turnout is declining globally (Dalton, 2007; Wattenberg, 2006; and Norris, 2004). Young people are withdrawing themselves from electoral politics. This is a growing concern for all well-established democracies, as this growing apathy that is evident in all young people will follow them throughout their whole lives (Henn & Foard, 2012:49). This is especially concerning in younger democracies, like South Africa. As the growing youth population, that is characterised by voter apathy, will replace the older cohort. In turn, this could lead to a vast decline in voter turnout in the future.

## 5.2.2 Unconventional Modes of Participation

### A – Protest Activity

Respondents were asked: “*Have you taken part in a protest demonstration (or march) in the last twelve months?*”. The CNEP data is statistically insignificant. However, table 5.6 results from the Afrobarometer survey indicates that 28% of young people; 30% of adults; and 23% of older adults indicated that they have taken part in a protest demonstration or march. The Cramer’s V (.083) indicates that there is a weak and inverse relationship between age and protest activity. This means that the older people are, the more likely it is that they will not have participated in any protest activity. Whereas, the younger people are, the more likely it is that they will have taken part in forms of protest activity. The p-value is .002, and can be applied to the broader South African population.

**Table 5.6 Unconventional participation by age (protest):** *Have you taken part in a protest demonstration (or march) in the last twelve months?*

CNEP	18-35	36-59	60-99
No	92.5%	93.1%	95.1%
Yes	7.5%	6.9%	4.9%
Total	100%	100%	100%
<b>Cramer’s V: .032, p-value: .473</b>			
Afrobarometer			
No	72.5%	70.5%	77.3%
Yes	27.5%	29.5%	22.7%
Total	100%	100%	100%
<b>Cramer’s V: -.083*, p-value: .002</b>			

Table 5.7 indicates that out of all the respondents, 6% of young people indicated that they have given online support to a protest, compared to 3% of adults and 2% of older adults. Although these percentages are low, the Gamma (.075) indicates that there is a relationship between age and giving online support to a protest. This means that the younger people are, the more likely they will support online protests.



**Table 5.7 Unconventional participation by age (online protest):** *Have you given online support to a protest in the last twelve months (like re-tweet, share, checking-in, posting under a particular hashtag)?*

CNEP	18-35	36-59	60-99
No	94.2%	97%	97.8%
Yes	5.8%	3%	2.2%
Total	100%	100%	100%
Cramer's V: .075*, p-value: .011			

## B – Communal Activity

Table 5.8 indicates that 37% of young people; 37% of adults; and 32% of older adults indicated that they have joined others in their community to request action from government. The Cramer's V (.083) indicates that there is a weak and positive relationship between age and communal activity. The p-value is .002, meaning that this relationship is statistically significant.

**Table 5.8 Unconventional participation by age (communal activity):** *Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens when they are dissatisfied with government performance. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year?*

Afrobarometer		18-35	36-59	60-99
Joined others in your community to request action from government?	No	63.1%	62.7%	67.7%
	Yes	36.9%	37.3%	32.3%
Total		100%	100%	100%
Cramer's V: .083*, p-value: .002				

The results from this section suggest that young people are more active in unconventional forms of participation, compared to their older counterparts. This lends support to hypothesis 5: *Young people are more active in the unconventional methods of participation, such as joining in protests, marches and various streams of activism, whereas older people are less likely to engage in unconventional*

*channels of political participation*. These results support the findings from international body of literature, that was discussed in Chapter Two. Young people are creating new ways in which people can participate (Mycock & Tonge, 2011:4). Young people are believed to want to participate in activities that help to create a type of society that they want (Harris, Wyn & Younes, 2010:23). By participation in unconventional forms of participation, young people are able to bring about issues that are important to them, in such a way that they feel heard.

Next, the study will tap into the levels of trust and demand for democracy in order to better understand the relationship with political participation. In other words, the study will provide correlations between levels of trust and levels of political participation in order to examine whether distrust in democratic actors and institutions can account for high levels of participation in unconventional modes of political participation among young people.

### 5.3 Research Question 3

The final research Question 3 of this study asks: “*Do attitudes towards democracy among young people help to explain differences in modes of political participation?*” Bivariate correlations are provided in a summary tabular form in Table 5.9 and Table 5.10. These tables illustrate the correlations between trust and modes of political participation but only where there are statistically significant differences across age groups, as identified in Chapter Four.

