

NATIONAL STUDY ON VOTER APATHY IN BOTSWANA

SUBMITTED TO
INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION (IEC)
BY DEMOCRACY RESEARCH PROJECT (DRP)
UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA

10th MAY 2022



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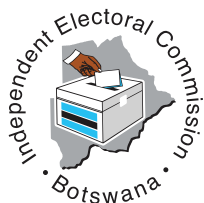


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31th MAY 2022

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It would be amiss not to mention the massive contributions of all the people who were engaged as Research Assistants in this study. It would have been impossible to successfully complete the same without them. They had to endure various hardships such as inclement weather conditions, maneuvering hostile terrains, travelling long distances and working long hours. It is through their commitment, dedication and discipline that we managed to collect data in all the constituencies.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BB	Business Botswana
BCP	Botswana Congress Party
BDP	Botswana Democratic Party
BFTU	Botswana Federation of Trade Unions
BIDPA	Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis
BIP	Botswana Independence Party
BMD	Botswana Movement for Democracy
BNF	Botswana National Front
BOFEPUSU	Botswana Federation of Public Private and Parastatal Sector Unions
BPP	Botswana People's Party
DDP	District Development Plan
DRP	Democracy Research Project
EMBs	Electoral Management Bodies
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FPTP	First Past-the-Post
ICT	Information Communication Technologies
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
JSC	Judicial Service Commission
NDP	National Development Plan
PR	Proportional Representation
UDC	Umbrella for Democratic Change
UDP	Urban Development Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) contracted the Democracy Research Project (DRP) based at the University of Botswana, to conduct a study on voter apathy in all the 57 constituencies. Collection of primary data, which is the backbone of the report, was started on the 11th December 2021 and completed on the 31st January 2022. The collected primary data has been complemented by secondary data obtained from election reports, books and academic articles. Voter apathy means disinterest and disengagement of the voters from the electoral process. It is perceived to be a demonstration of lack of trust in institutions of liberal democracy such as elections, parliament and political parties (Reybrouck: 2016). It is a problem that needs to be addressed as it presents a challenge to the very core of democracy itself.

Molomo and Molefe (2005:96) argue that voter apathy is an important research question in Botswana due to the fact that since the first elections which were held in 1965, there has been a marked decline in political participation with voter disengagement from politics. Hence, the commissioning of this study by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) came at an opportune time more especially that the political landscape has changed in the past twenty years. The data that was collected in relation to the first objective of this study indicates that out of 12 019 respondents interviewed, 71% said that they voted while 29% said that they did not vote. Several factors which contribute to an increase in voter apathy were identified. These are lack of knowledge about the political parties that contest the elections; lack of interest in partisan politics; the gap between politicians and the electorates; lack of recall mechanism; the absence of credible and ethical political candidates coupled with lack of responsiveness by the government. According to the findings of this study, 30.4% of the people who did not vote in 2019 were male while 27.5% were female. It also shows that 71.6% of these people were aged between 18 and 25 while a cumulative percentage of 62.2 were aged between 26 and 55. Cumulatively, 63.2% of these people live in cities, towns and urban villages; 66.2% have secondary and post-secondary education while 59.4% are unemployed and either looking for a job or not.

Regarding the second objective of this study, it has been established that there are low levels of political discussions among friends and family members as evidenced by the fact that 36.9% of the respondents stated that they sometimes talked to their family or friends about politics and current events. In the same vein, 34.9% said that their families occasionally talked about politics and current events when they were growing up. Hence, the conclusion that can be reached is that if politics and current events are occasional subjects of family conversations, it means that political consciousness is occasionally inculcated into growing minds. Further to the foregoing, 47% of the respondents stated that they are not interested in partisan politics. In the same vein, two-thirds of the respondents do not know about political parties that contested the 2019 elections. Hence, it has been concluded that there is a positive correlation between low political education and interest in partisan politics and the high rate of voter apathy. This clearly indicates that public political education is lacking and a concerted effort must be made to sensitise people on political issues. In terms of how the general elections are managed and conducted, the study findings reveal that the majority of the respondents (54%) still have faith, trust and confidence in the Independent Electoral Commission in terms of how it performs its duties and responsibilities. They are of the view that it operates in a neutral way as guided by the law.

This study also indicates that 47.1 % of the respondents believe that the IEC announced an accurate outcome of the elections in 2019; 8.3% think that the results are not an accurate

reflection of the outcome of elections at all, and 11.3 % think that the results are inaccurate with major discrepancies, while 18.6 % think the results of elections are accurate with minor discrepancies. Whilst these results reflect positively on the integrity of the IEC, cumulatively, 38.2% of the respondents believe that the results were not an accurate record. On the independence of the IEC, 73 % of the respondents agreed with the statement that the IEC should be removed from the Ministry of Presidential Affairs, Governance and Public Administration (now called Ministry of State President). The IEC is deemed to be a national organisation that should serve the citizens without creating an impression that it is controlled by the President. Although a significant percentage (73%) of the respondents advocate for the removal of the IEC from Ministry of Presidential Affairs, Governance and Public Administration, its location has no bearing on people's decision to vote or not to vote. Regarding funding of political parties, the results indicate that 56% of the respondents agree with the statement that all political parties contesting elections should be publicly funded. The contention here is that such a move will enable political parties to compete fairly. Democracy requires the participation of all eligible members of the public and it must be strengthened by participation of all citizens and political parties at all levels. Hence, it must be viewed and treated as a public good which should be made available to all citizens through the leveling of the playing field.

And lastly, on the electoral legal instruments, 76% of the respondents are of the view that the current method of deciding who wins the election encouraged them to vote. This means that a majority is happy with First-Past-the-Post (FPTP) and that the system encouraged them to vote. Since voting is a free enterprise, 55% of the respondents stated that it would be a 'bad' or 'very bad idea' for Botswana to adopt a law requiring people to vote. People should not be forced to vote and punished if they do not participate in an election. This report is in five parts. Part one covers the introduction; background of the study and the objectives; interpretation of the terms of reference and the literature review. Part two consists of the literature review which sheds light on the way things are done in other countries and more importantly, here in Botswana. It covers the different electoral systems that are used by different countries and zooms into Botswana. Part three is the research methodology that was used to collect primary data in all the 57 constituencies. Part four is the presentation and analysis of the study findings while part five is the recommendations made on the basis of the study findings.

RECOMENDATIONS

5.2.1 Administrative Recommendations

1. The IEC should increase advertising about where to vote and the date of the elections so that there is no confusion on the part of voters.
2. Since some of the polling stations are far from the voters and therefore discourage them from registering and voting especially when they need transport, it is recommended that more polling stations should be set up as close as possible to the voters.
3. The number of booths should be increased at all polling stations to address the issue of long queues which discourage people from voting.
4. As per SADC norms and standards on free, fair, and credible elections, the IEC must use transparent ballot boxes to engender transparency.
5. On election day, people with disabilities should be given priority and assistance in the manner that is appropriate.
6. There should be an inclusion of studies on democracy, elections and citizenship in the curriculum at lower levels of the education system to sensitise and assist children at a tender age to have a better grasp and understanding of the political landscape, as well as the importance of voting and partaking in political activities.
7. The public media must be requested to carry weekly political party (educational not propaganda) messages.

5.2.2 Legal Recommendations (Amendment of the constitution and/ or the Electoral Act)

8. The counting of ballots should be done at the polling stations to allay fears of cheating or rigging. This recommendation, which has been repeatedly made during elections audit workshops, is in accordance with the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.
9. The IEC should make every effort to reach people with disabilities at home so that they can register and vote. This requires introduction of mobile polling stations.
10. As per SADC norms and standards on free, fair and credible elections, and indeed practice all over the world, indelible ink must be used during voting to deal with issues surrounding multiple voting.
11. Technology could be used to shorten queuing times and, more broadly, to encourage young people to vote.
12. People should be allowed to register and vote for their preferred candidate without having to travel to their home villages. This calls for the use of technology.

13. Polling stations must be open for more than 12 hours on election day to give people who work on election day an opportunity to cast their votes after work.

14. The mandate of the IEC should be expanded to cover voter and civic education, campaign financing and constituency delimitation. This means that the IEC must be given more resources to improve voter and civic education which are of critical importance to ensuring that eligible voters appreciate the importance of registering and voting. This should be a continuous exercise as opposed to the current situation whereby the exercise is carried out on the eve of elections.

15. The IEC must be guaranteed institutional independence in law establishing it in the Constitution.

16. The Constitution must be amended to remove the IEC from the Ministry for State President and place it under Parliament (just like South Africa's chapter 9 institutions of which the IEC is part of). It must not just be independent, but it must also be seen to be independent for it to enjoy the trust and confidence that it needs to manage credible elections.

17. It is recommended that the name of the Election Management Body (EMB) be changed from the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) to the Electoral Commission of Botswana (ECB). The word "Independent" tends to pre-empt questions regarding the status of the EMB as it is assumed that its independence is captured and guaranteed by the name. The proposed change of name is in line with similar bodies in South Africa and Namibia.

18. Since some people usually fail to vote as a result of expired national identity cards (Oman), the law must be amended to allow voters to use passports and drivers' licences as forms of identity at the time of voting more so that they both have the Oman numbers and the holders' pictures on them.

19. The law must be amended to allow public funding of political parties that contest for state power as a way of leveling the political playfield.

Part ONE

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Introduction

Botswana has always been hailed as a beacon of democracy in Africa. The democratic system of governance that was embraced when the country attained independence on the 30th September 1966 is characterised by the protection of fundamental human rights and freedoms, existence of political parties competing for state power, arguably free and fair elections that are held after every five years, a free and independent judiciary, the establishment of oversight agencies and others. Since the attainment of independence, Botswana has held 11 national elections. According to Balule (2017:52), the legal framework that governs Botswana's electoral system and management is the country's Constitution of 1966 (as amended) and the Electoral Act of 1968 (as amended). The electoral system established in the legal framework is that of First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) where a political candidate who obtains one vote more than his or her opponent(s) is declared the winner. It is also referred to as the winner takes all system. The available data indicates that Botswana has, over the past years, been experiencing a decline in the number of citizens who register for national elections that are meant to give them an opportunity to elect their leaders at the district/local (i.e., Councillors) and national level (Members of Parliament). So far, the factors that contribute to the decline in the number of people who register to vote and the actual number that votes or voter apathy, have not been identified. Hence, the main purpose of this assignment was to conduct a national study covering all the existing 57 constituencies to identify such factors and make recommendations in terms of how the identified problems can be addressed.

1.2 Background of the study and its objectives

Due to the declining numbers of people who register for elections and those who cast their vote, the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), which is responsible for making all the necessary preparations for elections as well as the conduct of the same, deemed it appropriate to conduct a national study covering all the 57 constituencies to identify factors that have given rise to the problem of voter apathy. Thus, the main objectives of the study were to:

- a Establish factors influencing voter apathy among various demographics in Botswana.
- b Establish whether the level of political awareness has any influence on participation of citizens in the electoral process.
- c Make significant proposals for the improvement of participation of citizens in the electoral process and Botswana's democracy.

The study was to, among other things, determine whether perceptions about the following have any influence on participation of citizens in the electoral process:

- The management of elections by the IEC.
- The independence of the IEC.
- Political party funding.
- Electoral legal frameworks.

1.3 INTERPRETATION OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Our interpretation and understanding of the above-mentioned objectives are as indicated below:

1.3.1 Establish factors influencing voter apathy among various demographics in Botswana

The study must establish factors that influence different sections or groups of the society such as youth, unemployed, women, people with disabilities, elderly, civic society and others to register or not register for general elections. It is important to establish the voting patterns of these groups as well as identify any factors that may be discouraging them to register for elections.

1.3.2 To establish whether the level of political awareness has any influence on participation of citizens in the electoral process.

The study must establish if there is adequate political awareness or education among citizens who are eligible to vote as their level of understanding goes a long way in influencing them to make decisions about elections. Establishing the level of political awareness will assist the IEC to make informed decisions in terms of how the same can be raised to address the problem of voter apathy.

1.3.3 The management of elections by the IEC

The study must establish if the way in which the general elections are managed by the IEC is a factor that discourages citizens from voting. This calls for interrogation of the way in which the registration process is done, the way in which the polling stations are set-up, the security of the ballot papers, the manner in which the counting of the ballot papers is carried out and the time that it takes for the results to be released. It is about establishing if citizens have trust and confidence in the IEC as far as management of elections is concerned.

1.3.4 The independence of the IEC

The IEC is sometimes perceived not to be an independent entity, more especially, that it is treated as a department under in the Ministry of Presidential Affairs, Governance and Public Administration and its Secretary is appointed by the President. Furthermore, it is the President who has to determine the day on which the elections will be held. An assessment of the existing arrangement will go a long way in revealing if this discourages citizens from registering for elections.

1.3.5 Political party funding

The study must also interrogate the issue of political funding with a view to establishing if it plays any role in discouraging people from registering for elections. This is important mainly because there has always been an argument presented by opposition parties that the playing field is unlevel or uneven given their inability to strongly challenge a well-resourced ruling party.

1.3.6 Electoral legal frameworks

Lastly, the study must find out if the existing legal instruments (i.e. the country's Constitution of 1966 (as amended) and the Electoral Act of 1968 (as amended) have any bearing on facilitating or discouraging citizens to participate in political activities, including registering for elections. The obstacles presented by the two instruments, if any, should be identified with a view to finding a way through which they can be removed to encourage citizens to register for elections.

Part TWO

VOTER APATHY IN BOTSWANA: A LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Elections are a fundamental prerequisite of any polity that purports to be democratic. They are a mechanism through which citizens elect the political leadership. The holding of elections alone is not a sufficient precondition for democracy. The elections should also be free and fair. All contesting parties and/or individuals should be able to accept the election outcome. This acceptance represents a positive direction towards the consolidation of democracy. Ijm-Agbor (2007) has correctly observed that the authority of government in democracies derives solely from the consent of the governed, and that the mechanism through which this consent is translated into governmental authority is the holding of regular, periodic, free, and fair elections. Thus, elections are a tool that confers legitimacy on the political leadership.

However, throughout the world, even in developed democracies such as the United States of America, voter turnout has been found to be low and/or declining (Hill:2006). This is a challenge to the very core of democracy which is supposed to be based on popular participation. This explains why democracy scholars are concerned with voter apathy, its causes, and its implications for the democratic process in general. Voter apathy is the tendency among eligible citizens to disengage from the process of elections by either failing to register for elections or not voting during elections.

What follows is a synopsis of academic literature relating to the general causes of voter apathy and possible remedial measures to reverse this worrisome trend that threatens democracy itself. Empirical studies have shown that the phenomenon of voter apathy cannot be attributed to a single factor but to a multiplicity of factors. At a macro level, electoral systems and the administration of elections are cited as some of the main contributors to voter apathy.

2.2 Electoral Systems

An electoral system is a set of rules that governs the conduct of elections. Not only do these rules vary across the world, but they are also, in many countries, the subject of fierce political debate and argument (Heywood: 1997:214). Reynolds and Reilly (1997:7) have argued that electoral systems are manipulative instruments because they determine how elections are won and lost. Therefore, each country chooses its own electoral system, and this normally hinges on the nature of the political system.

Ball (1991:90) states that an electoral system consists of more than the methods of counting the votes cast by the voters. It would include such factors as the extent of the franchise, that is, who is entitled to vote. It would further include the rules relating to candidates and parties and those regulating the administration of elections, especially the provisions against electoral fraud. Even the size and shape of the constituency is an important aspect of electoral systems. The United Nations (UN) recognizes that there is no single electoral system that is equally suited to all countries and their people (Balule: 2017:51).

2.3 The Electoral System in Botswana

Botswana at independence in 1966 adopted a unicameral Westminster parliamentary system based on First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) or “winner-takes-all” electoral system. This system is based on direct election of members by demarcated constituencies or wards. The candidate with the most votes in each constituency will have a seat in Parliament. Molomo (2000:112) argues that the FPTP system has served Botswana well since independence because it has

consolidated multiparty politics that the country is widely acclaimed for. This system has several advantages. For instance, it is renowned for delivering stable, strong, and effective governments. It establishes a clear link between the representative and his or her constituents. In other words, the Member of Parliament is accountable to the voters. Furthermore, it allows governments to be formed that have a clear mandate from the electorate, albeit often based on plurality support amongst the electorate (Heywood: 1997:215).

However, the system has had its fair share of critics. The system has been found wanting in terms of representing the demographics in society, such as women, youth, minorities, and religious groups. Furthermore, the system “wastes” many (perhaps most) votes, those cast for the losing candidates and those cast for winning candidates over the plurality mark (Heywood: 1997:215). As examples, with reference to Botswana, in the 1999 elections, the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) won Selibe-Phikwe constituency with 6173 votes whereas the opposition combined vote was 7204. In the Ngwaketse West constituency, a BDP candidate won against a Botswana National Front (BNF) candidate by 4615 to 4602 votes. In the case of the Ngwaketse South constituency, BNF won against BDP by 3935 to 3771 votes (Report on the General Elections: 1999).

The point being illustrated with these examples is that some candidates, especially those from the ruling party, could still make it to Parliament even though the combined votes for opposition candidates were more than the ones earned by the former. Richards (2001:12) refers to the first-past-the-post as a “crooked electoral system” as it produces skewed electoral results. Richards further argues that a flawed electoral system can negatively affect democracy in general, and lead to voter apathy. The latter means disinterest and disengagement of the voters from the electoral process.

As it will emerge later in the report, during an in-depth interview an opposition member of Parliament warned against according too much weight to the FPTP electoral system as a contributory factor to voter apathy in Botswana. This contention is anchored on the fact that those who raise this point are mostly the educated citizens who are conversant with alternative electoral systems such as proportional representation or a combination of both FPTP and proportional representation. The issue should, therefore, be approached with caution. This argument is consistent with the finding by Botlhomilwe and Molebatsi (2015:7) who maintain that opposition political parties in Botswana have not been resolute in their demand for changes to the current electoral system. They are of the view that in part this ‘may be a result of the fact that ordinary voters, including politicians themselves, are not sufficiently educated in alternative electoral systems’. An empirical study by Phirinyane (2013) conducted by Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis (BIDPA), on behalf of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, found that most people in Botswana are in support of the current electoral system.

2.4 Election Management Bodies

The role of Election Management Bodies (EBMs) also has a bearing on voter apathy. Many democratic states have established EBMs in an endeavour to support free and fair elections. It is the credibility of these bodies that ensures that all stakeholders in the electoral process can have a feeling and faith that their success or loss in an election was a result of a fair process. Democratic governance, therefore, requires effective and independent electoral institutions. This explains why Lopez-Pintor (2000) regards electoral management bodies as institutions of governance. In most democracies, as is the case in Botswana, electoral management bodies are a relatively recent creation. Even older, mature, stable, and consolidated democracies

such as the United States and the United Kingdom do not have EMBs (Sebudubudu & Botlhomilwe: 2010). Botswana's Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) was only established in 1997, some 31 years after the country had gained independence. EMBs are important in that they are instruments with the potential to promote transparency and technical competence in the administration of elections (Lopez-Pintor: 2000). Poor administration of elections can have undesirable consequences such as post-election violence. Elections in Lesotho (1998), Madagascar (2001), Kenya (2007) and Zimbabwe (2008) are examples in Africa that experienced post-election violence emanating from poorly managed elections and allegations of electoral fraud (Sebudubudu & Botlhomilwe 2010). This goes to demonstrate that confidence in electoral management bodies is critical.

Although Botswana's IEC has been successful as compared to other African countries in administering peaceful elections, there is a perception that it is not independent (Sebudubudu:2007). The cause of disagreement regarding its non- independence is that it resides in the Office of the President and its budgetary and staffing requirements are determined by this Office. Moreover, the IEC Secretary is appointed by the President while the IEC Commissioners are appointed by the Judicial Service Commission (JSC), whose members are appointed by the President. It is, therefore, viewed in some quarters as an appendage of the presidency. It is in this context that perceptions that it is not independent or impartial are not without basis. If this perception is highly internalized within the electorate, it would be logical to suspect that this may discourage people from participating in the electoral process. Any perception that the outcome of an election is a forgone conclusion is a strong enough reason for people to abstain or withdraw from electoral participation. Since perceptions can be stronger than reality, there is a need to eradicate such perceptions.

Despite the extension of the vote to all the adult population, not everyone votes. Studies have shown that representatives are being elected, and governments decided, by a decreasing number of people. Increasing numbers of people are disenfranchised from the democratic system. More importantly, the low turnouts do not fall evenly amongst all social groups (Richards:2001:11). Voter apathy can significantly compromise the validity of democratic processes, including but not limited to decline in political participation and disengagement from the electoral process

2.5 Other causes of voter apathy

The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (International IDEA) classifies those factors that affect voter turnout as socio-economic; political; institutional and individual. At the level of the voter, demographic factors associated with voter turnout include education, income, socio-economic status, age, and location. Lijphart (1997) points out that young and the incredibly old often fail to register and to vote compared to other age groups. Taiwo and Ahmed (2015) found gender, education, and socio-economic status to be among the predictors of voter apathy in presidential elections in Nigeria.

Voters with higher socio-economic status and with higher education are more likely to vote than the poor and less educated. In addition to these, some psychosocial factors are also associated with voting behaviour. Trust in politicians, political parties, the political system, and the electoral process affect voting behaviour. Where people have trust in both the political and electoral systems, they are likely to be motivated to participate in elections by voting. Writing specifically about Botswana, Mfundisi (2006:86) attributes voter apathy to weak electoral

competition, lack of credible election candidates, poor campaign strategies that do not focus on substantive issues but are often characterised by insults and personal attacks on other candidates, rigid electoral process and limited opening times of polling stations.

2.6 Measures to Enhance Voter Turnout

The two possible measures that are discussed in this report are compulsory voting and voter mobilisation.

i) Compulsory Voting

Several specific measures have been proposed to tackle the problem of low voter turnout. One such proposal is the introduction of compulsory voting. Making a very compelling case for compulsory voting as a mechanism of improving voter turnout with reference to the United States, Hill (2006: 203) has argued that apart from making voter registration procedures easier and adopting other institutional means, 'there is one cheaper and more elegant solution capable of raising turnout higher than all these reforms put together: compulsory voting'. She contends that 'compulsory voting' should be accurately called 'compulsory voting attendance' because, 'due to the secret ballot it is only registration and attendance at a polling place (entailing having one's name marked off the roll, collecting the ballot papers and putting them in the ballot box) that is compulsory in places like Australia, Belgium and, before 1970, The Netherlands' systems of compulsory voting normally entail the imposition of sanctions on those who fail to register and/or cast a vote in an election and these sanctions vary in severity from country to country, from harsh to lenient. What emerges from the literature on countries using compulsory voting is that penalties imposed on those who do not vote are generally modest or lenient and are rarely enforced.

One major criticism of compulsory voting is that it infringes on civil liberties, especially that of freedom of choice. Hill (2006) dislodges this criticism by arguing that since voters are not forced and/or compelled to mark their ballot or vote formally, they retain the option to return a blank or spoiled ballot and that compulsory attendance is a better devil 'compared to other problems of collective action solved by mandatory means' such as schooling, taxation, and military service. Hill (2006:222) carries the criticism further by maintaining that:

“

Even so, it is still fair to say that compulsory registration and attendance do infringe the liberal-democratic principle of choice, but this is only a compelling argument against compulsion if it is granted that choice is more important than a whole range of other important liberal democratic values and desiderata that compulsion may serve, among them: legitimacy, representativeness, political equality, majority will and minimization of elite power.

She goes on to argue that:

“

Putting choice first not only sacrifices democratic values, it also sacrifices another important liberal right: equality of political opportunity. Bear in mind that that it is only registration and attendance at a polling place (entailing having one's name marked off the roll, collecting the ballot papers and putting them in the ballot box) that is compulsory. This distinction between actual participation and access to participation is important because the former has controvertible value (since the costs and benefits are disputed) whereas the value of equality of opportunity is generally undisputed by liberal democrats (Hill 2006:222).

To Hill, compulsory voting is the only institutional arrangement capable of achieving, on its own, turnout rates of 90 percent and above. Australia and Belgium are cited as examples of countries using this system where voter turnout rates consistently average over 90 percent. The Netherlands, which had practiced compulsory voting for 50 years before repealing the system in 1970, witnessed a drastic fall in voter turnout as soon as the law was repealed (Lijphart, 2001). The system has been shown to enhance political participation in countries where it is practiced.

ii) Voter Mobilisation

Another measure, which has been recommended to address voter apathy in the context of Nigeria, is voter mobilisation (Independent National Electoral Commission of Nigeria:2011). Voter mobilisation requires 'co-operation of stakeholders working together to ensure credible, inclusive, transparent, free, and fair elections' (INEC:50).

This measure of tackling voter apathy entails identifying all stakeholders that play a critical role in the electoral process and how each one can contribute to voter mobilisation. The identified stakeholders include: the election management body (EMB); politicians; government; the media and voters. The expected roles of each of some of the identified stakeholders were summarised as follows:

a) Election Management Body

- *Conduct transparent and credible elections.*
- *Voter education.*
- *Provision of adequate election materials.*
- *Improve voters' registration processes.*
- *Recruit competent staff.*
- *EMB should be independent.*

b) Government

- *Provide support to the EMB.*
- *Fulfill electoral promises.*
- *Public enlightenment campaigns.*
- *Provide adequate security.*
- *Enforce law and order.*
- *They should not interfere with the electoral process.*
- *Stop corruption.*

c) Politicians

- *Fulfill electoral promises.*
- *Stop violence.*
- *Educate their supporters.*
- *Well organised political rallies.*
- *Accept election results without manipulation.*
- *Avoid bribery and corruption.*
- *Responsible and honest representative.*
- *Obey the EMB's rules and orders.*

d) The Media

- *Voter's education.*
- *Provide accurate information.*
- *Unbiased reporting or equal coverage.*
- *Avoid bribery and corruption.*
- *Timely coverage.*

In addition to the above measures, enhancing the administration and management of elections, including the use Information Communication Technologies (ICT) would go a long way in instilling a sense of trust and transparency in the electoral systems (Mpabanga & Mokhawa: 2013). Furthermore, abiding to international norms and standards of elections and electoral systems would enhance voter participation (Mpabanga & Rinke: 2007).

2.7 Voter apathy and voting patterns in past elections in Botswana

One of the main criticisms of the FPTP electoral system in place in Botswana is that it has produced a predominant one-party system and, in some cases, a dominant two-party system. Since the first elections in 1965, the BDP has won all the elections that were held after every five years. This has been due to the electoral system that the country practices. As the subsequent discussion will show, the BDP has always had a healthy majority in parliamentary seats even though its popular vote has been decreasing and voter turnout declining.

Molomo (2005:35) has argued that the FPTP system tends to promote a sense of voter apathy, as one party dominates the electoral process, and supporters of opposing parties tend to get disillusioned and withdraw from participation in politics. In other words, voters reach a stage whereby they feel that their vote does not matter and would not bring tangible change. In most cases where voters feel their vote would make a difference, they turnout in large numbers but if the outcome is somehow known beforehand, they tend to lose interest in the political process and do not turnout to vote.

The discussion now turns to each election held in Botswana and attempts to analyse the issue of voter apathy and voter turnout. The independence elections held on 1 March 1965 stand out as the best in Botswana in terms of voter turnout. 69 percent of the eligible voters turned out to vote. The BDP, which would win the elections, won 28 of the 31 seats contested. In terms of popular vote this was 80 percent. The Botswana Peoples Party (BPP) won the remaining three seats, which was 14 percent of the popular vote. The Botswana Independence Party (BIP) won no seat, but 5 percent of the popular vote.

It would not be far-fetched for one to argue that the high voter turnout in 1965 was because this was a historic election in terms of transition from colonial rule to post-independence one. This fact alone might have motivated voters to turn out in large numbers. Surprisingly, voter turnout dropped massively in the next elections held in 1969. It dropped by 32 percent from 69 percent to 37 percent. Possible reasons for this drastic drop in voter turnout could have been the reforms that the post-independence BDP government introduced which created tension between itself and traditional authorities (dikgosi) that still had a tight grip over their people. In those elections, the BDP seats dropped from 28 to 24, however, this still accounted for 68 percent of the popular vote. The combined opposition popular vote increased from 20 percent to 32 percent. (Molomo & Molefe: 2005).

Molomo & Molefe (2005:103) further argue that the 1974 election was significant in the sense that it marked the lowest ever turnout of voters in Botswana's political history, at 26 percent. The BDP increased popular voter to 77 percent and that of the opposition declined from 32 to 23 percent. Warning signals were already there for this voter turnout in 1974 as Molutsi (1998:369) states that the government was particularly disturbed by that year's voter registration, which was very low. This prompted President Sir Seretse Khama to tour the country to appeal to the electorate to register to vote.

The voter turnout improved in the next election of 1979, and it increased from 26 percent in 1974 to 46 percent. An analysis of the 1979 elections shows that the BDP's popular vote dropped slightly to 75 percent from the previous elections, and that of the opposition marginally improved to 25 percent. Turning to the 1984 elections, voter turnout improved tremendously as it stood at 54 percent. Of significance was the fact that these were the first elections contested under

the leadership of Sir Ketumile Masire, having taken over the presidency following the passing on of Sir Seretse Khama in July 1980. This could have been a motivating factor for increased voter turnout. In 1984, the BDP's popular vote further declined to 68 percent whereas that of the opposition increased to 32 percent. In terms of parliamentary seats, BDP won 28 and the opposition five. Matsheka and Botlhomilwe (2000:41) have argued that the 1989 elections took place against a backdrop of unprecedented economic growth rate of 12 percent and that this might have had a feel-good factor on the electorate. The BDP increased its parliamentary seats to 31 and the opposition had 3. Despite this the BDP popular vote declined to 64 percent and that of the opposition increased to 34 percent.

The 1994 elections were the most competitive in Botswana. Out of 40 parliamentary constituencies on offer, the BDP won 27 and the opposition BNF won 13. Because of the FPTP electoral system practiced in the country, the BDP still had a comfortable majority of parliamentary seats, that is, 67 percent to BNF's 33 percent. However, the elephant in the room, that is voter apathy continued to haunt the electoral process. The BDP's popular vote declined to 54 percent, BNF gained 27 percent and the rest of the opposition parties accounted for the remaining 19 percent.

The 1999 elections came against the background of changed leadership in the BDP. The BDP was under the stewardship of Festus Mogae who was deputized by Ian Khama. Khama had been roped in after recommendations by the Schlemmer Commission of 1997, which was set up by the party to evaluate its 1994 electoral performance. On the opposition side, a new player had come into the political scene with the formation of the Botswana Congress Party (BCP) after the BNF split in 1998 at its Congress in Palapye. Curiously, the spiraling downward voter turnout continued as only 41 percent of the eligible voters bothered to vote. BDP's popular vote remained at 54 percent and that of the opposition was 41 percent (Molomo & Molefe: 2005:105). In the 2004 elections, only 41 percent of the eligible voters came out to vote. Of note was BDP's continued decline of the popular vote, which stood at 52 percent. However, in terms of parliamentary seats, the party had 77 percent as it won 44 of the 57 constituencies. As for the BNF, the party won 12 seats, which accounted for 21 percent of the seats. Its national vote stood at 26 percent.

The BCP had a national vote of 16 percent but one parliamentary seat. A further analysis of these results indicates that because of FPTP electoral system, the BDP was given "bonus seats" in Ngami, Okavango, Nkange, Selibe-Phikwe East and West, Gaborone North, South East South, Mogoditshane, Kweneng South, Francistown South and Ngwaketse South. In these constituencies, combined votes of the opposition outstripped that of the BDP. Put the other way round, had Botswana practiced a different electoral system such as proportional representation the outcome would have been different. Proportional representation is the principle that parties should be represented in an assembly or parliament in direct proportion to their overall electoral strength, their percentage of seats equaling their percentage of votes (Heywood: 1997:220).

Turning to the 2009 general elections, the BDP had a popular vote of about 53 percent, yet the electoral system converted this into 79 percent of the parliamentary seats. Balule (2017:53) has argued that given the disproportionate allocation of seats that results from the application of the FPTP system, it is debatable whether the system adequately reflects the will of the voters and hence whether the system fully complies with international standards and norms on democratic elections. The 2014 elections were notable for one significant development. For the

first time the BDP popular vote fell below 50 percent, to be precise, it was 47 percent and that of the combined opposition was 53 percent. However, the FPTP translated BDP's popular vote into 65 percent of the seats, whereas the Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) formed in 2012 by the BNF, Botswana Movement for Democracy (BMD) and Botswana Peoples Party (BPP) had 30 percent of the national vote and 30 percent of the seats in parliament.

The BCP garnered 20 percent of the popular vote which translated into 5 percent of the parliamentary seats. Kebonang and Kaboyakgosi (2017:69) have argued that Botswana's electoral system has over-represented the BDP and under-represented the opposition in Parliament. Its "winner-takes-all" character effectively disenfranchises other political parties. However, the BDP improved its popular vote in the 2019 polls. It rose to 52 percent and this translated into 67 percent of the parliamentary seats, UDC had 36 percent of the popular vote and this was 26 percent of the seats and the remaining 7 percent went to other opposition parties. Voter turnouts for all elections are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Voting Trends 1965–2019

	1	2	3	4	5	6
National Election Year	Number of eligible Voters	Registered Voters	% Of registered voters (2/1)	Number of Voters	% Voted (4/1)	% of (4/2)
1965	202 800	188 950	93.0	140 858	69	75
1969	205 200	140 428	68.4	76 858	37	55
1974	244 200	205 016	84	64 011	26	31
1979	290 033	243 483	84	134 496	46	55
1984	420 400	293 571	70.4	227 756	54	78
1989	522 900	367 069	72.3	250 487	48	68
1994	634 920	370 173	58.30	283 375	45	77
1999	844 338	459 662	57.6	354 463	42	77
2004	957 540	552 849	57.8	421 272	44	76
2009	892 339	723 617	81.1	555 078	62	77
2014	1 267 719	824 073	65.0	698 409	55	85
2019	1 593 350	925 478	58	777 943	49	84

Source: IEC Report on 2019 General Elections, pp.14–15 and pp.28

The preceding discussion has shown that the electoral system in a particular country can have a positive or negative effect on the people's participation in the electoral process. Though Botswana is one of the oldest multi-party democracies in the African continent since decolonisation, it fares badly when compared to other countries in terms of voter turnout or

participation in the electoral process. For instance, Mauritius by 1998 had held six elections and voter turnout stood at an average of 82.5 percent; Namibia had two and average voter turnout was 80.4 percent, Cape Verde had two and average voter turnout was 75.6 percent; Zimbabwe had five and average turnout stood at 58.8 percent (Institute of Democracy and Electoral Assistance: 1998). Botswana's electoral voter turnout stood at between 39 and 44 percent by 1998.

However, voter apathy is not peculiar to Botswana. For instance, in the second democratic elections in Zambia in 1996, the late President Frederick Chiluba won re-election by a landslide, with 73 percent of the vote. However, these results revealed some interesting trends. While voter turnout, at nearly 59 percent of registered voters, was more than 15 points higher than it had been in 1991, it still represented only 33 percent of those eligible. Thus, while President Chiluba may have received 73 percent of the vote, his mandate came from only about 24 percent of voting age population (Bratton & Prosner: 1999:398).

2.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, voter apathy is influenced by many factors including the electoral system. The important role played by various stakeholders in general elections has been emphasized including government, the electoral body, political parties, and the voters themselves. Some countries have maintained high voter turnout and lessons can be drawn from countries such as Mauritius and Namibia. Changing the electoral system, compulsory voting, voter mobilisation, improving the administration and management of elections, as well as the use ICT are some of the factors that could be used to address voter apathy and promote sustained voter participation in general elections.

Part THREE

DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGIES

3.1 Introduction

This part covers the methodology that was used to collect data in all the 57 constituencies. It covers the study population; sample design; sample size determination; study sites; sample selection; sampling respondents; focus group discussions; analysis plan and ethical issues.

3.2 Study Population

The sample universe for the opinion poll survey includes all citizens of voting age within the country. The minimum age for one to cast their vote in Botswana is 18 years. In addition, one must be a citizen. Therefore, the study population is citizens of Botswana who have attained the age of 18 years on the day of the interview. In other words, we exclude anyone who is not a citizen and anyone who has not attained this age (18 years) on the day of the survey. Also excluded are areas determined to be either inaccessible or not relevant to the study, such as national parks and game reserves. As a matter of practice, we have also excluded people living in institutionalized settings, such as students in dormitories, persons in prisons, police/military barracks, hospitals/nursing homes, or quarantined areas.

3.3 Sample Design

The main sampling principle, the objective of the design was to give every adult citizen an equal and known chance of being chosen for inclusion in the sample. This ensured that the survey results provide an unbiased estimate of the views of the national voting age population. We strived to reach this objective by:

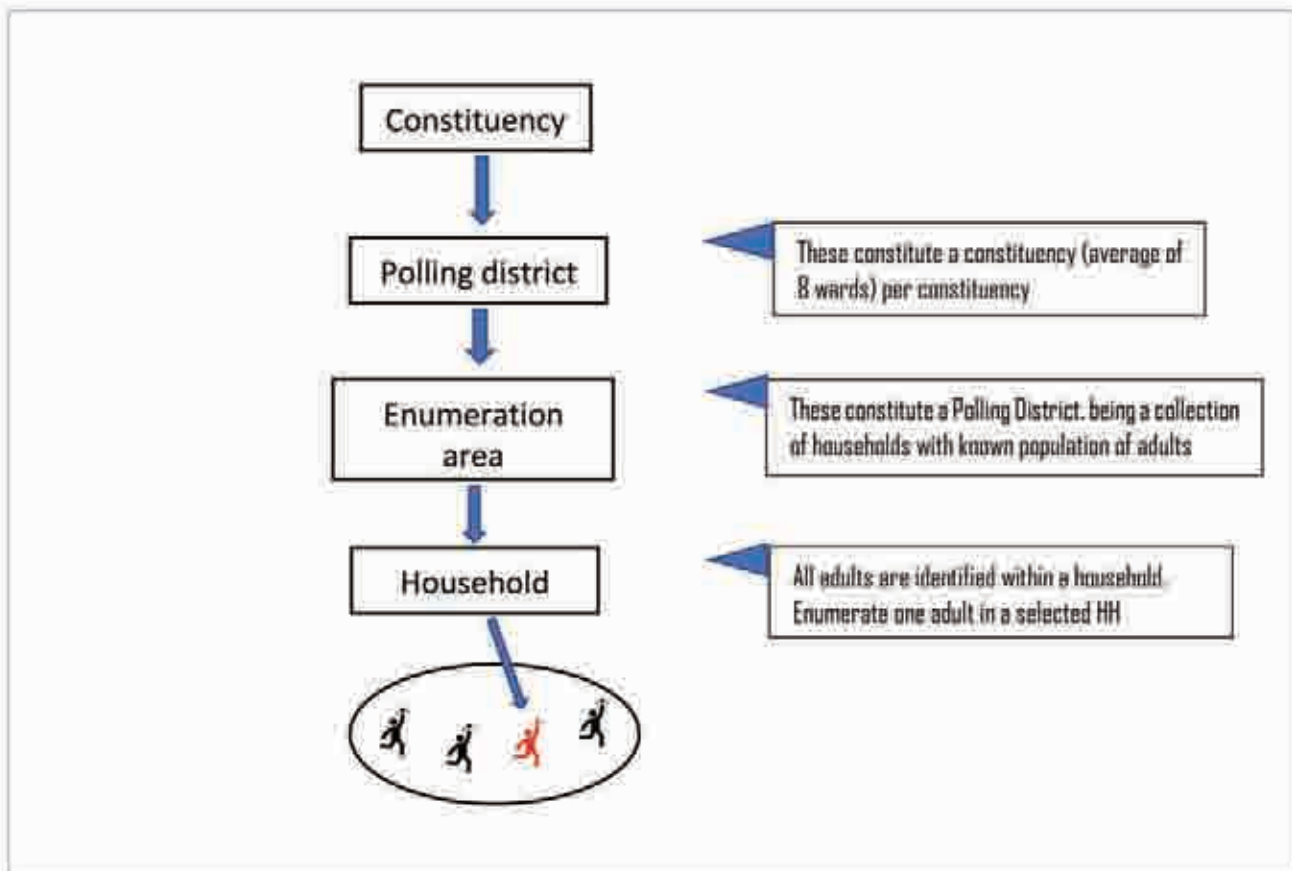
- (a) Strictly applying random selection methods at every stage of sampling; and
- (b) Applying sampling with probability proportionate to population size.

The proportion of the sample allocated to each constituency was the same as its proportion in the national population of voters as indicated by the 2019 voters roll obtained from the Independent Electoral Commission. The numbers were guided by the 2019 Population Projections from 2011 Population and Housing Census results.

The Primary Sampling Unit (PSU) is the smallest, well-defined geographic unit for which reliable population data are available. For this survey, these were the polling districts and wards. For each selected polling district within a ward in a constituency, we identified a random start using a designated polling station. Several random starts were used depending on the size of area a polling station serves.