Table 5.9 indicates if attitudes have an influence on participation. The CNEP data shows that Gamma (.183) indicates that there is a low to moderate relationship between trust and voter registration. The Gamma (.278\*) for trust in the IEC and voter registration indicates that there is a low to moderate relationship between the two variables. The more distrust people had in South Africa’s government and the IEC the more likely it is that they did not register to vote. Furthermore, recall the correlation between trust and age. The younger people are, the more likely they are to distrust these institutions, and also less likely to register.

Voter turnout and trust in the government (.190\*) and the IEC (.248\*) also indicates a low to moderate relationship. Again, these results suggest less trusting younger people are less likely to vote, compared to their older counterparts.

The Afrobarometer data, Table 5.9 also indicates a low to moderate relationship between voter turnout and trust in the president (.145\*); the Electoral Commission (.123\*); the premier of this province (.139\*); and the ruling party (.104\*). Because of the statistically significant correlation between trust and age, it suggests younger people display higher levels of distrust in these various political actors and institutions, and they are more likely to stay away from the voting polls.

When it comes to contacting officials, the Gamma (.066\*) indicates that there is a trivial relationship with trusting the ruling party. Therefore, it suggests that younger people are more likely to not contact an official to ask for help or to log a complaint if they do not trust ANC political officials.

**Table 5.9: Correlations:** *Conventional Modes of Political Participation and Institutional Trust*

<b>Registered to Vote (CNEP):</b>	<b>Trust in:</b>	<b>Correlation Statistic (Gamma):</b>	<b>Statistical Significance:</b>
	SA Government	.183*	.000
	The Independent Electoral Commission	.278*	.000
	Social Media. Such as: Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp	.055	.221
	The EFF	-.059	.201
<b>Voter turnout (CNEP):</b>	SA Government	.190*	.000
	The Independent Electoral Commission	.248*	.000
	Social Media. Such as: Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp	-.012	.785
	The EFF	-.070	.111
<b>Voter turnout (Afrobarometer):</b>	The President	.145*	.000
	The Parliament/National Assembly	.071	.076
	The Electoral Commission	.123*	.002
	The Premier of this province	.139*	.001
	Local elected government	.154	.000
	The ruling party (ANC)	.104*	.009
	Opposition political parties	-.005	.899
<b>Contacting Officials:</b>	The President	.007	.861
	The Parliament/National Assembly	-.004	.882
	The National Electoral Commission	.029	.329
	The Premier of this province	.021	.501
	Local elected government	-.022	.473
	The ruling party (ANC)	.066*	.025
	Opposition political parties	-.005	.873

Evidently, young people are more disconnected from conventional modes of political participation, lending support for hypothesis 6: “*Higher levels of mistrust among young people in South Africa towards political actors and institutions accounts for their unwillingness to engage in the electoral process*”. It also appears that higher levels of distrust in democratic actors and institutions among younger people may be partly responsible for low levels of conventional political participation.

When it comes to trust and participating in conventional modes of political participation, no correlations were found between trust and participating in protest activity. Interestingly, Table 5.10 indicates that there is a low to moderate relationship between trust in social media (Gamma: .214) and the EFF (Gamma:.268). The results from Chapter 4 indicated that there is an inverse relationship between age and trust in social media and the EFF. This means that younger people engage in online

protests because they have more trust in social media platforms and the EFF. Young people are more active on social media platforms and it is understandable that they are more likely to engaged in online protests, compared to their older counterparts. With regards to the trust, online engagement and the EFF, it is interesting because the EFF is a radical left-wing party and their leader (Julius Malema) is known for his radical outburst on social media platforms and in public.