We adopted a standard clustering of 20 interviews per random start. A sample size of 24,060 must, therefore, contain 1,203 random starts ($24060 \div 20$). To complete the process of sample design, we allocated the 1,203 random starts across the constituencies based on the proportion of the sample allocated to each constituency.

Figure 1: Organogram of sampling units for the study



3.4 Sample Size Determination

Sample size determination in multilevel designs requires attention to the fact that statistical power depends on the total sample sizes for each level. It is usually desirable to have as many units as possible at the top level of the multilevel hierarchy.

To determine the sample size, we used a sampling theory which states that we must ensure that $\Pr\{|\hat{p} - P| > d\} \leq \alpha$ for some prescribed d and small α (Cochran: 1977). We needed to specify the tolerance level, d (margin of error), p is the proportion of units in a given category (in our case it is the proportion of voters with a certain attribute) and the risk α which is the likely risk of not obtaining such tolerance (d). That is, we wanted the probability or chance of obtaining an estimate that is different from the true value in either direction by a specified amount d , to be small. Alternatively put, we wanted to maximize the probability of obtaining an estimate which is within the prescribed limit to be maximized. The minimum sample size was then obtained by solving the inequality, $n \geq P(1-P)Z_{\alpha}^2 / d^2$, where Z_{α} is the two-tailed α point of the Standardized Normal distribution, $N(0,1)$.

Table 2: Minimum sample size for set parameters

P	α	Z_{α}	d	Minimum sample size per constituency $n = \frac{p(1-p)Z_{\alpha}^2}{d^2}$
0.5	0.1	1.64485	0.03	752
0.5	0.1	1.64485	0.04	423
0.5	0.1	1.64485	0.05	271
0.5	0.1	1.64485	0.06	188
0.5	0.1	1.64485	0.07	138

The team settled for a d -value of 0.04, which yielded a sample size of 423 per constituency. Since a stratified two stage sampling design was used and it is less precise than the simple random sampling (SRS), the sample size used for the stratified two stage sampling design needed to be inflated by a factor (design effect: D) such that it achieved the same precision (variance) as SRS. We adopted a conservative figure of D=1.2 giving a sample of $423 \times 1.2 = 508$ per constituency for a total of 28, 956. Adjustments were made to ensure a minimum sample size of 20 for each selected starting point.

3.4 Study Sites

The study sought to interview a minimum of 9,652 and a maximum of 28, 956 respondents from all the 57 constituencies. But we managed to interview 12 019 respondents which fall within the desired parameters thus giving our results the much-needed credibility. This sample size gives a margin of error of $\pm 6\%$.

Table 3: List of Constituencies in Botswana

No.	Constituency	Population	Proportion	No. of EA	Ideal No. of EA	Sample	Ideal Sample
1	Chobe	23,347	0.01150691	16.6597106	17	333.1942	340
2	Maun East	43,174	0.02127894	30.8076561	31	616.1531	620
3	Maun West	40,506	0.01996398	28.9038523	29	578.0770	580
4	Ngami	34,387	0.01694814	24.5375196	25	490.7503	500
5	Okavango	34,217	0.01686435	24.4162127	24	488.3242	480
6	Tati East	30,881	0.01522015	22.0357444	22	440.7148	440
7	Tati West	29,383	0.01448184	20.9668170	21	419.3363	420
8	Francistown East	32,700	0.01611667	23.3337276	23	466.6745	460
9	Francistown South	38,133	0.01879441	27.2105515	27	544.2110	540
10	Francistown West	33,128	0.01632762	23.6391354	24	472.7827	480
11	Nata-Gweta	31,583	0.01556614	22.5366703	23	450.7334	460
12	Nkange	42,402	0.02089845	30.2567803	30	605.1356	600
13	Shashe West	37,032	0.01825176	26.4249113	26	528.4982	520
14	Tonota	39,189	0.01931487	27.9640811	28	559.2816	560
15	Bobonong	42,472	0.02093295	30.3067302	30	606.1346	600
16	Mmadinare	38,436	0.01894375	27.4267631	27	548.5352	540
17	Selibe Phikwe East	24,652	0.01215010	17.5909190	18	351.8183	360
18	Selibe Phikwe West	24,759	0.01220283	17.6672710	18	353.3454	360
19	Lerala-Maunatlala	33,743	0.01663073	24.0779807	24	481.5596	480
20	Palapye	40,691	0.02005516	29.0358627	29	580.7172	580
21	Sefhare-Ramokgonami	31,517	0.01553362	22.4895747	22	449.7914	440
22	Mahalapye East	25,835	0.01273316	18.4350719	18	368.7014	360
23	Mahalapye West	32,896	0.01621328	23.4735872	23	469.4717	460
24	Shoshong	29,147	0.01436553	20.7984146	21	415.9682	420
25	Serowe North	33,404	0.01646365	23.8360806	24	476.7216	480
26	Serowe West	25,572	0.01260353	18.2474031	18	364.9480	360
27	Serowe South	35,400	0.01744741	25.2603656	25	505.2073	500
28	Boteti West	32,390	0.01596389	23.1125210	23	462.2504	460
29	Boteti East	37,534	0.01849918	26.7831233	27	535.6624	540
30	Mochudi West	44,197	0.02178314	31.5376379	32	630.7527	640
31	Mochudi East	47,463	0.02339284	33.8681564	34	677.3631	680
32	Gaborone Central	47,277	0.02330116	33.7354324	34	674.7086	680

No.	Constituency	Popula- tion	Proportion	No. of EA	Ideal No. of EA	Sample	Ideal Sam- ple
33	Gaborone Bonnington North	45,688	0.02251800	32.6015702	33	652.0314	660
34	Gaborone Bonnington South	46,963	0.02314640	33.5113715	34	670.2274	680
35	Gaborone North	46,434	0.02288568	33.1338932	33	662.6778	660
36	Gaborone South	45,230	0.02229227	32.2747553	32	645.4951	640
37	Tlokweng	36,054	0.01776974	25.7270402	26	514.5408	520
38	Ramotswa	47,237	0.02328145	33.7068896	34	674.1377	680
39	Mogoditshane	47,206	0.0232661	33.684769	34	673.6953	680
40	Gabane-Mmankgodi	47,287	0.0233060	33.7425681	34	674.8513	680
41	Thamaga-Kumakwane	36,402	0.0179412	25.9753624	26	519.5072	520
42	Molepololo North	34,947	0.0172241	24.9371186	25	498.7423	500
43	Molepolole South	36,714	0.0180950	26.1979962	26	523.9599	520
44	Lentsweletau-Mmo-pane	42,633	0.0210123	30.4216149	30	608.4323	600
45	Letlhakeng-Lephephe	34,464	0.0169860	24.5924644	25	491.8492	500
46	Takatokwane	23,896	0.0117774	17.0514604	17	341.0292	340
47	Lobatse	30,730	0.0151457	21.9279954	22	438.5599	440
48	Goodhope-Mabule	34,079	0.0167963	24.3177401	24	486.3548	480
49	Mmathethe-Molapow-abo- jang	39,989	0.0197091	28.5349368	29	570.6987	580
50	Kanye North	34,181	0.0168466	24.3905242	24	487.8104	480
51	Kanye South	36,647	0.0180620	26.1501870	26	523.0037	520
52	Moshupa-Manyana	32,544	0.01603979	23.2224107	23	464.4482	460
53	Jwaneng-Mabutsane	38,335	0.01889397	27.3546926	27	547.0938	540
54	Kgalagadi South	32,400	0.01596881	23.11965673	23	462.39313	460
55	Kgalagadi North	18,092	0.00891691	12.90990215	13	258.19804	260
56	Ghanzi North	23,101	0.01138567	16.48417253	16	329.68345	320
57	Ghanzi South	20,254	0.00998248	14.45263973	14	289.05279	280
	Total	2,028,954	1	1447.8	1447	28956	28940

Source: IEC

3.6 Sample Selection

The sampling method proposed for this study was a combination of multistage cluster sampling and systematic sampling. The first stage of clusters was the Polling Districts in the 57 constituencies. Within the selected polling districts, we randomly chose a pre-set number of dwellings using systematic random sampling by adopting a walk pattern. After selection of the dwelling unit, during the time of visitation for interview, in cases where there are more than one household in a dwelling unit (a household is defined as one or more individuals who make common provision for daily living like eating from the sample pot), the interviewer listed all households in that dwelling unit and then used a lottery method to select one household for interview. Only one respondent aged 18 years and above who is a citizen of Botswana was randomly selected from a list of household members satisfying the above criterion who were present at the time of interview. Each respondent was given a number. The person whose name corresponds to the number randomly selected was interviewed. To balance the gender, each interviewer alternated their selection between males and females. After the respondent is selected, informed consent was sought.

3.7 Sampling Respondents

The four steps which were followed in sampling the respondents are presented below:

Step 1: Cluster sampling of wards in a constituency

A random sample of polling districts (PSU) within a constituency will be selected. All the selected wards within the constituency were listed.

Step 2: Cluster sampling of polling stations wards in a ward

A random sample of polling districts (SSU) within a ward was selected. The selected wards within the constituency were listed. For each randomly selected ward, all the polling stations within a ward were listed, and a pre-determined number of polling stations were selected randomly. In each selected polling station, we identified a random start and followed a walk pattern to select households. Several random starts were used depending on the size of area a polling station serves.

Step 3: Systematic selection of a household

The sampling unit was a household and the unit of measurement was an individual voter. Thus, dwelling units within polling districts were selected randomly. Based on the usable interval, a dwelling unit was selected by counting the required number of dwelling units from the random start. After selection of the dwelling unit, during the time of visitation for interview, in cases where there are more than one household in a dwelling unit (a household is defined as one or more individuals who make common provision for daily living like eating from the sample pot), the interviewer listed all households in that dwelling unit and then used a lottery method to select one household for interview.

Step 4: Listing all eligible occupants of the selected household

From the selected household, a list of all occupants who are eligible to vote was prepared. Using a random number method, one person was selected for the interview.

Each occupant was given a number. The person whose name corresponded to the number randomly selected was interviewed. To balance the gender, the interviewers alternated their selection between males and females.

3.8 Focus Group Discussions (FDGs)

The study was not based on an 'either/or' investigation framework by way of adopting one method of investigation or another. Thus, it triangulated data collection techniques. Focus Group Discussions (FDGs) are one of the techniques used and these were conducted in selected wards. A random selection of four out of 57 constituencies was done. According to Krueger (2002), successful FDGs are predicated on the observance of certain protocols which relate to participants; environment; moderator; and analysis and reporting.

It is important to note that FDGs are about data richness (small n) as opposed to data thickness (big n). The main objective was to get rich thin data as opposed to thick/big data which was collected through the quantitative component of the study. It is useful to write out an interview schedule, not just because there is a lot to remember to do, but in order to ensure that there is consistency across the various focus groups in the way that we treat them (Breen:2007:467). Hence, the focus-group interview schedule proceeded in this manner: welcome remarks; an overview of the topic; statement of the ground rules of the focus group, and assurance of confidentiality. In compliance with research protocols, the researchers upheld and observed all ethical values. The consent of all the participants to participate in the study voluntarily was sought before commencement of the discussions. They were given assurance on confidentiality regarding the data collected via FDGs.

To avert logistical problems, the constituency headquarters were the locus of the FDGs and the constituency offices were enlisted to help organise the participants. The FDGs were done in Ghanzi South, Ghanzi North, Serowe South, Maun East, Maun West, Shakawe, Selibe Phikwe East, Ramotswa, Masunga, Tati East, Tati West, Tlokweng, Molepolole South, Letlhakeng/Lephepe and Mogoditshane. A concerted effort was made to ensure that the environment was comfortable. Circle seating was embraced to avoid power dynamics and care was taken to ensure that FDGs moderators are skillful in group discussions and pre-determined questions. Hence, they were trained on how to handle the discussions. Since the success of the FDGs primarily depends on analysis and reporting, the same has been done in a systematic way. Verifiable procedures were used and there is appropriate and accurate reporting. In qualitative research, informant feedback or respondent validation is vital to improving the accuracy, credibility, and validity of a study (Creswell: 2009). Hence, summary observations were read out at the end of FDGs and participants were invited to validate the same.

For each FDG, a group of ten participants were to be recruited carefully and the demographics were to be as indicated below:

- i. Youth (18-35) – (one male, one female).*
- ii. Councillors – (one ruling party and one opposition party).*
- iii. Senior citizens – (one male, one female).*
- iv. People living with disabilities – (one male, one female).*
- v. Women – (two middle-aged; 40-50 years).*

Unfortunately, when the study started, the focus groups could not be constituted as indicated above due to logistical problems. It was not easy to mobilise people living with disabilities and senior citizens as the researchers were expected to have made a request to the constituency office prior to the commencement of the study. Hence, the majority of the focus groups were made up of people who could be mobilised easily being the councillors (both from the ruling party and opposition parties in equal numbers), youth and women.

3.9 Key informants

Given the nature of the study, it was imperative that interviews be conducted with key informants. These include three current Members of Parliament (MPs); a former IEC Commissioner; leaders of the two federations (Botswana Federation of Trade Unions and Botswana Federation of Public Private and Parastatal Sector Unions); leaders of Business Botswana; and two dikgosi.

3.10 Analysis Plan

The analysis of quantitative study data was guided by the study objectives as follows:

- *Descriptive statistics summarising variables using mean and standard deviation (median and interquartile range if a variable displays alleviated skewness) for continuous variable.*
- *Frequencies and contingency tables showing percentages of certain categories of given categorical variables of interest.*
- *Parametric (t-test, odds ratios, ANOVA, etc.) and non-parametric (Chi-square, Kolmogorov test, etc.) tests to establish association that may exist between variables.*
- *Prevalence of voter apathy by gender, age, political affiliation, constituency, urban/rural, etc. over the past voting years. Number of registered voters and those who subsequently voted as proportion of the eligible voting population.*
- *Establish factors influencing inclination to vote or not to vote using responses on the four potential influencers of voter apathy. These being IEC management of elections by IEC, Independence of IEC, political party funding and the Electoral Legal frameworks.*

3.11 Ethical Issues

Since every study that is conducted must take into consideration ethical issues, the following things were done to ensure that the study satisfied all the research protocols.

i) Human subjects' considerations

All citizens of Botswana who are 18 years old and above were the target population of this study. Some of the individuals are affiliated to different political parties of Botswana. The population included among others; the economically disadvantaged members of the society, and civil leaders who are perceived to be non-aligned to any political party in Botswana.

ii) Potential risks to participants

Whereas to some people, their affiliation to political parties is public knowledge, some individuals preferred that their affiliation to parties remained private, only known to themselves and maybe their immediate family members. Worse still, the poor communities believe that if their political affiliation is known to the public, this may disadvantage them from benefiting in certain social and government programmes. Thus, some people felt vulnerable if what they

divulged to the study cannot be kept safely from the prying eyes.

iii) Protection against other risks

Study results: all the results emanating from the study are reported in aggregated form to eliminate any chance of attributing any response to a particular study participant.

iv) Confidentiality

All subjects participating in the study were assigned a unique participant identification (ID) number. This participant ID number was used for identification purposes on information solicited from the interviews. All electronically stored personally identifying information was encrypted and accessible only through password protected computers. All consent forms, containing the names of the participant and national identity, were stored in Gaborone in a locked filing cabinet in a locked facility with 24-hour alarm service. Only the multi-Principal Investigators and the Statistician had access to the locked filing cabinet containing this sensitive identifying information.

vi) Consenting

Prior to the inception of any interview, consent to participation was solicited either verbally or written form. The consent sought to alert the participant of their rights to full information about the study, the liberty to accept or decline participation in the study. Furthermore, the consent sought to inform the participant that they were free to terminate participation any time they felt like it without facing any adverse consequence for withdrawing their participation before the end of the interview.

3.12 Limitations of the study

The following challenges were encountered during the data collection phase:

- i. Failure to access some homesteads in Gaborone, Phakalane and Ghanzi: the researchers could not access some of the homesteads in the afore-mentioned areas. In both Gaborone and Phakalane, some residents of the selected households simply refused to participate in the study while others did not allow the researchers to enter their premises. In Ghanzi, the researchers could not interview some people because they stay in privately owned farms which are inaccessible to non-residents. The gates of the farms were locked and the researchers could only be allowed to enter them only if prior arrangements with the owners were made. This proved to be time consuming.
- ii. Unreasonable demands by some councilors (mileage and sitting allowances): some of the councilors who were requested to participate in the focus group discussions refused to do so if they were not given money for mileage (i.e. travelling from their houses to the meeting place and back) and food. They also demanded that they be given sitting allowance. These demands delayed the constitution of focus groups as more effort had to be made to persuade others to participate.
- iii. Weak or poor coordination by the constituency offices (mobilisation of women, youth and people with disabilities): the officers manning the constituency offices did not help much with mobilisation of the people needed for focus group discussions such as women, youth and people with disabilities. The researchers lost time and had to seek the intervention of the IEC officers stationed at the districts.

Part FOUR

STUDY FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

Part four of the report is a presentation and analysis of the study findings. It starts with a presentation of pertinent information about the respondents in terms of their sex, age, educational level, type of locality where they reside, and their employment status. The second part covers a presentation and analysis of the study findings. There are tables and graphs that are presented and interpreted. And lastly, there is a summary of the study's main findings.

i) Demographics

Table 4 presents a brief description of the respondents in terms of sex, age, employment status and sex. The demographic characteristics of the sample show that more women were interviewed than men (57% vs 43%). In terms of age, 66% of the respondents are 45 years and below, showing that almost two-thirds of the sample is young people and is reflective of the national characteristic. With regards to education, almost three-quarters (72%) of the sample have attained intermediate school or some secondary school or high school education. In terms of locality, 21.7% live in the cities/towns, 36.2% live in urban villages, 32.6% live in villages and 9.5% live in areas classified as farms/lands and cattle-posts. And lastly, two-thirds or 63.9% of the respondents are employed while the remaining 36.1% are unemployed.

Table 4: Demographics of the respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	5209	43.3	43.4	
Female	6793	56.5	56.6	
Total	12002	99.9	100.0	
Missing	17	0.1		
	12019	100.0		
Age group	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
18 - 25 years old	2025	16.8	16.9	16.9
26 - 35 years old	2975	24.8	24.8	41.6
36 - 45 years old	2872	23.9	23.9	65.5
46 - 55 years old	1744	14.5	14.5	80.1
56 - 65 years old	1262	10.5	10.5	90.6
66 - 75 years old	707	5.9	5.9	96.5
75 years old and older	426	3.5	3.5	100.0
Total	12011	99.9	100.0	
Missing	8	0.1		
	12019	100.0		

Highest level of education	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
No Formal Education	1261	10.5	10.7	10.7
Primary	2243	18.7	19.0	29.7
Secondary	5199	43.3	44.0	73.7
Post-Secondary	3112	25.9	26.3	100.0
Total	11815	98.3	100.0	
System	204	1.7		
	12019	100.0		
Type of locality	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
City/town	2605	21.7	21.7	
Urban Village	4354	36.2	36.2	
Village	3915	32.6	32.6	
Farm/Lands/Cattle Post	1145	9.5	9.5	
Total	12019	100.0	100.0	
Employment status	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Employed	7646	63.6	63.9	
Unemployed	4328	36.0	36.1	
Total	11974	99.6	100.0	
System	45	0.4		
	12019	100.0		

4.2 PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY FINDINGS

The results are grouped according to the two main study objectives. The first objective is to establish factors influencing voter apathy among various demographics in Botswana. The second objective is to establish whether the level of political awareness has any influence on the participation of citizens in the electoral process.

4.3 STUDY OBJECTIVE ONE

The first study objective is to establish factors influencing voter apathy among various demographics in Botswana. Hence, this section presents the number of people who voted in 2019 and the importance that people attach to voting as well as their opinions on some statements on voting and elections indicating whether they agree or disagree. The discussion also covers the demographics of people who did not vote; factors that discouraged people not to vote; and factors that could have motivated them to vote. The findings are presented using tables and graphs.

4.3.1 Did You Vote In October 2019?

In an attempt to establish the number of people who voted in the last general elections which were held in October 2019, the respondents were asked whether they voted or not. The results are as captured in Table 5.

Table 5: The number of people who voted in 2019

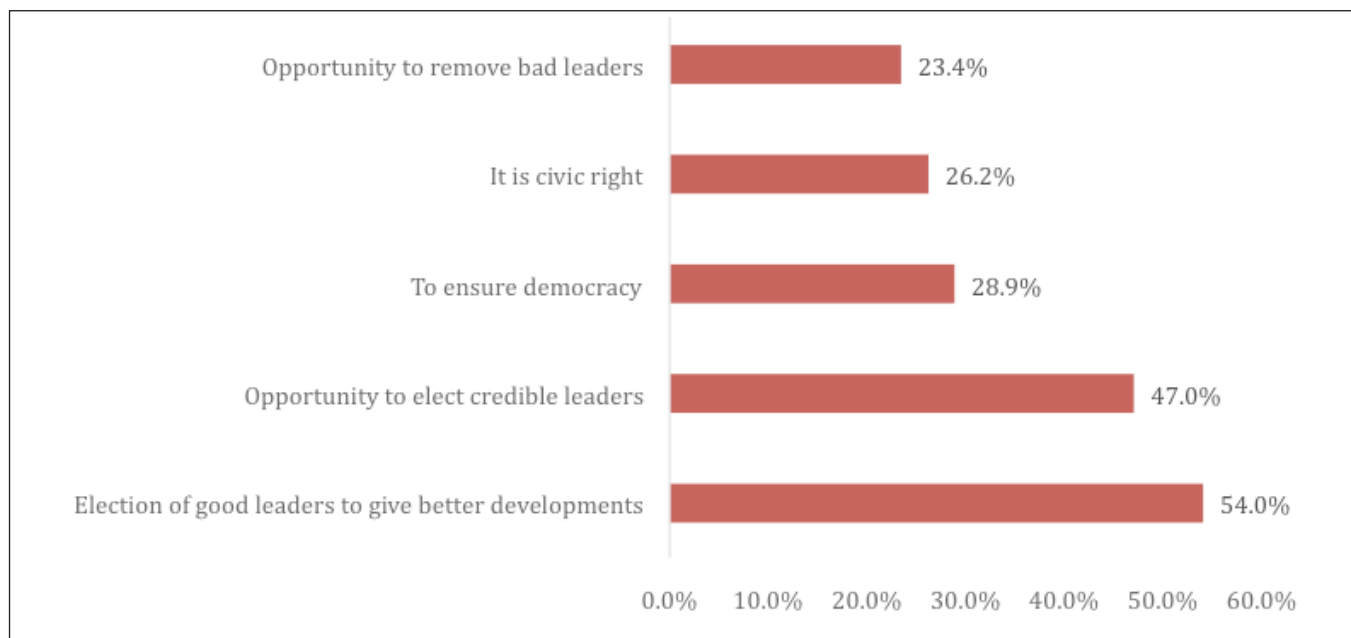
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	No	3452	28.7	28.7
	Yes	8563	71.2	71.3
	Total	12015	100.0	100.0
Missing System		4	0.0	
Total		12 019	100.0	

Out of 12, 019 respondents, 71% stated that they voted while 29% stated that they did not vote.

i) Why is it important for people to vote?

The question sought to find out if the respondents knew and appreciated the importance of voting. The results are presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Why is it important for people to vote?



The results indicate that 54% of the respondents believe that voting gives them an opportunity to elect good leaders who can give them better developments and 47% believe that it allows them to elect credible leaders. In the same vein, 28.9% stated that they vote to ensure that there is democracy; 26.2% stated that it is their civic right while 23.4% stated that voting gives them an opportunity to remove bad leaders from positions of power.

ii) How critical is it that people vote in elections?

The respondents were asked to rate the importance of voting in elections on a sliding scale from 'essential' (maximum) to 'not at all important' (minimum or zero). The responses 'somewhat important', 'very important' and 'essential' had a cumulative frequency of 92% and it is notable that the 'essential' response had the highest score of 45.6% as reflected in Table 6.

Table 6: How critical is it that people vote in elections?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Not at all important	376	3.1	3.1
	Not very important	472	3.9	3.9
	Somewhat important	712	5.9	5.9
	Very important	4876	40.6	40.6
	Essential	5475	45.6	45.6
	Don't Know	99	0.8	0.8
	Total	12010	99.9	100.0
Missing System		9	0.1	
Total		12 019	100.0	

In view of the above results, it can be concluded that the respondents overwhelmingly (i.e., 86.2%) placed a very high premium on voting in elections. Even though the law does not require them to vote, a majority indicated that voting was important. On the contrary, only 7% placed a zero or little premium on voting. This finding is unsurprising given that the majority stated that voting in elections very favourably circumstanced them to, amongst others, to partake in the public policy making process.

iii) Opinions on some statements on voting and elections indicating whether they agree or disagree with each statement.

This was a seven-part question whereby respondents were asked to give opinions as next enunciated.

1 *'My vote doesn't really matter in a general election':* 45.4%, 38.1% and 3.8% of the respondents 'strongly disagreed'; 'disagreed'; and 'neither agreed nor disagreed' respectively with the statement. With 45.4% of the respondents strongly disagreeing with the statement, it is apparent that a majority believed that 'my vote counts' for it can make a difference in the election. Thus, despite the 'winner takes it all' electoral system that currently obtains in Botswana, a majority believed that an individual's single vote can and does matter and, thus, can make a change, sometimes, even a sea change.

2 *'There is no political party in Botswana that I really agree with':* cumulatively, 76% of the respondents 'strongly disagreed' and 'disagreed' with the statement. This could be interpreted to suggest that a majority of the respondents were wedded to the idea that they agreed with the policy position or planks of all registered political parties in Botswana only to find all of them electorally unappealing.

3 *'Most of the issues that governments have to deal with are too complicated for voters to understand':* cumulatively, 58% of the respondents 'strongly disagreed' and 'disagreed' with the statement. This suggests that the respondents felt that public policy issues were unpacked such that a majority understood them. However, 58% is a small quantum, therefore, there is a need to increase the percentage by simplifying public policy issues. However, as counseled by Mathes (1986), care must be taken not to oversimplify public policy issues. Oversimplification of any sort results in a public decision that is suboptimal in a decision analysis sense or unduly satisficing in a decision-making sense (Mathes: 1986). In this regard, policymakers may consider a value-oriented social decision analysis (VOSDA) procedure to enhance the mutual understanding of public policy issues (ibid).

4 *'None of the political parties in the last general election had a plan to address the issues that are important to me':* cumulatively, 70% of the respondents 'strongly disagreed' and 'disagreed' with the statement. This suggests that the respondents felt that the political parties in the last general election had a plan to address issues that were important to them. However, whether or not they delivered on the same is another matter.

‘Generally, the outcome of general elections has no direct effect on me’:

5 cumulatively, 78% of the respondents ‘strongly disagreed’ and ‘disagreed’ with the statement. This suggests that the respondents felt that the outcome of general elections had a direct effect on them. This response suggests that the respondents were wedded to the idea that voting in an election mattered as manifest in the response to the statement; ‘my vote doesn’t really matter in a general election’. To reiterate, 45.4%, 38.1% and 3.8% of the respondents ‘strongly disagreed’, ‘disagreed’; and ‘neither agreed nor disagreed’ respectively with the statement that ‘my vote doesn’t really matter in a general election’.

‘When people don’t vote, this shows us that the electoral system is not working’:

6 cumulatively, 47% of the respondents ‘strongly disagreed’ and ‘disagreed’ with the statement. While 47% was the majority response, the percentage score is too low since it is shy of the 50% mark. This suggests that in the mind of naysayers, 42% (NB, 10.9% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement), there is a direct and linear linkage between voter apathy and the electoral system.

The policy implication arising out of the foregoing is that there is a need to pay attention to the acceptability or lack thereof of the electoral system when dealing with issues of voter apathy. This, therefore, means that any efforts to deal with voter apathy (or colloquially put, ‘to rock the vote’), there is a need to interrogate the existent electoral system.

‘Voting is every Motswana’s duty as a good citizen’:

7 cumulatively, 84% of the respondents ‘strongly agreed’ and ‘agreed’ with the statement. Given the response to ‘my vote doesn’t really matter in a general election’ where 45.4%, 38.1% and 3.8% of the respondents ‘strongly disagreed’, ‘disagreed’; and ‘neither agreed nor disagreed’ respectively with the statement, this is not a surprising response. Thus, it can be concluded that a majority of the respondents were wedded to the idea that voting was a patriotic civic duty. Notably, unlike in countries where there is compulsory (or mandatory) voting (e.g., Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Peru, Samoa etc.), many respondents felt voting is a citizenship duty in Botswana despite zero/no legal compulsions.

Multilevel Model

To establish factors influencing voter apathy among the various demographic groups, we fitted a logistic multilevel model. Most social-economic surveys employ multistage sampling designs where clusters are sampled in stage one, and sub-clusters in stage two until the elementary are sampled in the final stage. This results in multilevel data and hence the analysis of such data set is called multilevel analysis (Rabe-Hesketh & Skronda: 2006). It is known by various names such as mixed effects, random effects, hierarchical linear modelling and mixed linear (Raudenbush & Bryk: 2002). Hierarchical linear modelling is the statistical technique used to analyse hierarchical data as it accounts for the hierarchy. HLM is an intricate form of ordinary least squares (OLS) regression that is used to analyse variance in the response variables when the explanatory variables are at varying hierarchical levels (Gill: 2003). Simple linear regression techniques were used to analyse hierarchical data before the establishment of HLM in the early 1980’s. These conventional regression techniques resulted in the incorrect partitioning of variance to variables, dependencies in the data and increased chances of making Type I error since they usually ignored nesting of data (Osborne: 2000). Buxton (2008) stated that multilevel modelling is an appropriate approach that can be used to handle clustered or grouped data.

Bryan and Jenkins (2013) further stated that hierarchical regression is the most popular approach for the multilevel case as it accounts for the shared variance in hierarchically structured data. Furthermore, they stated that HLM simultaneously assesses relationships within and between hierarchical levels of grouped data hence making it more efficient at accounting for variance among variables at different levels than other existing analyses.

For a binary outcome variable y_{ij} , define the probability of the response equal to one as $\pi_{ij} = \Pr(y_{ij} = 1)$ and model π_{ij} using a link function. The standard assumption is that y_{ij} has a Bernoulli distribution.

Then the general two-level linear multilevel model as indicated by Hox (2010), is given by:

$$\log \left[\frac{\pi_{ij}}{(1-\pi_{ij})} \right] = \beta_{0j} + \sum_{p=1}^P \beta_{pj} X_{pj} + \epsilon_{ij} \quad (1)$$

Where $\pi_{ij} = \Pr(y_{ij} = 1)$ measured for the i^{th} level-1 nested within the j^{th} level-2; X_{pj} = value on the level-1 predictor; β_{0j} = Intercept for the j^{th} level-2 predictor; β_{pj} = Regression coefficient associated with X_{pj} for the j^{th} level-2 unit; $\epsilon_{ij} \sim N(0, \sigma^2_{\epsilon_{ij}})$ is the random error associated with the i^{th} individual unit nested with the j^{th} level-2 unit.

The most important assumption of HLM is that any level-1 error (ϵ_{ij}) are normally distributed with mean 0 and variance σ^2 . That is: $E(\epsilon_{ij}) = 0$; $Var(\epsilon_{ij}) = \sigma^2$. For the case of a Q level-2 predictors Z_q ($q = 1, \dots, Q$):

$$\beta_{0j} = \beta_0 + \sum_{q=1}^Q \beta_{0q} Z_{qj} + U_{0j} \quad (2)$$

$$\beta_{pj} = \beta_{p0} + \sum_{q=1}^Q \beta_{pq} Z_{qj} + U_{pj} \quad (3)$$

where β_{0j} = Intercept for the j^{th} level-2 unit; β_{pj} = Effect for the j^{th} level-2 unit; Z_{qj} = Value on the level-2 predictor ($q = 1, \dots, Q$); β_0 = Intercept; β_{p0} = Effect of level-2 predictor; β_{0q} = Effect of the level-1 predictor; β_{pq} = Effect of the cross-level interaction between level-2 and level-1 predictors; U_{0j} = Random effect of the j^{th} level-2 variation in the level-1 intercepts that remains after controlling for Z_q ; U_{pj} = Random effect of the j^{th} level-2 variation in the level-1 slope for X_{pj} after controlling for Z_q . As indicated by Hox (2010), when substituting equation (2) and (3) into equation (1) produces the single-equation version of the multilevel regression model:

$$\log \left[\frac{\pi_{ij}}{(1-\pi_{ij})} \right] = \beta_0 + \sum_{p=1}^P \beta_{p0} X_{pj} + \sum_{q=1}^Q \beta_{0q} Z_{qj} + \sum_{q=1}^Q \sum_{p=1}^P \beta_{pq} Z_{qj} X_{pj} + \sum_{p=1}^P U_{pj} X_{pj} + U_{0j} + \epsilon_{ij}$$

The most important assumption of HLM is that any level-1 error (ϵ_{ij}) are normally distributed with mean 0 and variance σ^2 . That is: $E(\epsilon_{ij}) = 0$; $Var(\epsilon_{ij}) = \sigma^2$

The assumption of level-2 model as stated by Sullivan *et al* (1999), (when errors are homogeneous at both levels) is that β_{0j} and β_{1j} have a normal multivariate distribution with mean β_0 and β_{10} , and variance σ_{u0}^2 and σ_{u1}^2 respectively. The covariance between β_{0j} and β_{1j} (defined as σ_{u01}) is equal to the covariance between U_{0j} and U_{1j} . Lastly, covariance between U_{0j} and ϵ_{ij} , and the covariance between U_{1j} and ϵ_{ij} are both zero. In summary, the assumptions are as follows (Sullivan *et al.*, 1999):

$$E(U_{0j}) = 0; \quad E(U_{1j}) = 0; \quad \text{Var}(\beta_{0j}) = \text{Var}(U_{0j}) = \sigma_{u0}^2; \quad \text{Var}(\beta_{1j}) = \text{Var}(U_{1j}) = \sigma_{u1}^2;$$

$$\text{Cov}(\beta_{0j}, \beta_{1j}) = \text{Cov}(U_{0j}, U_{1j}) = \sigma_{u01}; \quad \text{Cov}(U_{0j}, \epsilon_{ij}) = \text{Cov}(U_{1j}, \epsilon_{ij}) = 0$$

A LOGISTIC MODEL OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS THAT EXPLAIN VOTER APATHY

The binary logistic model in Table 7 on shows that in terms of age, voters who are between the ages of 18 to 25 are 30 times likely to not vote in an election compared to voters aged over 75. Voters in the next age group aged 26 to 35 are also six times more likely not to vote than the oldest age group (75+ years old). Those middle-aged (36 to 45 years) are three times more likely not to vote, with the older age group (56 to 65 years old), almost twice as likely not to vote than the oldest age group. The overwhelming evidence deduced from the model is that the younger voters in the population are more likely not to vote than older voters.

The logistic results also show that men are 1.2 times more likely to not vote than their women counterparts even though some results point to men having more interest in politics than women. In terms of highest education attained, voters with no formal education are 1.5 times more likely to not vote than voters with a post-secondary level of education. Those with primary and secondary levels of education are both 1.2 times more likely not to vote. In the final analysis, voters with lower levels of education are more likely not to vote than their counterparts with higher education attainment.

The employment status was also considered in the model. Those who were unemployed and not looking are 1.5 times more likely not to vote compared to those who are employed full-time. The voters who were unemployed and looking for a job are 1.3 times more likely not to vote. Those who are employed full-time are more likely not to vote than those who are unemployed whilst those who are employed part-time are 5% more likely not to vote.

In terms of location, city and town dwellers are 1.4 times more likely not to vote than those who reside in farms or lands or cattle posts. The voters residing in urban villages are 1.1 times more likely not to vote than dwellers residing in farms or lands or cattle posts.

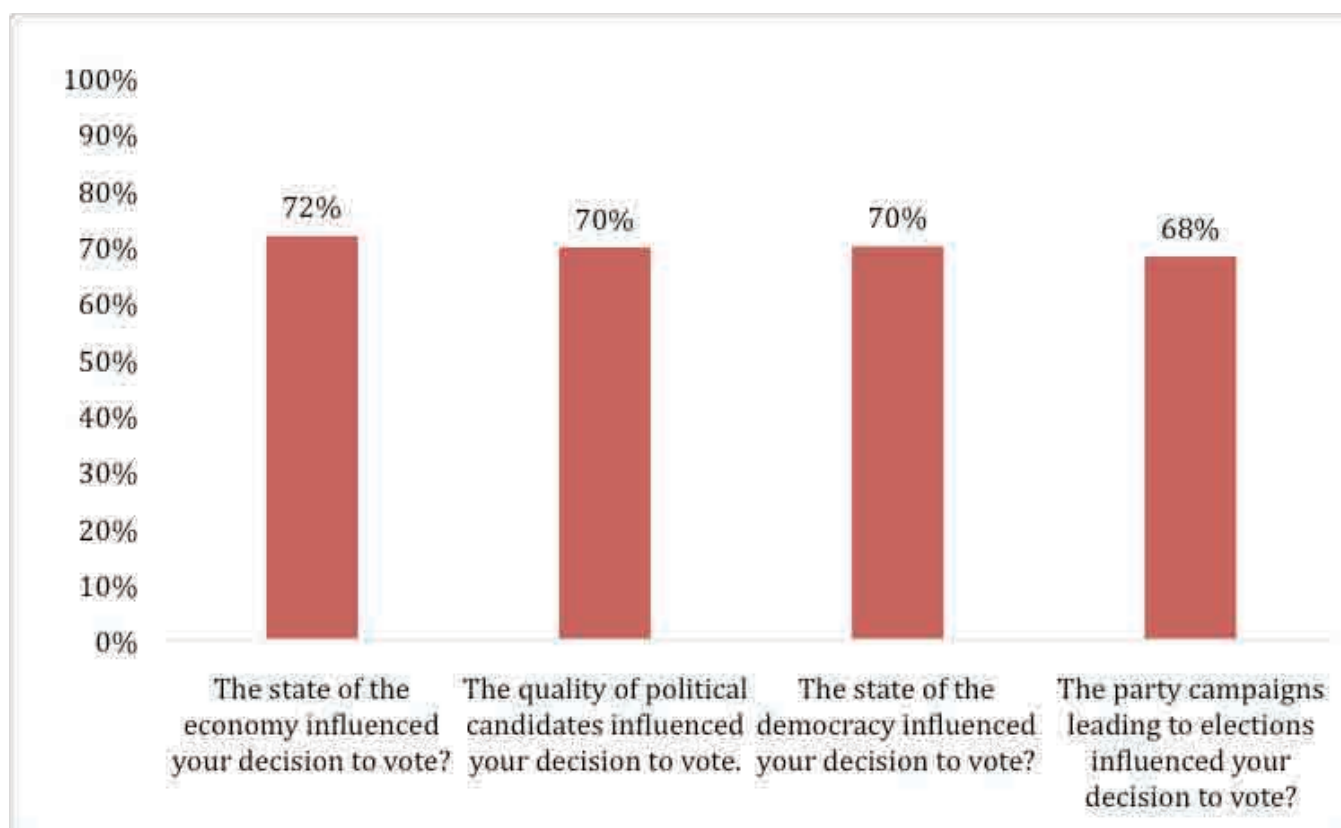
Table 7: Fitted Multinomial logistic regression model

Q3. Did you vote in the last general elections held in 2019?		B	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% Confidence Interval for Exp(B)	
								Lower Bound	Upper Bound
No	Intercept	-3.019	0.214	198.750	1	0.000			
	[Q56. Respondent's gender=1]	0.178	0.047	14.236	1	0.000	1.195	1.089	1.311
	[Q56. Respondent's gender=2]	0b			0				
	[Highest level of education=1]	0.424	0.113	14.131	1	0.000	1.527	1.225	1.905
	[Highest level of education=2]	0.218	0.085	6.584	1	0.010	1.244	1.053	1.469
	[Highest level of education=3]	0.178	0.057	9.889	1	0.002	1.195	1.069	1.336
	[Highest level of education=4]	0b			0				
	[Q1. Age group=1]	3.406	0.190	320.518	1	0.000	30.140	20.759	43.760
	[Q1. Age group=2]	1.809	0.188	92.259	1	0.000	6.106	4.221	8.833
	[Q1. Age group=3]	1.145	0.188	37.065	1	0.000	3.144	2.174	4.546
	[Q1. Age group=4]	0.685	0.189	13.204	1	0.000	1.984	1.371	2.871
	[Q1. Age group=5]	0.230	0.191	1.448	1	0.229	1.259	0.865	1.832
	[Q1. Age group=6]	-0.353	0.223	2.504	1	0.114	0.703	0.454	1.088
	[Q1. Age group=7]	0b			0				
	[Q55. Do you have a job that pays a cash income? =0]	0.375	0.080	21.868	1	0.000	1.455	1.243	1.703
	[Q55. Do you have a job that pays a cash income? =1]	0.241	0.065	13.833	1	0.000	1.272	1.121	1.444
	[Q55. Do you have a job that pays a cash income? =2]	0.052	0.082	0.395	1	0.530	1.053	0.896	1.237
	[Q55. Do you have a job that pays a cash income? =3]	0b			0				
	[Type of Locality=1]	0.313	0.094	11.070	1	0.001	1.368	1.137	1.645
	[Type of Locality=2]	0.099	0.088	1.259	1	0.262	1.104	0.929	1.311
	[Type of Locality=3]	-0.023	0.088	0.069	1	0.793	0.977	0.822	1.162
	[Type of Locality=4]	0b			0				
a. The reference category is: Yes.									
b. This parameter is set to zero because it is redundant.									