**Table 5.10: Correlations: *Unconventional Modes of Political Participation and Institutional Trust***

	<b>Trust in:</b>	<b>Correlation Statistic (Gamma):</b>	<b>Statistical Significance:</b>
<b>Protest Activity:</b>	The President	-.009	.738
	The Parliament/National Assembly	-.018	.531
	The National Electoral Commission	.031	.277
	The Premier of this province	-.006	.840
	Local elected government	-.054	.062
	The ruling party (ANC)	.034	.220
	Opposition political parties	-.038	.185
<b>Online Protest:</b>	SA Government	.002	.984
	The Independent Electoral Commission	.071	.455
	Social Media. Such as: Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp	.214*	.016
	The EFF	.269*	.011
<b>Communal Activity:</b>	The President	-.004	.898
	The Parliament/National Assembly	-.036	.199
	The National Electoral Commission	.004	.883
	The Premier of this province	-.012	.690
	Local elected government	-.055	.061
	The ruling party (ANC)	.057*	.036
	Opposition political parties	-.030	.287

From the bivariate analysis above, the study has found some support for hypothesis 6: “High levels of mistrust and skepticism among young people in South Africa towards political actors and institutions accounts for their unwillingness to engage in the electoral process”. In addition, there is some limited evidence that young people are more active than their older counterparts in engaging in unconventional modes of participation.

## 5.4 Conclusion

The main results from Chapter Five that were based on the Afrobarometer Survey Round 7 in 2018 and the CNEP survey in 2019 are:

1. Young people are highly disengaged with voting and participation in conventional modes of political participation.
2. Young people more actively participate in unconventional modes of participation (although these numbers are still low).
3. Low levels of trust among young people in democratic actors and institutions may partly account for their lack of conventional political participation.

As was mentioned in Chapter Two, young people, globally, display low levels of trust in democracy, and this is concerning. However, it is even more concerning for young democracies. When there is little to no trust in democracy, its beliefs, norms and values, that will influence diffuse support for democracy, and this will essentially undermine democracy. The results already show that there is a correlation between trust in political actors and institutions and registration and voter turnout. In this regard, it appears that trust attitudes do indeed drive some forms of political behaviour.

## ***Chapter 6: Conclusion***

### **6.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to examine the differences in the attitudinal and behavioural bases of support for democracy across different age groups. Additionally, it explores whether or not differences in attitudinal bases of support could account for the differences in behavioural bases of support for democracy, especially across different modes of political participation. The literature review provides a detailed discussion of the importance of political attitudes and behaviours, and how attitudes inform behaviour. The literature also emphasises the importance of participation in democracy and how an active citizenry keeps governments accountable. Globally, young people demand democracy, similar to their older counterparts. However, they do not think that they are getting the democracy that they deserve. Moreover, young people have lower levels of trust in democracy, its actors and institutions. The literature review also explains how young people are withdrawing themselves for conventional political participation and turning towards more unconventional, alternative modes of political participation. Since participation lies at the very core of democracy, it is detrimental for young people not to participate in politics, as the quality of democracy depends on reasonably high levels of participation. This is of particular concern in young democracies, such as South Africa. Therefore, this study was motivated by the fact that South Africa is a relatively young democracy, with a growing youth bulge. The study aimed to explore whether or not a decline in attitudinal support for democracy among young people could account for a decline in levels of conventional participation.

The study was guided by three related research questions, each with their own hypotheses. In order to be able to answer the three research questions, the study employed a quantitative approach by using secondary data from already existing, publicly available data from the Afrobarometer Survey Round 7 (that was conducted in 2018) and the Comparative National Election Project – CNEP – (that was conducted in 2019). The data results from the study were provided across two chapters, Four and Five. For ease of interpretation and due to space constraints, only the results that were statistically significant were discussed and used in the final bivariate analysis in Chapter Five. Chapter Six provides the conclusion of this research study and the following sections will present a summary of the highlights of this study, in three sections: summary of findings; research implications; and further research recommendations.

## 6.2 Summary of Findings

Chapter Four addresses the Research Question 1: “*Are there attitudinal differences in demand for; supply of; and trust in democracy among young people, compared to older people in South Africa?*?”. Chapter Four starts off by using bivariate analysis to explore three political attitudes: demand for, supply of and trust in democracy across age. The results found little support for hypothesis 1 – instead, it found that young South Africans display slightly lower levels of demand for democracy compared to older counterparts. This finding is contrary to what has been found globally. Globally, research has indicated that young people demand democracy. Henn, Weinstein and Wring (2009) found that they have a high degree of faith in the democratic process. Marzęcki and Stach (2016) also found that young people in countries across Europe (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania) also prefer democracy above any other alternative regimes. Hence, it is interesting that young people in South Africa display lower levels of demand for democracy compared to older people.