4.3.2 WHAT DID PEOPLE CONSIDER WHEN THEY DECIDED TO VOTE?

As a way of appreciating the reasons for voting, the respondents were asked to state things that they considered when they decided to vote or not. Four factors were identified and these are: the state of the economy; the quality of political candidates; the state of democracy and the party campaigns leading to elections. The results are as indicated in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Four factors that influenced people to vote in 2019



These are multiple responses as one respondent was allowed to state four factors that they considered when they decided to vote or not. The results indicate that 72% of the responses are of people who were influenced by the state of the economy; 70% of the responses are of people who were influenced by the quality of political candidates; another 70% of the responses are of people who were influenced by the state of democracy and 68% of the responses are of people who were influenced by the party campaigns leading to elections. These are significantly high percentages which clearly indicate the importance attached to them by the respondents. The state of the economy was stated as critical as it was said to be directly linked to voting to solve key economic and developmental issues such as poverty, unemployment, and income inequality. Samples of conversations from Focus Group Discussions in Shakawe (31st January 2022) are worth noting;

“

Go botlhokwa go roma motho wa gago go go direla bokamoso ka gogo buelela ka ditlamelo jaaka ditsela le tse dingwe (it is important to task someone, through a vote, to see to your future and economic and developmental needs).

“

Ka tlhopho o neela mongwe boikarabelo go diragatsa se o se batlang jaaka ditlhabololo segolo bogolo (through voting, you are tasking someone to see to your needs, particularly, economic and developmental needs).

“

Go tlhophha ke go batla tharabololo mo matshealong a batho (voting is a way of seeking solution(s) to people's life issues)

Figure 4 and 5 shed more light on the characteristics of the respondents who were influenced by the four factors. It can be deduced from the above graph that 72% of the respondents were male and 72% were female. It also indicates that 45% of the respondents are aged between 18 and 25; 72% are aged between 26 and 35; 79% to 80% are aged between 36 and 65 while 76% are aged above 75. It is interesting to note that 78% of the respondents who do not have any formal education raised this issue followed by 74% with post-secondary education, 72% with secondary education and 70% with primary education. It must also be noted that 66% of these people live in cities and towns while 73%, 74% and 71% live in urban villages, villages, and farms/lands/cattle-posts. These numbers yield an average of 72% which indicates the high weight that this factor carries. Figure 5 shows the percentages of the respondents who were influenced to vote by the quality of the political candidates.

Figure 4: Percentage of the respondents who said the state of the economy influenced their decision to vote

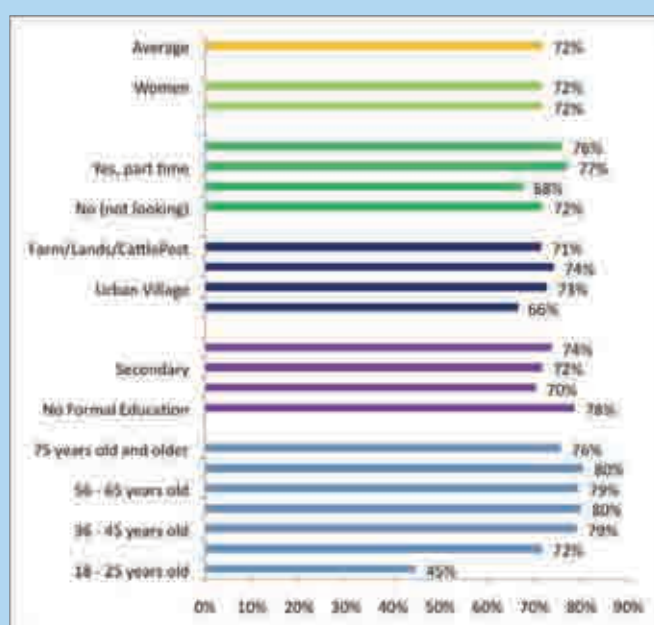
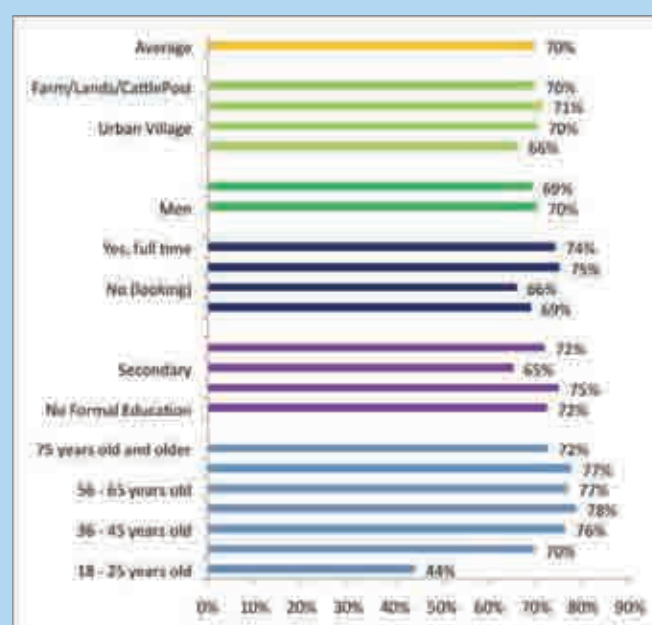


Figure 5: Percentage of the respondents who said that the quality of political candidates influenced their decision to vote



Figures 3 and 5 clearly indicate that the quality of the political candidates and their performance are two of the most important factors that influence people to register and vote or not. It is, therefore, not surprising that the results presented in Figure 4 are almost the same as the ones presented in the afore-mentioned graphs. The results in Figure 5 yield an average of 70%. The only interesting result in this graph is that 44% of the respondents who said that the quality of the political candidates influenced their decision to vote are aged between 18 and 25. The percentages for other age groups (i.e., 26 to 75 and above) range between 70 and 78 which

is consistent with the results obtained under Figure 3. Figure 6 shows the percentages of the respondents who were influenced to vote by the state of democracy. The graph indicates an equal percentage of males and females (70%) said that they were influenced by the state of democracy to register and vote. It also indicates that 43% of the respondents aged between 18 and 25 and those aged between 26 and 35 said that they were influenced by the state of democracy. The percentages of those aged 36 and above range between 74 and 81. The percentages of those with no formal education and primary education are 74 and 76 as compared to 65 and 72 for those who have secondary and post-secondary education.

Figure 7 shows the percentages of the respondents who were influenced to vote by the party campaigns leading to elections. It can be deduced from the graph that an equal number of males and females said that they were influenced by the party campaigns leading to the elections. It also indicates that 42% of the respondents are aged between 18 and 25 and 68% of them are aged 26 to 35. The percentages of those aged 36 and above range between 70 and 77 which indicate the weight attached to this factor by people who are older. In the same vein, the respondents who have no formal education and those with primary education (i.e., 71% and 74%) attach more importance to this factor.

It is interesting to note that 63% of the respondents living in cities and towns were influenced by this factor to vote; 71% of those living in villages and 67% of those living in farms/ lands/ cattle-posts said the same thing. An average of 66% of the unemployed people as compared to an average of 73% of those who are employed said the same thing.

Figure 6: Percentage of the respondents who said that the state of the democracy influenced their decision to vote

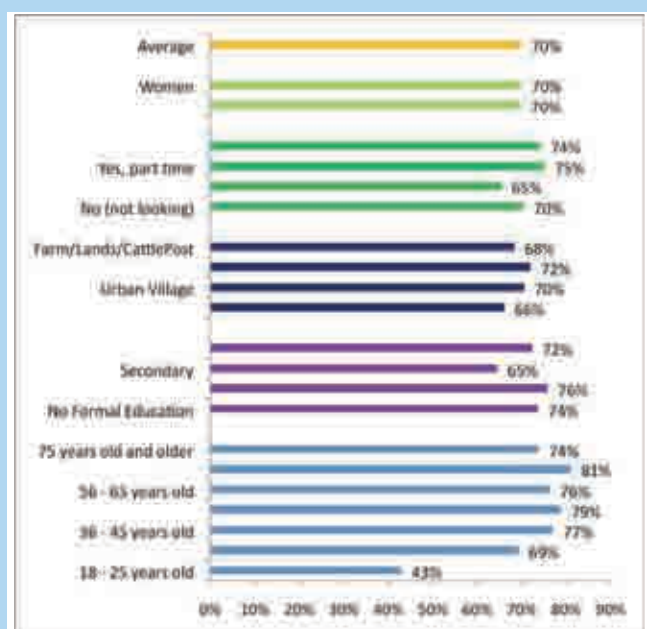
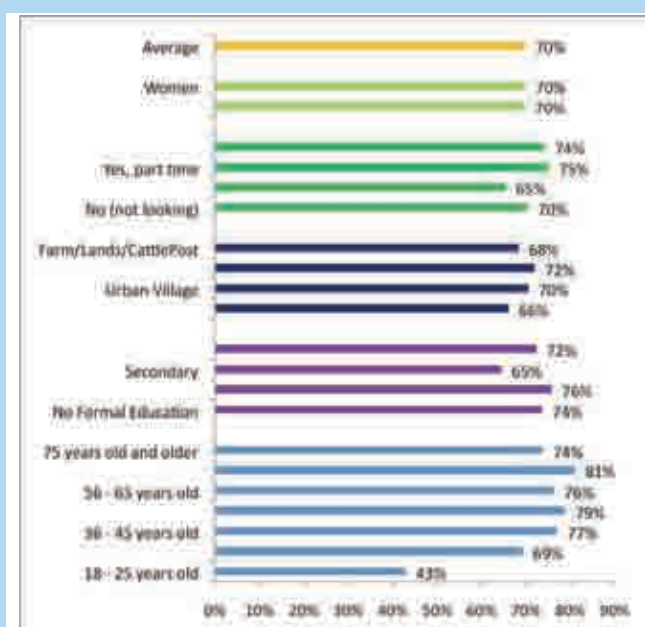


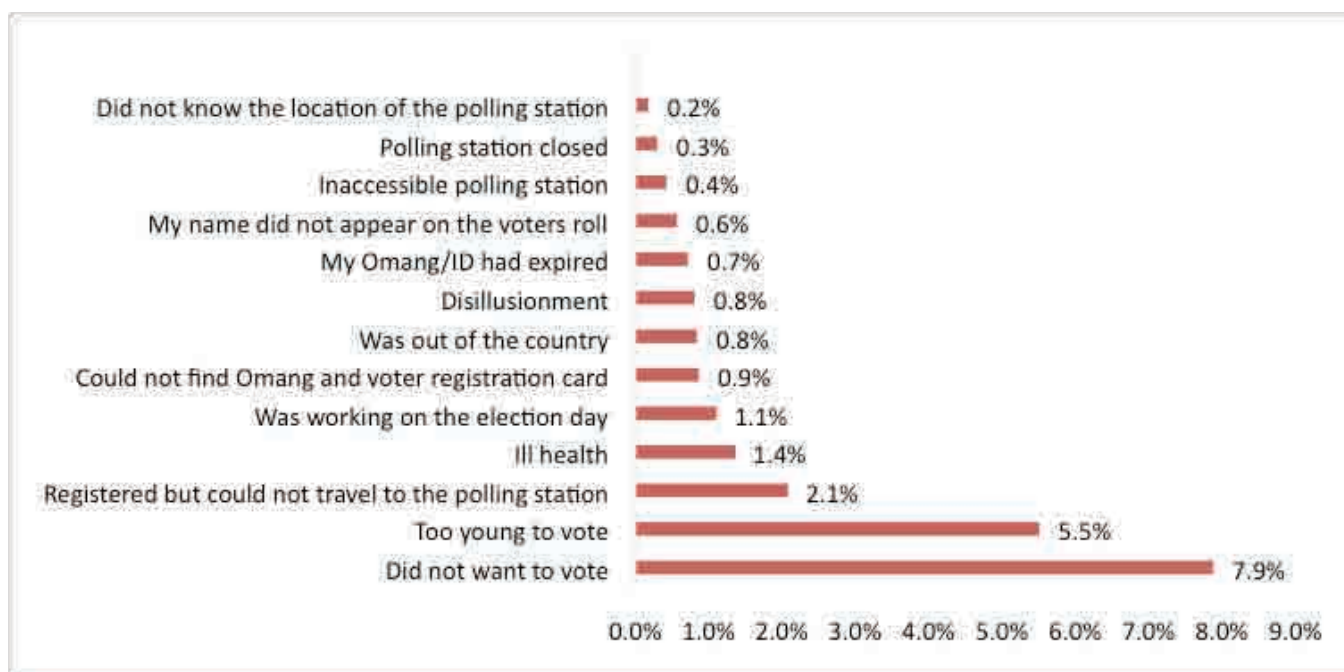
Figure 7: Percentage of the respondents who said that the party campaigns leading to elections influenced their decision to vote



4.3.3 WHY PEOPLE DID NOT VOTE IN 2019

Those who did not vote were asked to state why they failed to do so, and several reasons were given. The results are as presented in Figure 8.

Figure 8: why people did not vote in 2019

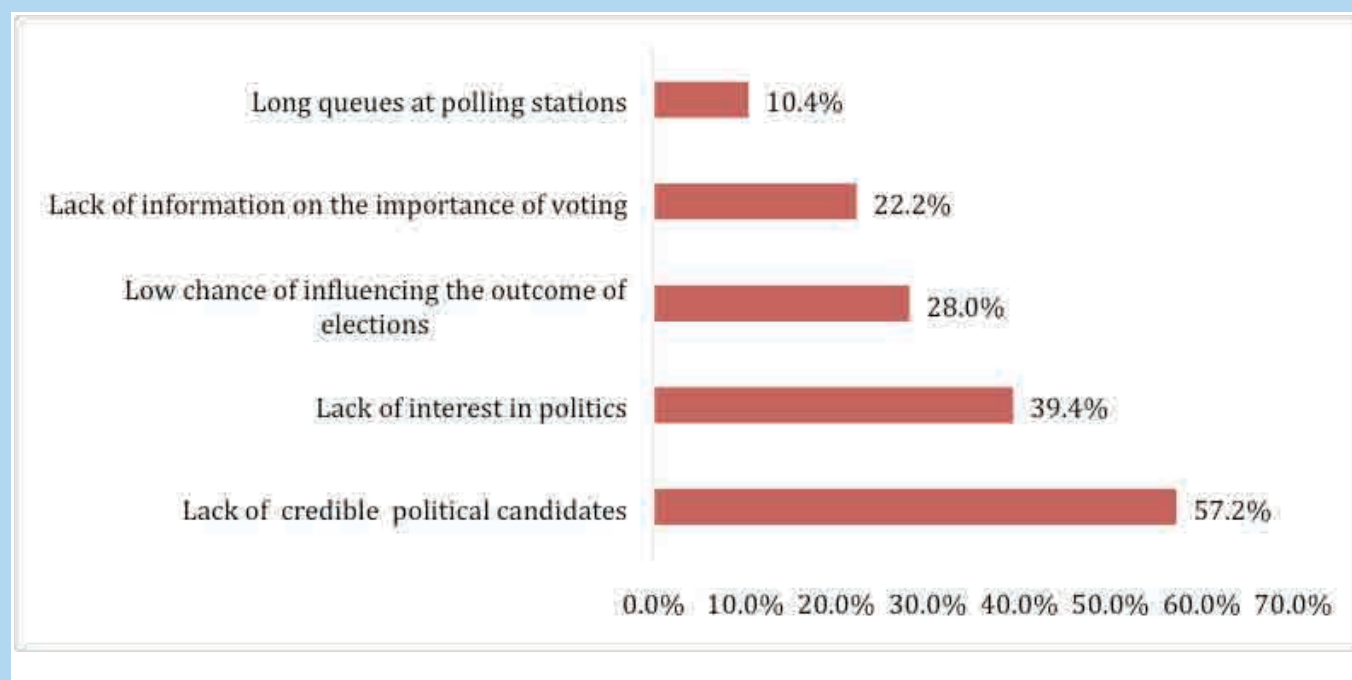


The results indicate that 7.9% of the respondents did not want to vote; 5.5% said that they were too young to vote; 2.1% said that they registered but could not travel to the polling station. Furthermore, 1.4% and 1.1% said that they could not vote because of ill health and being at work on the election's day respectively. It is notable that 7.9% of the respondents stated they that did not want to vote for no reason. This shows that a majority of the respondents were apathetic for no apparent reason, hence, proving that voter apathy can manifest for no reason other than simple disinterest or disengagement from the electoral process. In this regard, simple disinterest or disengagement from the electoral process are problematic issues that need serious investigation.

Other reasons that were given which account for less than one percent of the respondents include failing to find Omang and voter registration cards; being outside the country; disillusionment; expired Omang card; names not appearing on the voter's roll; inaccessible polling station; closed polling station; and not knowing the location of the polling station.

In view of the declining voter turnout, the respondents were further probed to state the things or factors that they think make people not register and vote. The results are as presented in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Things or factors that the respondents think make people not to register and vote



Lack of credible political candidates was presented by 57.2% of the respondents as the main factor that discourages people to register and vote, followed by lack of interest in politics at 39.4%. Low chance of influencing the outcome of elections was presented by 28% while 22.2% said lack of information on the importance of voting and 10.4% said long queues at the polling stations discouraged people from registering and voting.

It is worth discussing the correlation between 'lack of credible political candidates' and 'things or factors that the respondents think make people not to register and vote' since it scored 57.2%. It can be concluded that credibility, 'the quality of being trusted and believed in', is highly valued and prized in the electoral process. Credibility has synonyms such as trustworthiness, reliability, dependability, integrity, character, and reputation. Credibility is a perceptual attribute, therefore, 'in times of perception politics, the credibility of electoral candidates is a crucial asset in political marketing' (Zuydam & Hendriks: 2020:258).

In this regard, The Irish Times (2000) argued for a fair and honest basis for the conduct of public life at the beginning of the new millennium stating that; "politics and politicians, therefore, must be credible and clearly accountable" and that "the ever-increasing pace of change will require people of the highest calibre and the highest integrity in public life". It can be concluded from this score that the credibility of political candidates is imperatively important, that is, the

credibility of political candidates correlates with voting behaviour. The lower the credibility of the political candidates, the lower the level of participation in registration to vote and actual voting. Thus, low-credibility political candidates are likely to dissuade people from participating in the electoral process. However, this finding should not be surprising because similar and/or related studies, for example by Afro barometer, have shown that low-credibility political candidates are likely to dissuade people from participating in the electoral process.

The implication arising from this finding is that political marketing is key to ensure that high-credibility political candidates are fielded. The IEC, can, through its meetings with the political parties, emphasize the importance of fielding high-credibility political candidates. This is key because it is often said that 'perceptions matter more than reality in politics', hence, there is profit in fielding political candidates who are beyond the pale. That is, those seen to have credibility in the eye of the voter.

4.3.4 WHAT OTHER FACTORS INFLUENCE PEOPLE NOT TO VOTE?

The available literature indicates that voter apathy can be caused by a range of factors such as trust in politicians, political parties, the political system, and the electoral process. When people have trust in both the political and electoral systems, they are likely to be motivated to participate in elections by voting. In an attempt to get the views of the respondents on factors that contribute to voter apathy, a few statements were read to them, and they were asked to indicate if they agree or strongly agree or disagree and strongly disagree with the same.

The statements focused specifically on three issues being: the poor performance of the political representatives; lack of credible and trustworthy political representatives; and lack of responsiveness on the part of the government. Figure 10 presents the results on the percentage of the respondents who agreed and strongly agreed that poor performance of political representatives causes voter apathy.

It is noticeably clear from the graph that a very high average of 86% of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that poor performance of political representatives causes voter apathy. The percentages in all categories range between 71% and 91%. These high percentages are very much in line with the responses that were obtained when the people were asked about the absence of credible and ethical potential candidates or representatives as a factor that causes voter apathy.