Results for supply of democracy indicate that young people are more unsatisfied with the democracy that they receiving, providing support for hypothesis 2: “*Young people are more dissatisfied than their older counterparts with the current democratic system*”. When the final attitude, trust in democratic institutions was examined, the study found far lower levels of trust among young people toward political actors and institutions. This supports hypothesis 3: “*Young people display higher levels of distrust in political actors and institutions, compared to their older counterparts*”. These results echo what international researchers have written about young people and their political attitudes and reaffirms literature on South Africa’s youth. Younger generations are more unsatisfied with the current democracy and this leads to a decline in levels of trust in democracy (Resnick & Casale, 2014). This in turn may also help to explain why demand for democracy has also declined. Young people in South Africa are more sceptic of political actors and institutions and they feel that political actors never listen to their wants and needs (Richmond, 2015).

Chapter Five aimed to answer Research Question 2: “*Are there behavioural differences among young people, compared to older people, across different modes of conventional and unconventional participation in South Africa?*?”. The analysis show that young people are more disconnected from conventional modes of participation, lending hypothesis 4 support. Young people were also found to be more actively participating in unconventional forms of participation, such as giving online support to a protest. However, these levels are still relatively low. Young people have not been turning out to vote, as was seen in previous elections and it is also evident from global findings across established democracies but are more likely to engage in unconventional forms of participation (Fields, 2003; Henn & Foard, 2012). There are various explanations as to why young South Africans are not engaging in electoral politics. Literature on young people and participation in South Africa have

pointed out that young people are distancing themselves from electoral participation as a response to the poor governance and failures of the current government (Oyedemi & Mahlatji, 2016; Tracey, 2016).

These results lead to the second part of Chapter Five, that used a bivariate analysis to determine whether or not low levels of political participation in conventional modes of political participation can be partly explained by the low levels of trust in political actors and institutions among young people (Research Question 3). The results showed that Hypothesis 6 has some support: “*High levels of mistrust and scepticism among young people in South Africa towards political actors and institutions accounts for their unwillingness to engage in the electoral process*”. It is evident that young people do not trust the government, the IEC, the ANC, or other political institutions and actors can serve as a partial explanation as to why they are not registering or turning out to vote. The fact that trust in democracy in South Africa is low can have severe consequences for future support for democracy. Norris (1999) has explained that trust influences the extent to which citizens offer their support to democracy. Specific support relates to support for specific political actors (Norris, 1999:12). Norris (1999) points out that if specific support starts to deteriorate “then in time this might erode their belief in democracy itself. In this perspective failure of performance will flow upwards to undermine democratic values” (Norris, 1999:2). According to Gouws and Schulz-Herzenberg (2016:26) “as citizens become increasingly despondent with the current political arena they also become less inclined to embrace the dream of a democratic, unified nation”. It is evident from the findings that specific support in South Africa is eroding and this in turn will influence diffuse support (regime support and its norms and values) and this in turn will undermine democracy itself.

### **6.3 Research Implications**

The results from this study provide some evidence to suggest that pro-democratic attitudes may reinforce pro-democratic behaviours. It is not surprising that demand for democracy is declining among younger people, because they have a largely lived experience of the Zuma-presidency. Under the Zuma-administration, South Africa faced various challenges of corruption, abuse of power, poor governance and, ultimately, state capture (Basson & Du Toit, 2017). This finding is important, because it emphasises how important ‘supply of democracy’ may be in determining demand for democracy. The results have indicated that young people also do not think that they are getting the democracy that they deserve. The fact that young people in South Africa still face vast inequalities, such as poor education systems, high unemployment rates, and poverty (Mattes, 2012:8), may be influencing their evaluation of the government’s performance. If young people do not see that changes are being made to the challenges that they are currently facing, they will remain apathetic



towards politics and participation. This again shows how low levels of specific support will eventually infiltrate into support for democracy (as a regime) and its democratic values and beliefs. This, in turn, leads to low levels of trust, because the government is not reaching the expectations of its citizens. What South Africa's democracy is currently experiencing may be the ripple-effect of years and years of poor governance, which characterise the adult years of younger people, that is taking its toll on the attitudinal bases of support for democracy. Once attitudinal support starts to deteriorate, behavioural support for democracy will begin to fade (Easton 1975; Norris 1999).

It is evident from the results that low levels of trust in democracy may have influenced how young people participate in politics. The fact that young are not turning out to vote can be explained by their low levels of trust in the government and other political actors and institutions. It is of growing importance that South Africa's democracy needs to work on regaining a trusting and supportive citizenry. The fact that South Africa is such a youthful democracy, indicates that the already low levels of trust will only decline in the future if nothing is done to address citizen trust. In order to gain the trust of citizens, the government needs to work on suppling a better quality of democracy by addressing these challenges that young people, and citizens in general, are facing. However, as Dermody and Hanmer-Lloyd (2005:120) argue, once trust starts to deteriorate, it makes it even more challenging for those in power to succeed and, in turn, this will just continue to strengthen the feelings of distrust among citizens. Therefore, it will be a difficult challenge for South Africa's government to re-gain the trust of their citizens, especially the young people. The future quality, legitimacy and stability of South Africa's democracy is dependent on the youth of today. This research highlights the importance of engaging the youth in electoral politics and that voting is essential for democracy to survive. If trust in democracy is already at a low and demand for democracy is starting to deteriorate, this may have serious repercussions for South Africa's future.

As it was established in the literature in Chapter Two, attitudes are drivers of behaviour. Along with this, participation is essential for any democracy's survival. Democracy requires and an active citizenry (Pateman, 1970; Dalton, 2020). There are many ways in which people can participate in the democratic process, but voting is considered to be the very essence of democracy (Dalton, 2020). It can be assumed that the stability of a democracy rest of the levels of demand, support and trust citizens have in the democratic system and their evaluations of the extent to which they think they are receiving the democracy they demand. If young people are not demanding and supportive of democracy and what it stands for, this will have further implications for the future stability and legitimacy of South Africa's democracy. With this being said, it is already evident in the declining levels of trust and, as this study has shown, trust has an influence on why young people are not participating in democracy. This research highlights how important it is to maintain pro-democratic

attitudes in a democratic system. Without attitudinal support for democracy, behavioural support for democracy will start to fade away. This study also wanted to emphasise how important it is for the youth of today to engage in electoral politics and that voting is essential for democracy to survive. If trust is already declining and the demand for democracy is starting to deteriorate, this may have serious repercussions for South Africa's future.

#### **6.4 Recommendations for Further Research**

A strength of quantitative research design allows for this study to apply all the findings to the broader South Africa population. The study chose a quantitative approach because of the limited research that is available on young people are their attitudinal and behavioural bases of support for democracy. However, there were limitations to this study, that should be addressed by further research.

The first recommendation would be to adopt a qualitative or mixed methods design. A qualitative research design allows the researcher to gather in-depth information from a smaller number of cases (Burnham, Lutz, Grant & Layton-Henry, 2008:40). In this way, it will allow the researcher to gain more detailed responses, for example, as to why young people are not engaging in electoral politics; or why they are more trusting of social media platforms. On the other hand, using a mixed-methods approach (that uses both qualitative and quantitative methods) "may provide complementary data which can strengthen the findings" (Burnham, Lutz, Grant & Layton-Henry, 2008:40). For example, by using interviews and survey research to gather data.

As interviews allow researchers to gather more in-depth information on people's opinions and perceptions, survey research is very limited in that sense. Survey research is that it does not allow respondents to express their feelings, to be able to give explanations as to why they feel a certain way about a matter. Survey research has been criticised for not being able to take the complexity of people's feelings into account (Devere, 1993:13). Therefore, if researchers want to get more reliable representation of people's opinions and reasons behind their scepticism about political actors and institutions and reasons for their reluctance to participate, they need to adopt a qualitative research method. In-depth interviews provide a 'safe space' where interviewees are able to express their true feelings, concerns and opinions. In this way, the researcher will be able to gather more valuable information and this will strengthen the validity of their research. Having interviews with people between the ages of 18-35-year-olds will allow researchers to ask different kinds of questions that surveys cannot.