Figure 10: Percentage of the respondents who agree/strongly agree that poor performance of political representatives causes voter apathy

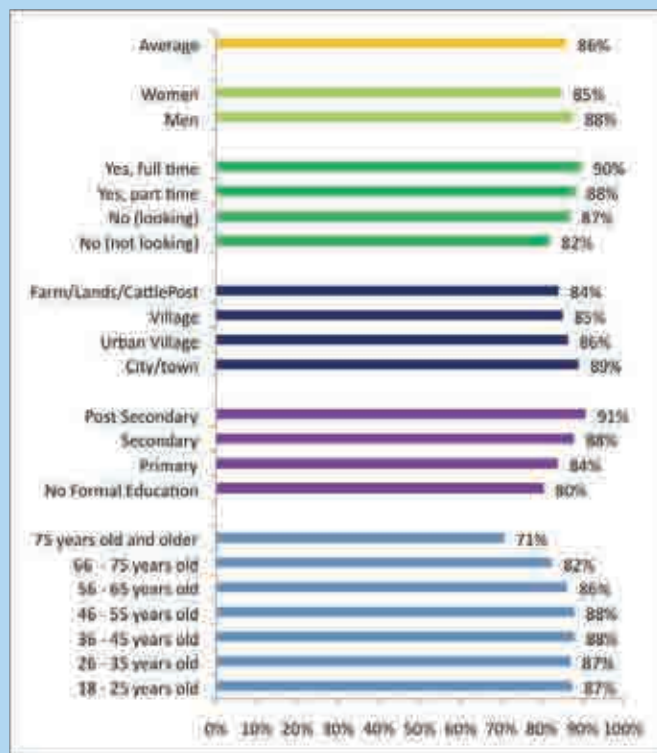
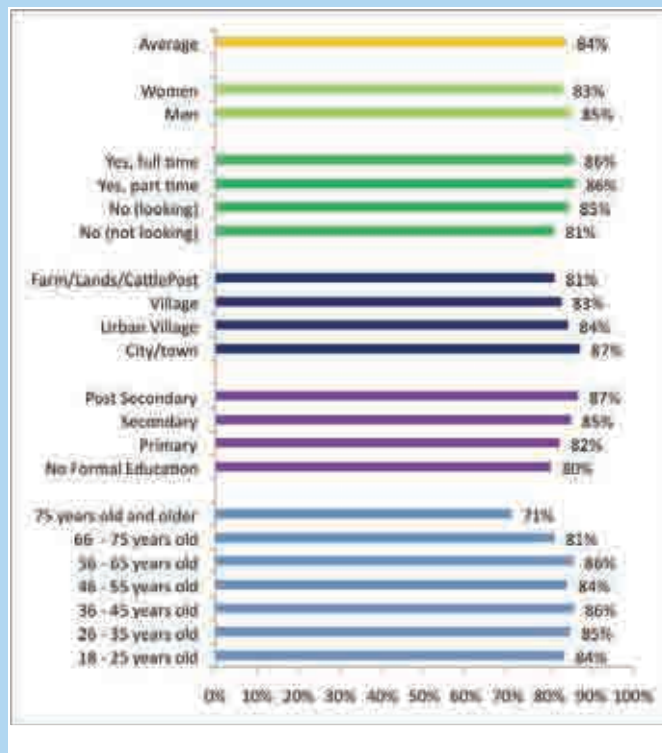


Figure 11: The absence of credible and ethical potential candidates or representatives causes voter apathy (% who agree/strongly agree)

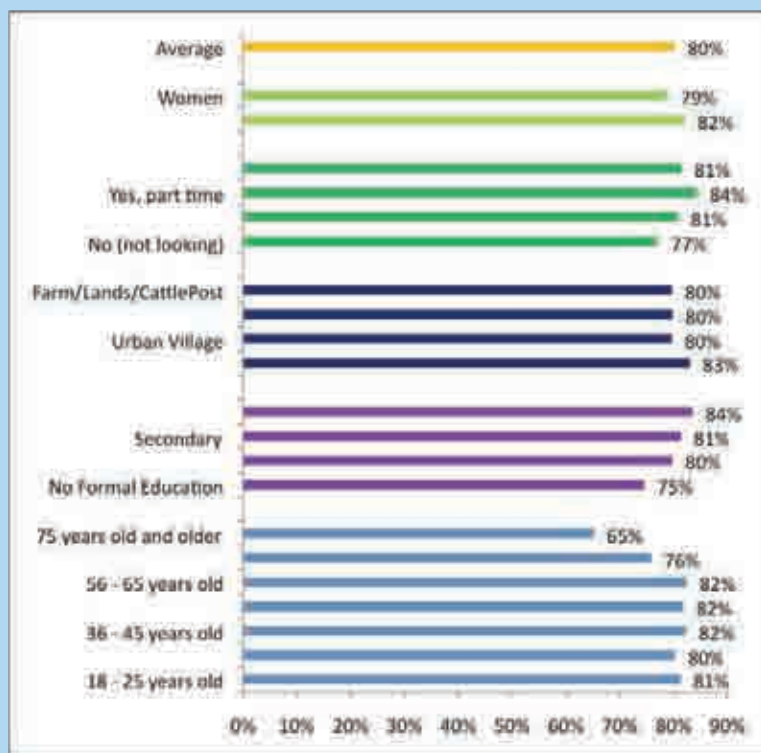


Credibility and ethics speak to the issues of trust and confidence that the electorates have in the political representatives and the results are as indicated in Figure 11. The results, as can be seen from this graph, are very similar to the ones presented under Figure 10.

The poor performance of the political representatives, coupled with the absence of credible representatives, is deemed to be the main factor that discourages people to register and vote. Another important factor that is deemed to encourage voter apathy is the failure by the government to respond to the needs, demands and aspirations of the citizens as demonstrated by Figure 12.

As it can be deduced from the above graph, the percentages of people aged between 18 and 65 who agreed or strongly agreed that the government is failing to respond to the needs of the citizens range between 81% and 82% while similar sentiments were expressed by 76% of those aged between 66 and 75 and 65% of those who are aged above 75.

Figure 12: Lack of responsiveness by the government causes voter apathy (% of respondents who agree/strongly agree)



4.3.5 DISCONNECT BETWEEN THE POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVES AND THE CITIZENS

One of the critical issues that was raised by the respondents that explains an increase in the rate of voter apathy is the weak relationship between the political representatives and the citizens. There is a gap between the two actors as evidenced by the results presented below.

i) Attendance of community meetings

The respondents were asked if they have attended a community meeting. The results indicate that 39.3% and 60.4% of the respondents stated that they attended or did not attend community meetings, respectively. The 60.4% statistic demonstrates a high level of lack of citizen engagement with community issues, which does not bode well with the concepts of community citizenship and civic engagement. Regarding whether they attended several times, once or twice; and often, the attendance rates were 24.7%, 13.3% and 21.9%. Often attendance was 21%, meaning that often attendance in community meetings, the most desirable and ideal situation, was not satisfactory, meaning less meaningful and impactful community engagement. On a related note, those who reported that they never attended community meetings indicated that they were willing to do so if the chance availed itself. If they could do so, this will extend and enhance

the contours of meaningful and impactful community engagement. In respect of the question, *'have you got together with others to raise an issue'*, 74.7% answered in the affirmative. This, therefore, denoted an appreciable amount of efforts to mobilise others regarding community issues. For those who never got together with others to raise an issue, a majority stated that it would if an opportunity were to present itself in the future. Furthermore, a majority stated it would do so often or several times. Lastly, regarding the question, *'would you participate in a demonstration or protest march if given a chance?'* a majority stated it would not do so. This finding generally denotes the low protest culture that obtains in Botswana (this is in stark contradiction to what happens in other jurisdictions in the sub-region, for example South Africa, the so-called capital of service delivery protests (e.g., see Alexander:2010).

ii) Contact between political representatives and electorates during the past five years

As a way of finding out if there is constant contact or a good and healthy relationship between the respondents and their political representatives, the former was asked: "During the past five years, how often have you contacted any of the following persons about some important problem or to give them your views? The results are as indicated in Table 8.

Table 8: Contact between political representatives and the electorates

		Count	Column N %
A local government councillor	Never	8054	67.1
	Only once	1322	11.0
	A few times	1563	13.0
	Often	994	8.3
	Don't know	78	0.6
A member of [Parliament]	Never	9662	80.5
	Only once	951	7.9
	A few times	848	7.1
	Often	468	3.9
	Don't know	76	0.6
A political party official	Never	9843	82.0
	Only once	742	6.2
	A few times	793	6.6
	Often	518	4.3
	Don't know	112	0.9
A traditional leader	Never	9164	76.4
	Only once	783	6.5
	A few times	1024	8.5
	Often	931	7.8
	Don't know	93	0.8

The results indicate that 67.1%, 80.5%, 82.0% and 76.4% of the respondents stated that they never contacted the local government councillor, a Member of Parliament, a political party official and a traditional leader, respectively, during the past five years. It is notable that 8.3% of the respondents stated they often contacted a local government councillor. Members of Parliament, political party officials and traditional leaders were less often contacted by the respondents, respectively, during the past five years. What can be deduced from the foregoing is that there is a serious disconnect between the respondents and local government councillors, Members of Parliament, political party officials and traditional leaders. This calls for the closing of the chasm because the four are the link between the community and the government. All four are domiciled in the community and are, therefore, readily reachable. On its part, though, the community must make use of these offices/officers.

iii) Audience with the Member of Parliament, members of local government and traditional leaders

The respondents were asked to state how these people try their best to listen to what people have to say. That is to say, do they make any concerted effort to listen to the concerns and issues raised by citizens? Table 9 presents the results.

Table 9: Audience with the Member of Parliament, members of local government and traditional leaders

		Count	Column N %
Members of [Parliament]	Never	5648	47.1
	Only sometimes	3432	28.6
	Often	1197	10.0
	Always	638	5.3
	Don't know	1085	9.0
Members of [local government council]	Never	4911	41.0
	Only sometimes	3348	27.9
	Often	1794	15.0
	Always	865	7.2
	Don't know	1069	8.9
Traditional leaders	Never	4036	33.7
	Only sometimes	2351	19.7
	Often	2185	18.3
	Always	2099	17.5
	Don't know	1292	10.8

The results indicate that 47.1%, 41.0% and 33.7% of the respondents stated that Members of Parliament, members of local government council and traditional leaders in this order did not listen to them. It is notable that Members of Parliament fared the worst in terms of officers who did not listen to the respondents. Statistics for listening 'only sometimes' and 'often' did not provide for good reading. Therefore, this means that the lines of communication between the respondents and Members of Parliament, members of local government council and

traditional leaders were not working as would be expected. In a way, it can be concluded that the four were majorly not listening to the respondents. As a result, the respondents are not very favourably circumstanced to engage their MPs, members of local government council and traditional leaders on matters that are imperatively critical and important to it. In the ultimate, this has negative implications for the delivery of the social contract/compact.

4.3.6 WHO EXACTLY DID NOT VOTE IN 2019?

Since the first objective of the study is to establish factors influencing voter apathy among the various demographics in Botswana, the collected data was further disaggregated with a view to identifying the people who did not vote; their sex; age; educational background; location and employment status. Figure 13 sheds more light on the characteristics of these people. The graph indicates that 30.4% of the people who did not vote in 2019 were male while 27.5% were female. It also shows that 71.6% of these people were aged between 18 and 25 while a cumulative percentage of 62.2 were aged between 26 and 55. Cumulatively, 63.2% of these people live in cities, towns, and urban villages while a cumulative percentage of 51.1% of these people live in villages and areas classified as farms/lands/cattle-posts. Furthermore, a cumulative percentage of 66.2 have secondary and post-secondary education and 59.4% are not employed. All these responses yielded an average of 28.7%. In addition to the people who did not register to vote in 2019, there are some who did not want to vote and therefore did not register for the elections. They simply did not have any interest to register and vote.

Figure 13: Percentage of the respondents who did not vote in the 2019 general elections

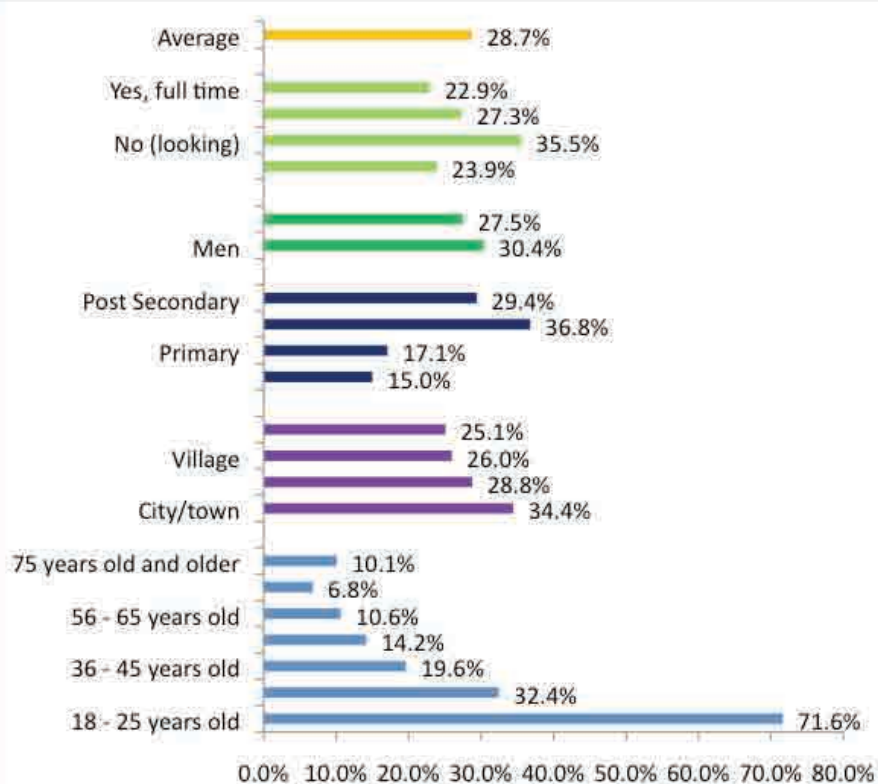
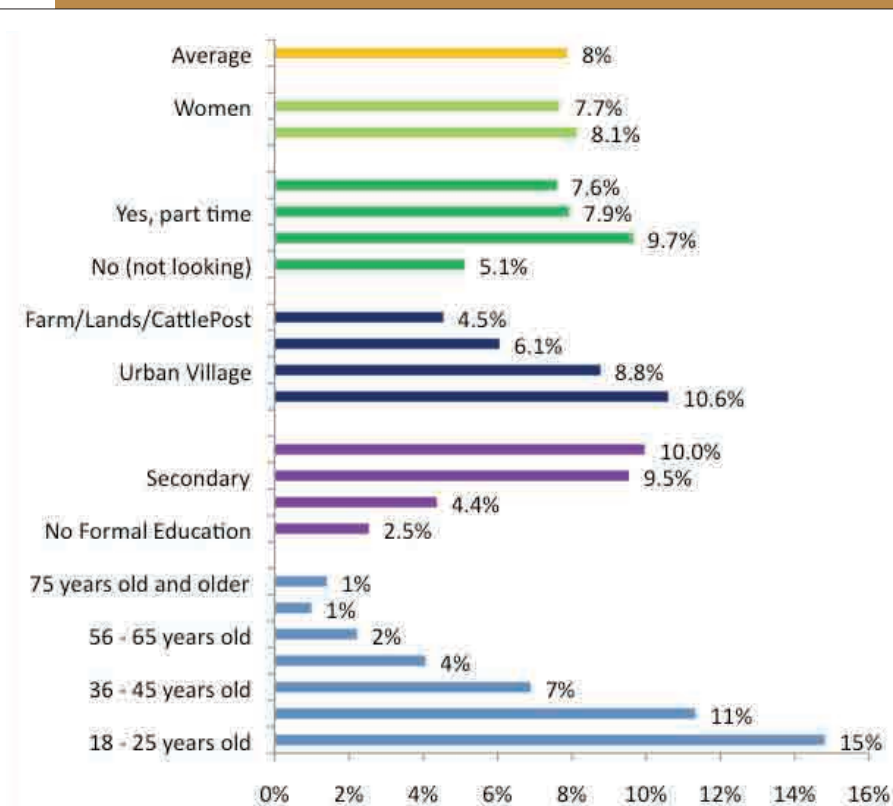


Figure 14 presents the percentages and the demographics of those people. The graph indicates that 8.1% of the respondents were male while 7.7% were female. It also shows that 15% were aged between 18 and 25; 11% were aged between 26 and 35 while a cumulative percentage of 13 were aged between 36 and 65. Cumulatively, 19.5% had secondary and post-secondary education and a cumulative percentage of 19.4 live in cities, towns, and urban areas. A cumulative percentage of 10.6 live in the villages, farms, lands, and cattle-posts. In terms of employment status, a cumulative percentage of 15.5 are employed either on full-time or part-time basis while 14.8% are unemployed. The average is 8%.

Figure 14: Percentage of the respondents who did not want to vote



4.3.7 WHEN DID PEOPLE DECIDE TO VOTE OR NOT TO VOTE IN 2019?

The respondents were asked to think of the 2019 general elections and indicate the statement that best describes when they decided that they would or would not vote. The results are presented in Table 10.

Table 10: When did people decide to vote or not to vote in 2019?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
	As soon as the election was called	7650	63.6	66.2
	Soon after the election was called	945	7.9	8.2
	Part way through the election campaign	1389	11.6	12.0
	A few days before election day	590	4.9	5.1
	On election day	377	3.1	3.3
	Don't Know	601	5.0	5.2
	Total	11552	96.1	100.0
	Not Applicable [For Respondents who were under 18 years in 2019]	428	3.6	
	Total	11980	99.7	
Missing System		39	0.3	
Total		12 019	100.0	

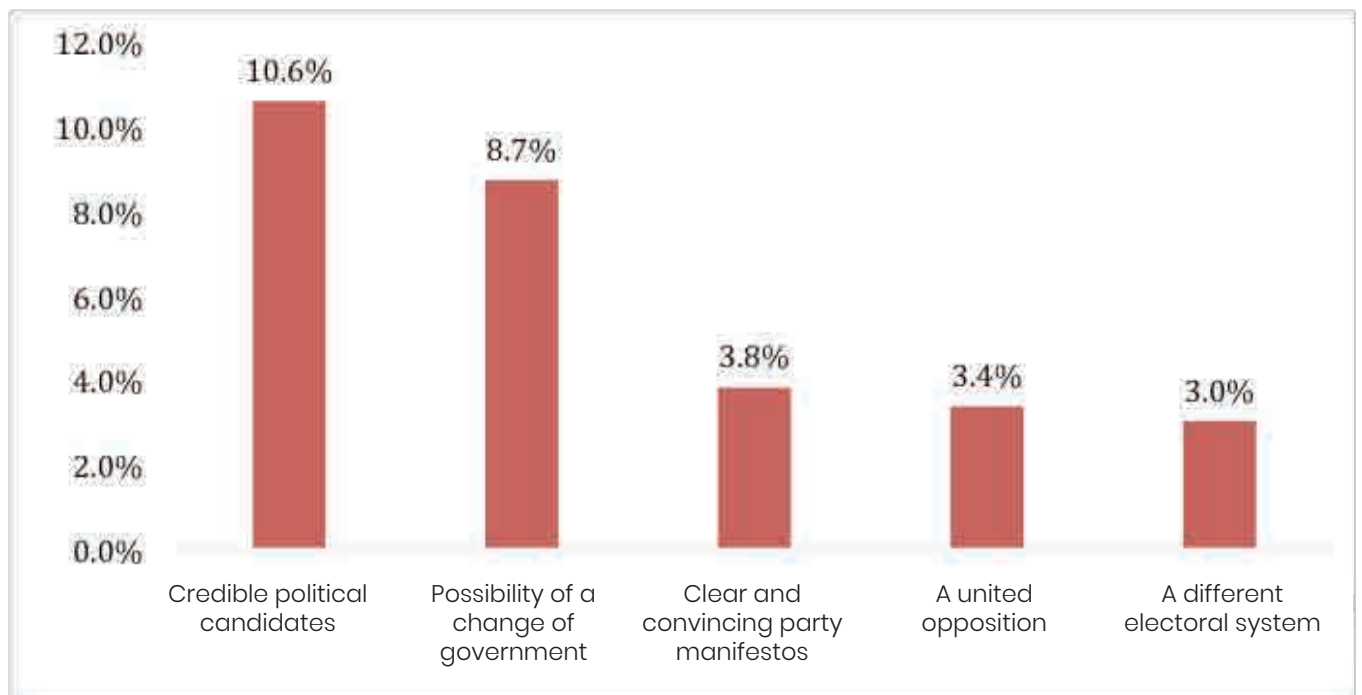
The results from the table indicate that 66.2% or two-thirds of the respondents decided to vote or not to vote as soon as the election was called; 8.2% decided soon after the election was called; 12% decided part way through the election campaign; 5.1% decided a few days before the election day; 3.3% on the election day while the remaining 5.2% did not know when they made the decision.