Focus groups is another technique that researchers can use. This technique allows researchers and respondents to sit together and discuss a variety of topics (Burnham, Lutz, Grant & Layton-Henry,

2008:134). This allows “respondents to simulate one another and to provide information based on a range of personal experiences” (Burnham, Lutz, Grant & Layton-Henry, 2008:134). Focus groups will allow researchers to ask different kinds of questions that cannot necessarily be asked by using surveys. Using focus groups will also allow researchers the opportunity to gain a more in-depth understanding of how and why youth people perceive current democratic institutions and actors and what their opinions are of South Africa’s current democracy. However, a limitation of focus groups and interviews is that it “limits the generalizations that can be made” (Burnham, Lutz, Grant & Layton-Henry, 2008:134) and it is not possible to know how representative the group actually is of the broader population. In addition to that, the results can also be biased and respondents can be easily influenced by each other (Burnham, Lutz, Grant & Layton-Henry, 2008:134). Conducting interviews and/or having focus groups can definitely be beneficial for future research. Future research could also benefit from longitudinal research to be able to study how specific events influence a change in people’s attitudes and behaviour over a period of time. The limit of doing cross-sectional research is that it only provides insight into the attitudes and behaviour of the respondents at that given time.

With regards to further development on the findings of this study, the fact that young people display lower levels of demand for democracy also creates a ground for development and research. The literature has pointed out that young South Africans are not voting because they feel unrepresented by the current democratic system (Oyedemi & Mahlatji, 2016:321). Young people are not voting because of the incompetence of the ANC to address their issues (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2019b:12). It could be interesting to explore what exactly drives young people to have lower levels of demand for democracy, and if there have been any changes in the levels of demand since Cyril Ramaphosa took over as president.

Another recommendation is that research can also be done to examine whether or not the different attitudes towards democracy (demand for; supply of; and trust in democracy) have an influence on one another. From the literature in Chapter Two, it is evident that there is a possible connect between demand, supply and trust and that they do have an influence on one another. The fact that young people have vastly low levels of trust in political actors and institutions, also provides an opportunity for further research. To further investigate what the importance of trust is on voter turnout. It is difficult to measure attitudes but that is why it could, once again, be beneficial to adopt a mixed methods approach to be able to grasp why young people are distrustful of political actors and institutions and to gain more insight into why they are not voting.

An interesting finding that this study found is that there is a low to moderate inverse relationship between age and trust in social media. Therefore, it could be interesting to explore this finding in further research, to explore the relationship between young people and online protest support, and

why they are more trusting of social media platforms. The literature in Chapter Two shows that young people are indeed more on various online platforms because they feel that they are able to create a sense of community, where they feel free to express their concerns and opinions (Harris, Wyn & Younes, 2010:27). However, it would be interesting to know why they are more trusting of social media platforms, when they are aware of the dangers of these various platforms, such as, spreading fake news. It could also be interesting to explore why they are more likely to support online protests, rather than to go out and participate in protests and marches.

## **6.5 Conclusion**

The concluding question is: can changes in attitudinal bases of support influence behavioural bases of support for democracy? This study provides some support for how changes in attitudinal bases of support for democracy can account for changes in behavioural bases of support for democracy. This study found evidence that young people in South Africa are less demanding of democracy; they are more disconnected from conventional methods of participation; and they display lower levels of trust in political actors and institutions. Additionally, the study found that there is a correlation between trust and political participation – voting and online support for protests. The findings point to the importance that positive attitudes have on enforcing positive behaviour because the study proved the opposite to be true – negative attitudes enforce negative behaviour. The results can be generalised to the broader South African population. South Africa's democracy is being put to the test and the future stability and legitimacy of the regime are in the hands of the youth. However, because there is only limited amounts of literature available on the South African case the study lays a foundation for further development and research in this particular area of research. Recommendations for future research would be to adopt a qualitative or mixed-methods approach and to explore other findings that this study did not explore, such as the relationship between young people and their levels of trust in various social media platforms.

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## Appendix A – Coding of Independent and Dependent Variables