These results indicate that there are some people (3.3%) who decided on the elections day as to whether they will vote or not. Another 5.1% said that they decided a few days before the elections day thus bringing the percentage of those who decided at the eleventh hour to 8.4%. Whilst this percentage may appear to be small, it can tilt the final percentage of people who registered and voted upwards or downwards. The various reasons that influenced people to vote or not to vote are discussed in the next section.

4.3.8 FACTORS THAT COULD HAVE MOTIVATED PEOPLE TO VOTE IN 2019

After identifying the people who did not vote in 2019 as well as the time when they made such a decision, it was important to know why they did not vote. Hence, a follow-up question to all those who did not vote in 2019 was posed with a view to establishing if there is anything that could have motivated or encouraged them to vote. The question reads thus: "What, if anything, could have encouraged you to vote in the 2019 election?" The responses are as indicated in Figure 15.

Figure 15: Motivators to vote



It can be deduced from the graph that 10.6%; 8.7%; 3.8%; 3.4% and 3.0% could have been motivated by a contestation of credible political candidates; possibility of a change of government; presentation of a clear and convincing party manifestos; a united opposition and the use of a different electoral system. It is notable that the 'credible political candidates' had the highest score at 10.6%. This finding is an underscoring of the credibility of political candidates, that is, credibility matters in electoral politics. This is particularly true in the age of 'perception politics'. Those who are perceived as lacking in credibility are deemed not worthy of office, therefore, they are less likely to encourage voters to register and vote. Amongst others, the fear is that low-credibility political candidates will engage in all manner of wrongs, including stealing embezzlement and pilfering.

Figures sixteen to twenty shed more light on the demographics of the respondents who discussed the foregoing five issues.

Figure 16: Percentage of the respondents who said that credible political candidates could have encouraged them to vote

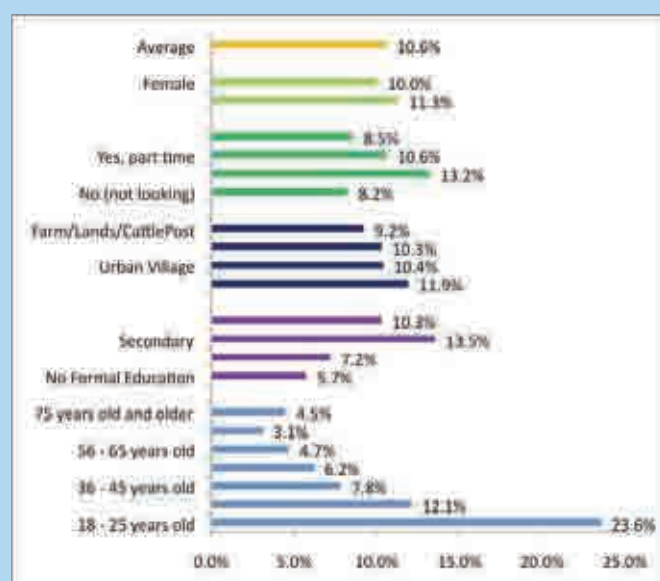


Figure 17: Percentage of the respondents who said the possibility of a change of government as a reason would have encouraged them to vote

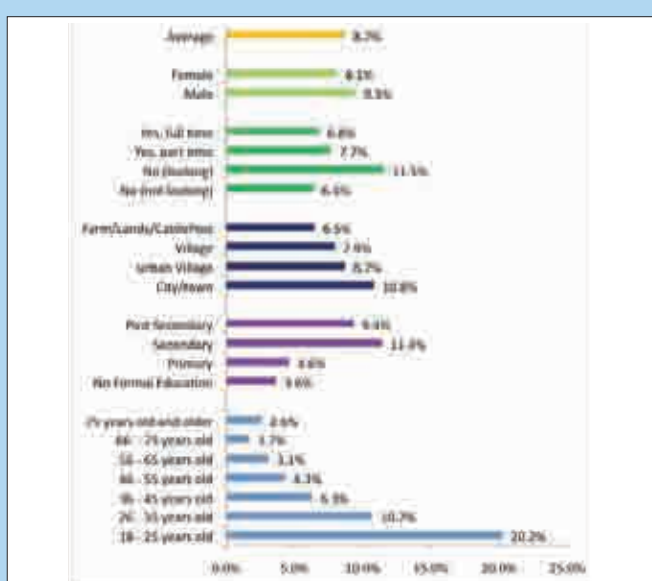


Figure 16 indicates that 11.3% were male while 10% were female. A cumulative percentage of 35.7% of people classified as the youth (i.e., ages between 18 and 35) stated that they could have voted if there were credible political representatives. 23.8% of the respondents have secondary and post-secondary education; while 22.3% live in cities and urban villages and 10.3% and 9.2% live in villages and farms/lands/cattle-posts respectively. And lastly, 21.4% are unemployed while 19.1% are employed.

Figure 17 presents the results of people who could have been motivated to vote in 2019 by the possibility of a change of government.

The graph indicates that 9.5% are male while 8.1% are female. It also indicates that 30.9% of those classified as youth would have been motivated by a possibility of change of government.

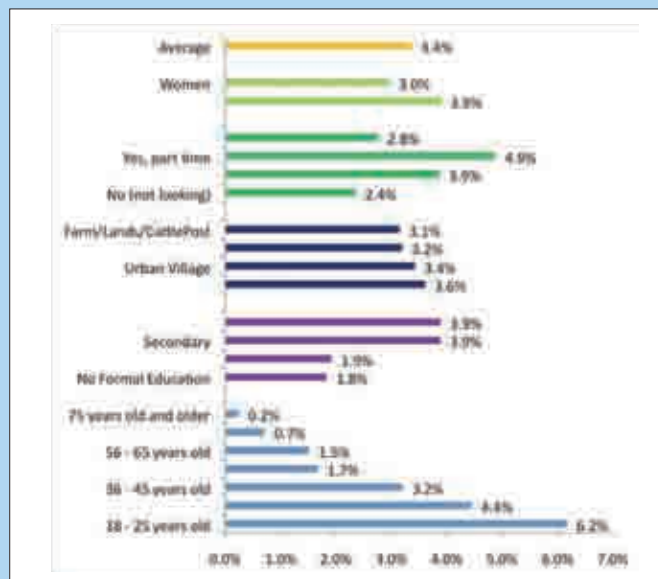
A cumulative 20.8% of the people motivated by this factor have secondary and post-secondary education; 4.6% have primary education; 19.5% live in cities and urban villages while 14.4% live in villages, farms/lands and cattle-posts. In terms of employment status, 17.9% are unemployed while 14.5% are employed. All these numbers yield an average of 8.7%.

The percentages of those who said that the presentation of clear and convincing party manifestos would have encouraged them to vote are captured in Figure 18.

Figure 18: Percentage of respondents who say clear and convincing party manifestos could have encouraged them to vote



Figure 19: United opposition would have encouraged me to vote in the 2019 general elections



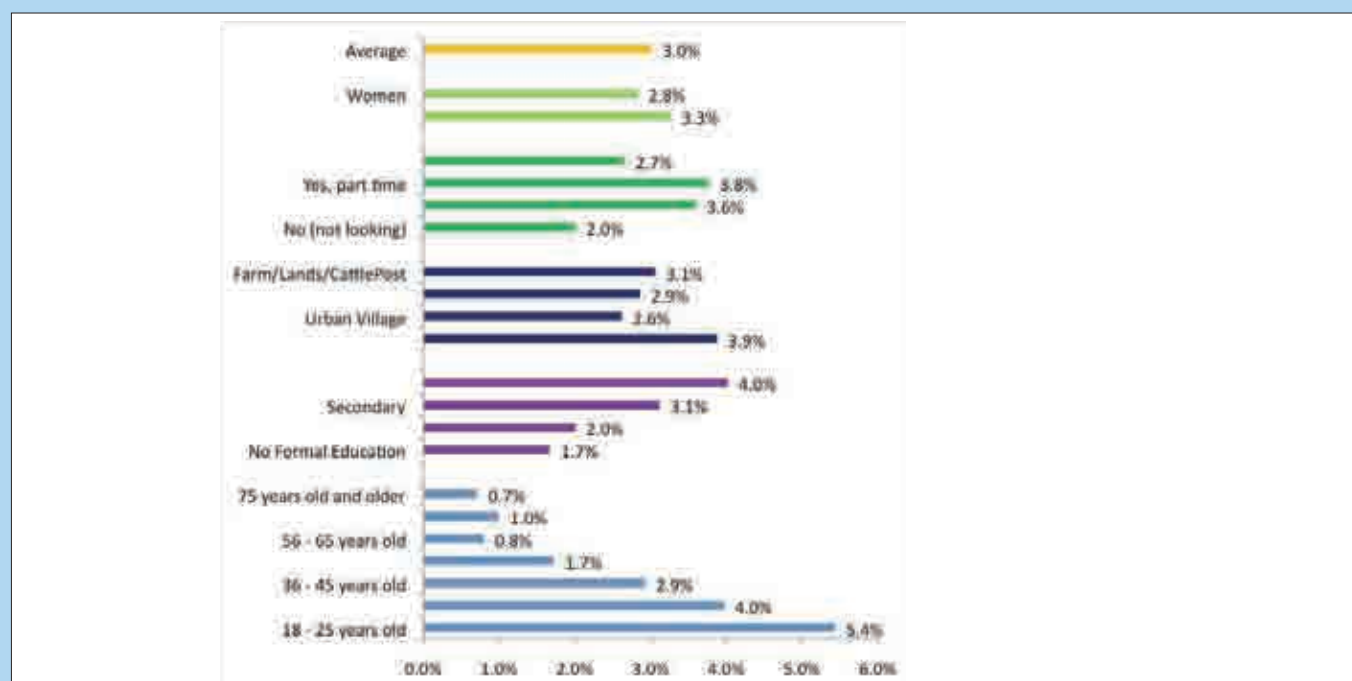
The graph indicates that 4% of the respondents are male while 3.7% are female. It also indicates that 9.2% are aged between 18 and 25 followed by 4.3% of those who fall within the category of 26 to 35 years. A cumulative 9.4% have secondary and post-secondary education. In the same vein, a cumulative percentage of 8.7 live in cities and urban areas while 6.3% live in villages, farms, lands, and cattle-posts.

Figure 19 shows the percentages of those who said that they could have been encouraged to vote by a united opposition.

The above graph indicates that 3.9% of the respondents are male while 3% are female. A cumulative percentage of 10.6 are aged between 18 and 35 and 7.8% of them have secondary and post-secondary education. Furthermore, 7% live in cities and urban areas while 6.3% live in villages, farms, lands, and cattle-posts. In terms of employment status, 7.7% are employed while 6.3% are unemployed.

Figure 20 shows the percentages of those who said that the use of a different electoral system could have encouraged them to vote.

Figure 20: Percentage of respondents who say a different electoral system could have encouraged them to vote



The graph shows that 3.3% of the respondents are male while 2.8% are female. It also shows that 5.4% are aged between 18 and 25 followed by 4% who are 26 to 35 years old. It further indicates that cumulatively, 7.1% have secondary and post-secondary education; 3.9% and 2.6% live in cities and urban areas respectively. Cumulatively, 6% live in villages, farms, lands, and cattle-posts. Lastly, 6.5% are employed while 5.6% are unemployed.

4.4 SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

The summary is done in two parts. The first sub-section focuses on the people who did not vote in 2019 and reasons for doing that. The second sub-section covers the factors that motivated or influenced people to vote.

1. The people who did not vote in 2019

The results, as presented through numerous graphs, are in line with what is covered in the available literature which states that the youth do not generally register and vote. The majority of them are male aged between 18 and 35. These are the people who live in cities and urban areas. They also have secondary and post-secondary education, a factor that should encourage them to vote as they are deemed to be more enlightened as compared to people who live in the rural areas with lower levels of education and lower levels of appreciation when it comes to issues related to elections.

The pattern shown by the people who did not register to vote is just the same as those registered but did not vote in 2019. The two groups are basically the same and have yielded the same results.

2. Why people did not vote in 2019

The results under this sub-section can be grouped into two main categories. The first category is poor political representation, and the second category is lack of response by the government to the needs and demands of the citizens.

i) Poor performance of political representatives

With regards to the first issue of poor performance by political representatives, an average of 86% was obtained while 84% and 80% were obtained for absence of credible political representatives and lack of responsiveness by government to the needs and demands of the citizens respectively. These high percentages capture the views of all different groups that were interviewed being males, females, youth, educated and less educated, employed and unemployed as well as people living in urban and rural areas. In other words, the views of the respondents on the three issues are the same irrespective of their status and location.

The poor performance of the politicians was discussed at length in the focus group discussions that were done in Ghanzi North (25 January 2022), Ghanzi South (27 January 2022), Selibe Phikwe East constituencies (28 January 2022), Shakawe 31 January 2022), Serowe South (3 February 2022), Molepolole (10 February 2022), and Ramotswa and Tlokweng (6 April 2022). Similar sentiments were expressed by some of the key informants (i.e. representatives of Dikgosi, BFTU, BOFEPUSU and Business Botswana) who were interviewed.

The politicians are accused of promising the voters developmental projects which are, in most cases, never carried out or are delayed for whatever reason. This tends to encourage a negative view of politicians by the electorates which ultimately discourages them from voting in the next election cycle. Their failure to deliver on their election promises dents their credibility and renders them as people who are dishonest and unethical people.

ii) Lack of response by the government to the needs and demands of the citizens

A very high average of 80% is a serious indictment on the government as its failure to respond promptly and satisfactorily to the needs and demands of the citizens leads to despondency and lack of interest in all issues related to elections. This issue was also discussed at length in some of the focus group discussions as some participants strongly argued that in some cases, the government is let down by the public servants who fail to implement the good policies and programmes that have been developed. Some of the key informants concurred and also argued that some of the political and administrative leaders are engaged in corrupt practices which result in diversion, misallocation and misuse of public resources which could be used to address the needs and demands of the citizens.

According to the respondents, this is not helped by the fact that some of the culprits are never brought to book while some of those who have been prosecuted were either, acquitted by courts of law, given light sentences or reinstated. All these issues give the citizens the impression that stern action is only taken against ordinary citizens while leaders are favoured in one way or the other. This results in despondency and discourages people to actively participate in political activities including registering and voting.

3. Factors that motivated people to vote in 2019

The respondents indicated that they could have been motivated by five factors to vote in October 2019. These factors are contestation of credible political candidates; possibility of a change of government; presentation of clear and convincing party manifestos; a united opposition and the use of a different electoral system.

The results as captured in the five graphs above are consistent and similar for all the identified factors. The majority of the respondents who said that they could have been motivated by the above-mentioned factors are male; aged between 18 and 35; have secondary and post-secondary education; employed as well as live in cities and urban areas. This is not surprising given the fact that the group is more enlightened.

However, it is also interesting to note that the difference between those who live in cities/urban areas and those who live in villages/farms/lands and cattle-posts is very small. This gives the impression that the people's location has little or no bearing on the manner in which they make decisions related to elections.

In addition to the factors stated above, the results also indicate that more than two-thirds of the respondents were influenced by the state of democracy, the quality of political candidates, the state of the economy, and campaigns of political parties prior to the elections to vote in 2019. The responses given by the respondents yield the same percentages irrespective of sex, age, educational level and location. It must also be noted that the percentages of all the respondents aged 18 to 25 range between 42 and 45 in all four issues.

4.5 STUDY OBJECTIVE TWO

The second study objective is to establish whether the level of political awareness has any influence on participation of citizens in the electoral process. In an attempt to address this objective, the respondents were asked questions which sought to establish the extent to which

they understand and are interested in political issues including the importance of registering and voting. The discussion covers a wide range of issues such as the extent to which people discuss political matters with friends or family; the frequency of having such discussions and whether such discussions took place when they were growing up.

4.5.1 DISCUSSION OF POLITICAL MATTERS WITH FRIENDS OR FAMILY

Since political matters are not only discussed at political rallies, the respondents were asked three questions that focused mainly on the discussions that they have on politics and current events with their friends and family members. The assumption made is that the more people discuss political matters, the more they become more enlightened and motivated to register and vote. The results are captured in the tables and graphs below.

The respondents were asked to state the frequency at which they discuss politics with friends and family members. The results are as shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Discussion of political matters with friends or family members

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Occasionally	5189	43.2	43.3
	Never	2975	24.8	24.8
	Frequently	3816	31.7	31.8
	Don't know	11	0.1	0.1
	Total	11991	99.8	100.0
Missing System		28	0.2	
Total		12 019	100.0	

Cumulatively, 74.9% of the respondents stated that when they get together with friends or family, they discuss political matters frequently or occasionally. It is notable that 43.2% stated that they occasionally discussed the same when they got together with friends or family. This is a worrying statistic in the sense that this shows that political matters are not a chief item in conversations when the respondents got together with friends or family.

The foregoing has negative implications for electoral participation and activism. That 24.8% of the respondents stated that when they got together with friends or family, they never discussed political matters is both sobering and telling and, thus, an eloquent and sad commentary on electoral participation and activism in respect to the said respondents. Why is this so for the 24.8% of the respondents?

As a way of shedding more light on the issue of discussing political issues with friends or family members, the respondents were asked if they also talk about politics and current events. If they do, is it often, sometimes, seldom, or never? The results are as indicated in Table 12.

Table 12: Talking about politics and current events with friends or family members

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Never	2564	21.3	21.3
	Seldom	1152	9.6	9.6
	Sometimes	4432	36.9	36.9
	Often	3822	31.8	31.8
	Don't know	41	0.3	0.3
	Total	12011	99.9	100.0
Missing System		8	0.1	
Total		12 019	100.0	

Cumulatively, 78.3% of the respondents stated that they talked to their family or friends about politics and current events. 21.3% of the respondents stated that they never talked to their family or friends about politics and current events. It is notable that 36.9% and 31.8% of the respondents stated that they sometimes and often talked to their family or friends about politics and current events respectively.

That 36.9% of the respondents stated that they sometimes talked to their family or friends about politics and current event, which means that the subjects were not dominant items in the menu of conversations with either family or friends. This has negative implications for electoral participation and activism in Botswana. Consequently, the effects of low electoral participation and activism may degenerate voter apathy into voter disengagement. Notably, the latter is more deleterious than the former.

In an attempt to find out if people have been taught about political issues at an early stage of their development, the respondents were asked another question on the discussion of politics and current events in their households. The question read: When you were growing up, did your family talk about politics and current events often, sometimes, seldom, or never? The assumption made is that when people start hearing and talking about political issues at an early age, they may have a better understanding of everything related to elections and voting. The results are as presented in Table 13

Table 13: Family members talk about politics and current events at an early age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Never	2920	24.3	24.3
	Seldom	1826	15.2	15.2
	Sometimes	4193	34.9	34.9
	Often	2960	24.6	24.6
	Don't know	112	0.9	0.9
	Total	12011	99.9	100.0
Missing System		8	0.1	
Total		12 019	100.0	

Cumulatively, 74.7% of the respondents stated that their families talked about politics and current events when they were growing up. 24.3% reported that their families never talked about politics and current events when they were growing up. It is notable that 34.9% of the respondents stated that their families occasionally talked about politics and current events when they were growing up while 15.2% stated that the occurrence was seldom.

That 34.9% of the respondents stated that their families occasionally talked about politics and current events when they were growing up is a worrying statistic. The foregoing has negative implications for electoral participation and activism. Thus, politics and current events were occasional subjects of dinner table conversations meaning that political consciousness was occasionally inculcated into growing minds.

4.5.2 MOVING AWAY FROM THE HOUSEHOLDS TO THE PUBLIC SPHERE

The second part of the discussions covered issues related to people having interest in partisan politics; knowledge about the various political parties that participated in the 2019 general elections, their policies and election platforms; people's participation in other forms of political activity besides voting in the past five years; policy issues which are of interest to the respondents; membership of any political group on Facebook; participation in political debates on social media platforms; attending a campaign rally; working for a candidate or party and contact by a representative of a political party; and fair media coverage of political candidates.

i) Interest in partisan politics

In view of the foregoing, the respondents were asked to state if they are interested in partisan politics or not. The results, as presented in Table 14, indicate that 47% is not interested while the remaining 53% is interested.