	Afrobarometer	CNEP
<b>Independent Variable: AGE</b>		
	<b>How old are you?</b> <b>Recoded:</b> (1) youth (ages 18-35); (2) adults (ages 36-59); and (3) older adults (ages 60-99)	<b>How old are you?</b> <b>Recoded:</b> (1) youth (ages 18-35); (2) adults (ages 36-59); and (3) older adults (ages 60-99)
<b>Dependent Variables: ATTITUDES TO DEMOCRACY</b>		
<b>Demand for Democracy:</b>	<b>There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives?</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office.</li> <li>2. The army comes in to govern the country.</li> <li>3. Elections and Parliament are abolished so that the president can decide everything.</li> <li>4. If the country returned to the old system we had under Apartheid.</li> </ol> <b>Recoded:</b> (1) Disapprove (2) Neither (3) Approve.	<b>There are many ways to govern a country. Would you disapprove or approve of the following alternatives?</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office.</li> <li>2. Elections and the National Assembly should be abolished so that we can have a strong leader running the country.</li> <li>3. The army comes in to govern the country.</li> </ol> <b>Recoded:</b> (1) Disapprove (2) Neither (3) Approve.
	If a non-elected government or leader could impose law and order, and deliver houses and jobs: How willing or unwilling would you be to give up regular elections and live under such a government? <b>Recoded:</b> (1) Willing; (2) Unwilling	<b>Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government (3)</li> <li>• Only one political party is allowed to stand for election and hold office (2)</li> <li>• For someone like me, it doesn't matter what kind of government we have (1)</li> </ul>
<b>Supply of Democracy:</b>	<b>In your opinion, how much of a democracy is South Africa today?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A full democracy (4)</li> <li>• A democracy, but with minor problems (3)</li> <li>• A democracy, with major problems (2)</li> <li>• Not a democracy (1)</li> </ul>	<b>In your opinion, how much of a democracy is South Africa today?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A full democracy (4)</li> <li>• A democracy, but with minor problems (3)</li> <li>• A democracy, with major problems (2)</li> <li>• Not a democracy (1)</li> </ul>
	<b>Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in South Africa? Are you:</b> <b>Recoded:</b> SA is not a democracy (1); (2) Not satisfied; (3) Satisfied	<b>Overall, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in South Africa? Are you:</b> <b>Recoded:</b> SA is not a democracy (1); (2) Not satisfied; (3) Satisfied

<p><b>Trust in Democracy:</b></p>	<p><b>How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The President</li> <li>• Parliament/National Assemble</li> <li>• National Electoral Commission</li> <li>• The Premier of this province</li> <li>• Your elected local government</li> <li>• The ruling party (ANC)</li> <li>• Opposition political parties</li> </ul> <p><b>Recoded:</b> (1)Do Not trust; (2) Trust</p>	<p><b>How much do you trust each of the following?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The government of SA</li> <li>• The Independent Electoral Commission</li> <li>• The media such as: TV, newspapers or radio</li> <li>• Social media, such as: Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp</li> <li>• The ANC</li> <li>• The DA</li> <li>• The EFF</li> </ul> <p><b>Recoded:</b> (1)Do Not trust; (2) Trust</p>
<p><b>Dependent Variables: POLITICAL PARTICIPATION</b></p>		
<p><b>Voting:</b></p>	<p><b>Understanding that some people were unable to vote in the most recent national election in 2014, which of the following statements is true for you?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You were not registered to vote</li> <li>• You voted in the elections</li> <li>• You decided not to vote</li> <li>• You could not find the polling station</li> <li>• You were prevented from voting</li> <li>• You did not have time to vote</li> <li>• You did not vote because your name was not in the register</li> <li>• Did not vote for some other reasons</li> <li>• You were too young to vote</li> </ul> <p><b>Recoded:</b> (1) Did not vote; (2) Voted</p>	<p><b>Were you registered in the recent national elections?</b> (1)Not registered; (2) Registered</p>
		<p><b>Did you vote in the 2014 general election?</b> <b>Recoded:</b> (1)Did not vote; (2) Voted</p>
<p><b>Contacting Officials:</b></p>	<p><b>Contacted a government official to ask for help or make a complaint?</b> (1)No; (2) Yes</p>	
<p><b>Political Party Activity:</b></p>	<p><b>Thinking about the last national election in 2014, did you: Work for a candidate or party?</b></p>	

	(1)No; (1) Yes	
<b>Protest:</b>	<b>Have you participated in a demonstration or protest march?</b> (1)No; (2) Yes	<b>Have you taken part in a protest demonstration in the last twelve months?</b> (1)No; (2) Yes
		<b>Have you given online support to a protest in the last twelve months (like re-tweet, share, checking in, posting under a particular hashtag)?</b> (1)No; (2) Yes
<b>Communal activity</b>	<b>Joined others in your community to request action from government?</b> (1)No; (2) Yes	
Note: Don't knows, refused and other unnecessary categories have been removed from the statistical analyses.		