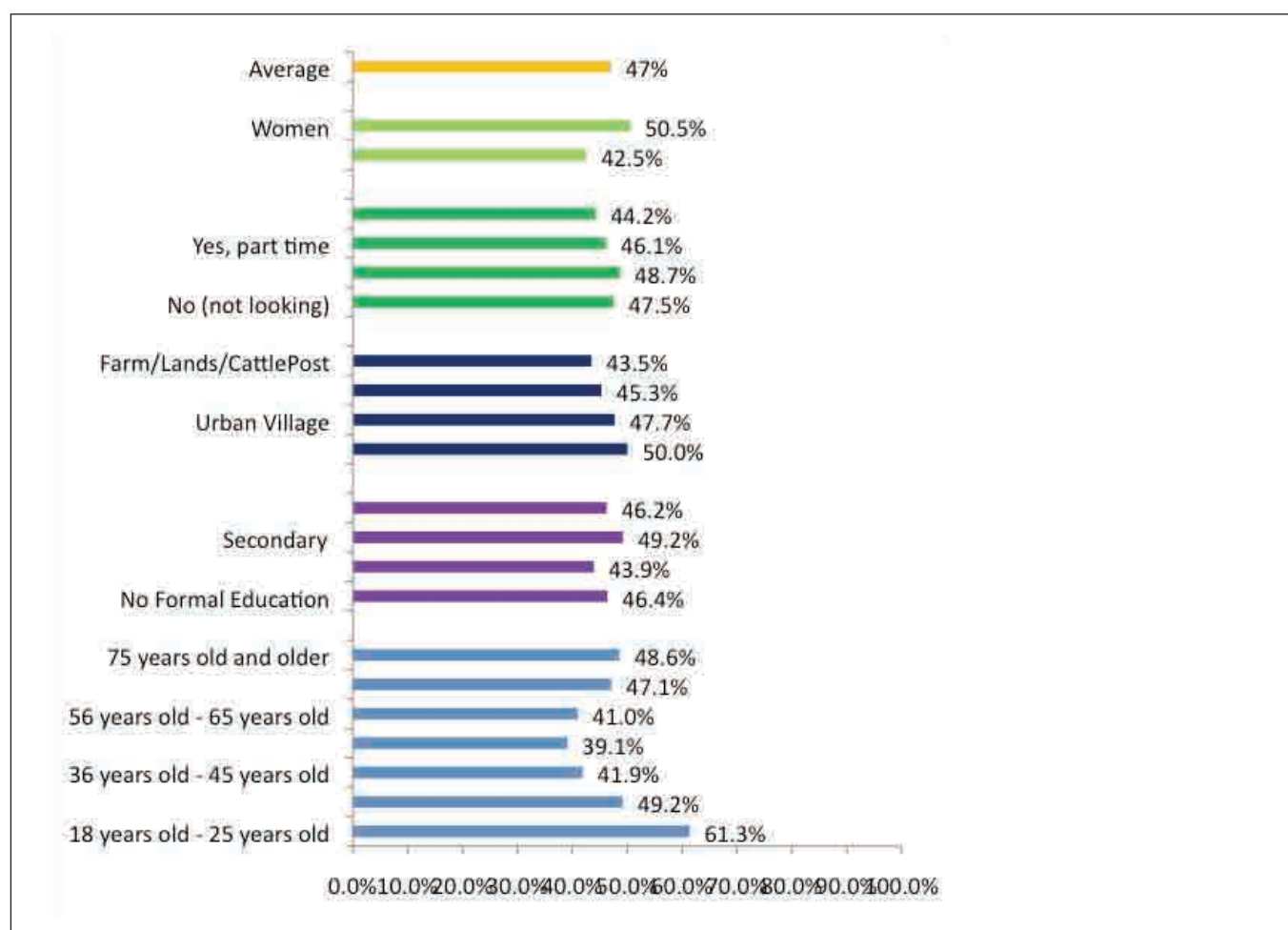
Table 14: Interest in partisan politics

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	No	5646	47.0	47.0
	Yes	6364	52.9	53.0
	Total	12010	99.9	100.0
Missing System		9	0.1	
Total		12 019	100.0	

A statistic of 47% for people who are not interested in partisan politics is significantly high. Lack of interest in partisan politics may explain low political participation and high voter apathy. It, therefore, calls for the adoption of multi-pronged strategies geared towards enticing people to develop interest in partisan politics.

As a way of shedding more light on the people who do not have interest in partisan politics, the data was disaggregated further, and the results are as indicated in Figure 21.

Figure 21: Percentages of voters who generally do not have interest in partisan politics



The results indicate that 50.5% of the respondents are female and 42.5% are male. A significant percentage of 61.3 are aged between 18 and 25; 49.2% are aged between 26 and 35; 49.2% have secondary education while 46.2% have post-secondary education.

Similarly, 50% live in cities and towns while 47.7% live in urban villages. An average of 48% of the unemployed respondents said that they are not interested in partisan politics.

In trying to establish the extent to which the respondents had knowledge about the various political parties that participated in the 2019 general elections, their policies and election platforms, they were asked to state if they were very knowledgeable, somewhat knowledgeable, not very knowledgeable, or not at all knowledgeable. The results are presented in Table 15.

Table 15: Knowledge about the political parties that participated in the 2019 general elections, their policies and election platforms

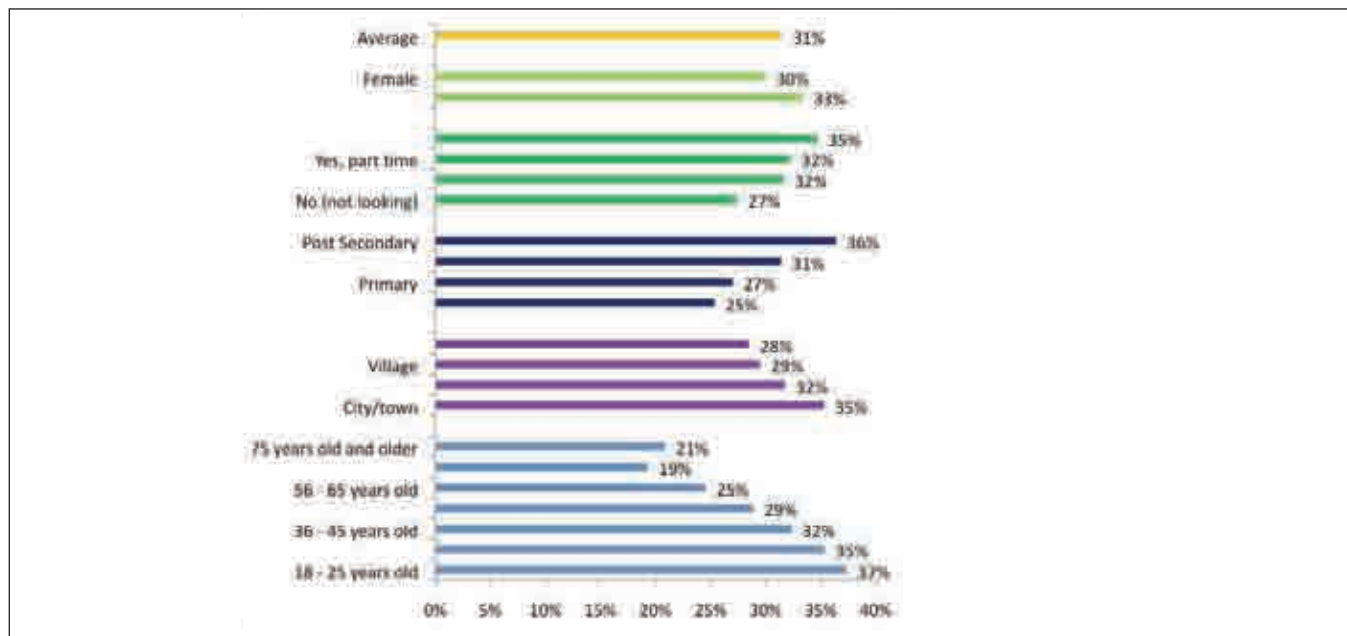
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Not at all knowledgeable	1636	13.6
	Not very knowledgeable	2151	17.9
	Somewhat knowledgeable	3716	30.9
	Very knowledgeable	4345	36.2
	Don't Know	109	0.9
	Total	11957	99.5
Missing System		62	0.5
Total		12 019	100.0

The results indicate that 67% or two-thirds of the respondents were somewhat or very knowledgeable about the political parties that contested the 2019 general elections, their policies and the elections platforms that were used. The remaining 32% said that they were not knowledgeable.

These results indicate that there is a huge problem which needs to be addressed as quickly as possible. Lack of knowledge about the political parties which contested elections in 2019 and the policies that they promised to formulate and implement when they attain state power, calls for more public education by the IEC, political parties, and civil society organisations. All the stakeholders should come up with strategies that can enable them to reach the two-thirds who are currently not in touch with what is happening in the political realm. These are the potential voters, and they must be sensitised about political issues at all costs.

Figure 22 sheds more light on the people who said that they were not knowledgeable on political parties that contested the 2019 general elections, their policies and the elections platforms that were used.

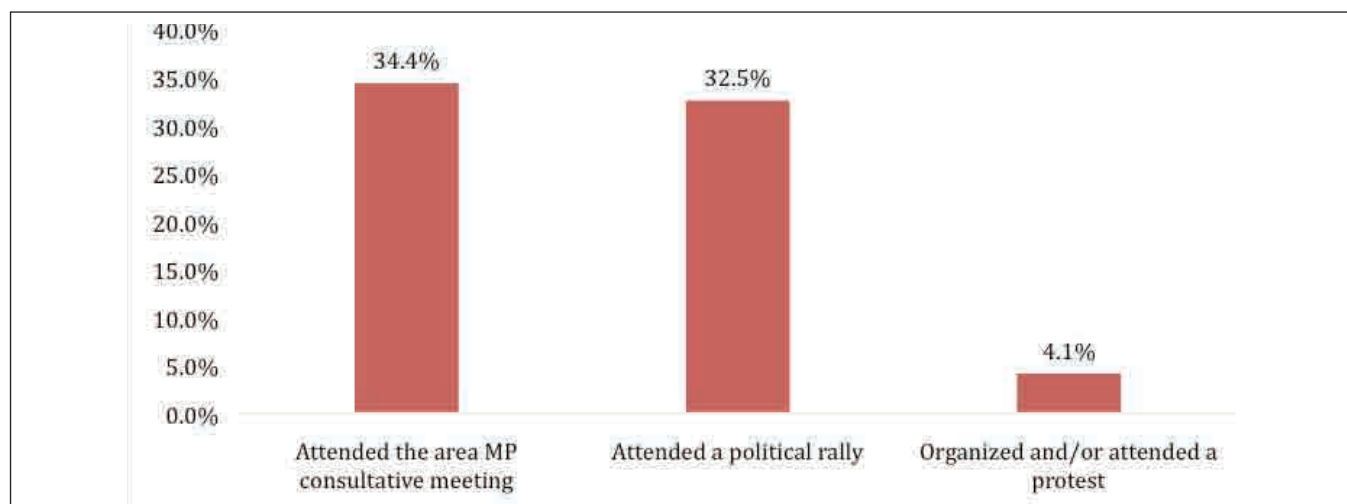
Figure 22: Percentage of voters who said that they did not know enough about the parties, policies, or candidates



As can be deduced from Figure 22, 30% of the respondents are female while 33% are male. Cumulatively, 72% are aged between 18 and 35 (i.e., the youth) and the majority of them live in cities/towns and urban villages (i.e., 35% and 32%, respectively). In terms of education, 36% have post-secondary education while 31% have secondary education.

Cumulatively, 67% of those who are employed said that they did not know enough about the political parties that contested the elections, their policies and the candidates who represented them. As a way of gauging the extent to which the respondents participate in other forms of political activities, they were asked to state if they have done so in the past five years or not. The results are presented in Figure 23.

Figure 23: Percentages of people who participated in other forms of political activity besides voting in the past five years

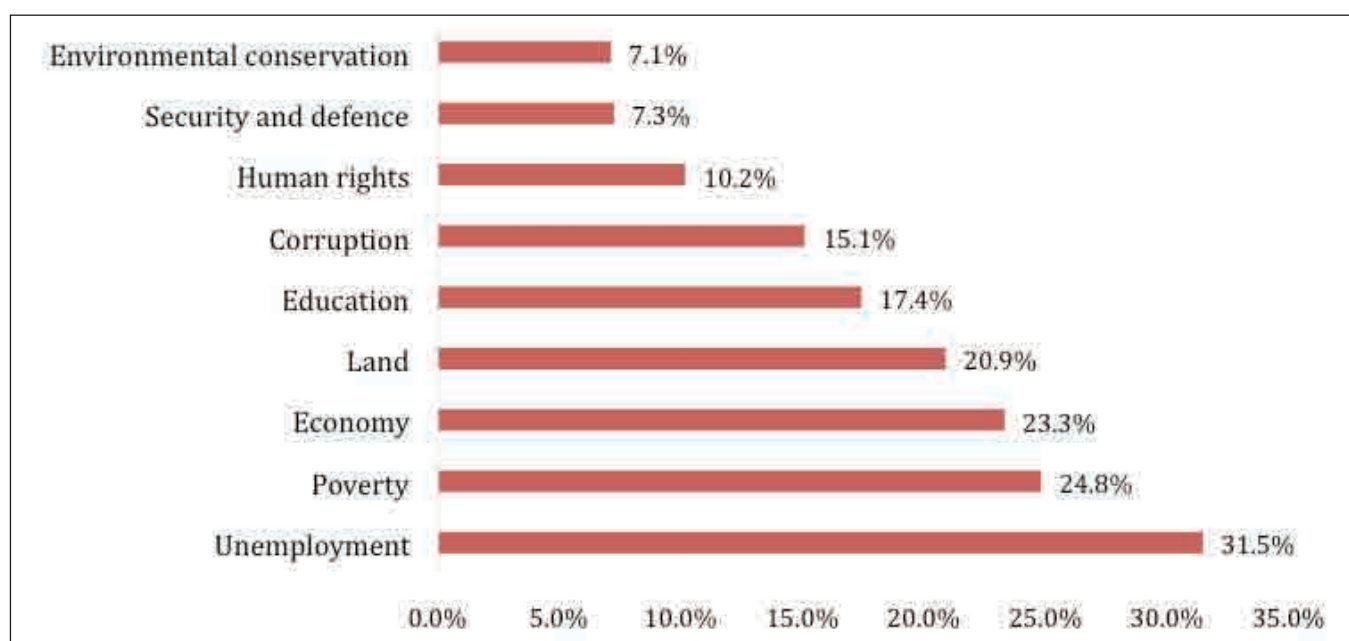


The graph indicates that 34.4% of the respondents said that they attended the area MP consultative meetings; 32.5% attended political rallies and 4.1% organised or attended a protest. These results demonstrate a low level of participation by citizens when dealing with political issues. They call for an assessment and modification of the strategies that are used by the politicians to interact with the citizens with a view to generating more interest in political issues as they affect them on a daily basis in one way or the other.

ii) Policy issues which are of interest to the respondents

Since the majority of the available public policies have a direct effect on the lives of citizens, different political parties contesting the elections usually indicate the type of public policies that they will formulate and implement if voted into power. Figure 24 indicates the policy issues that were of great interest to the voters in 2019.

Figure 24: Policy issues which are of interest to the respondents



About one-third or 31.5% of the respondents are interested in unemployment; 24.8% in poverty; 23.3% in the economy while 20.9% is interested in issues related to land. In the same vein, 17.4% is interested in education; 15.1% in corruption; 10.2% in human rights issues; 7.3% in security and defence while the other 7.1% is interested in environmental conservation.

Unemployment has been a thorny issue for a lot of the people, more so that it mainly affects the young people. The same applies to poverty, the performance of the economy and issues related to land allocation and management.

iii) Membership of any political group on Facebook

One way through which people can gain political knowledge is by joining various groups as well as participating in political debates. Information on pertinent national issues and the positions

of various political parties can be disseminated through some of these political groups which are formed on social media platforms such as Facebook. Hence, it was deemed important to find out if the respondents were members of any political group on Facebook and the results are as presented in Table 16.

Table 16: Membership of any political group on Facebook

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	No	8264	67.1	83.2
	Yes	1629	13.6	16.8
	Total	9693	80.6	100.0
Missing System		2326	19.4	
Total		12 019	100.0	

It can be deduced from the table above that 83% of the respondents stated that they were not members of a political group on Facebook while the remaining 17% gave a positive answer. Social media is currently used for information dissemination by the government, private sector entities and civil society organisations. It, therefore, follows that those who do not use it or belong to political groups on Facebook may miss important information on political issues that are being discussed.

iv) Participation in political debates on social media platforms

One way through which people can learn and gain knowledge about politics is by joining political groups as well as participate in political debates. Political debates go a long way in widening people's scope of understanding politics, things that are promised by various political parties and how the government machinery works. Table 17 sheds light on the number of people who participate in political debates on social media platforms.

Table 17: Participation in political debates on social media platforms

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	No	8253	68.7	85.1
	Yes	1447	12.0	14.9
	Total	9700	80.7	100.0
Missing System		2319	19.3	
Total		12 019	100.0	

The results indicate that 85% of the respondents do not participate in political debates on social media platforms while the remaining 15% do participate. These results are consistent with the ones obtained under table --- above which deals with membership for any political group on Facebook. If they do not belong to the political groups on Facebook, then it is not surprising that they do not participate in political debates.

v) Attending a campaign rally; working for a candidate or party and contact by a representative of a political party

The respondents were further requested to think about the last national election in 2019 and indicate if they attended a campaign rally; worked for a candidate or party or were they contacted by any representative of a political party during the campaign.

Table 18: Attending a campaign rally; working for a candidate or party and contact by a representative of a political party

		Count	Column N %
Did you attend a campaign rally?	Yes	4909	40.9
	No	6936	57.8
	Don't know	159	1.3
Did you work for a candidate or party?	Yes	1762	14.7
	No	10069	83.9
	Don't know	173	1.4
Did any representative of a political party contact you during the campaign?	Yes	5393	45.0
	No	6413	53.5
	Don't know	190	1.6

Table 18 indicates that 40.9% of the respondents attended a political rally; 14.7% worked for a candidate or party and 45% were contacted by a representative of a political party. The results further indicate that 57.8% said that they did not attend a political rally; 83.9% did not work for any candidate or party and 53.5% were not contacted by any representative of a political party during the campaign.

If 57.8% of the respondents did not attend a political rally and 53.5% were not contacted by any representative of a political party during the campaign, then a conclusion can be reached that some of the information that could have been shared with the citizens did not reach them. This does not in any way imply that other forms or medium of communication that are usually used such as newspapers, radio stations and social media platforms were not used.

vi) Being offered something in the form of food, gift or money in return for vote

The respondents were asked “how often, if ever, did a candidate or someone from a political party offer you something, like food, a gift, or money, in return for your vote?”

Table 19: Being offered something in the form of food, gift or money in return for vote

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	9844	81.9	82.0	82.0
	Once or twice	1176	9.8	9.8	91.8
	A few times	480	4.0	4.0	95.8
	Often	296	2.5	2.5	98.3
	Don't know	206	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	12002	99.9	100.0	
Missing System		17	0.1		
Total		12 019	100.0		

The results indicate that a very high percentage (82) said that they have never been offered anything in return for their votes. A cumulative percentage of 16.3 said that they were offered something once or twice, a few times and often while 1.7% said that they do not know. Whilst the results indicate that in most cases the political candidates do not “bribe” the electorates to vote for them, the revelation by 16.3% of the respondents that they have been “bribed” is a cause for concern. It is something that needs to be nipped in the bud, lest it compromises the quality of the electoral process.

vii) Fair media coverage of political candidates

The extent to which the media covers the political candidates and the political parties greatly assists the electorates to make a decision as to whether they will vote and who they will vote for. The electorates get to know more about the candidates and their political parties if they are covered widely by the media. Table 20 indicates that views of the respondents in terms of how the media performed in the 2019 elections.

Table 20: Fair media coverage of political candidates

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Never	1588	13.2	13.2
	Sometimes	2795	23.3	23.3
	Often	3148	26.2	26.2
	Always	3059	25.5	25.5
	Don't know	1417	11.8	11.8
	Total	12007	99.9	100.0
Missing System		12	0.1	
Total		12 019	100.0	

It can be deduced from Table 20 that 13.2% of the respondents said that the media never provided fair coverage of all the candidates; 23.3% said that they were covered sometimes; 26.2 said that they were covered often times; 25.5% said that they were always covered fairly; while 11.8% said that they did not know. Cumulatively, 86.8% gave a positive response by saying that the coverage was done sometimes, often, and always.

4.6 SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

The results indicate that 36.9% of the respondents stated that they sometimes talked to their family or friends about politics and current events. This means that the subjects were not dominant items in the menu of conversations with either family or friends. This has negative implications for electoral participation and activism in Botswana as the effects of low electoral participation and activism may degenerate voter apathy into voter disengagement.

It has also been established that 34.9% of the respondents stated that their families occasionally talked about politics and current events when they were growing up. This is a worrying statistic as it also has negative implications for electoral participation and activism as stated in the point above. It can be concluded that if politics and current events are occasional subjects of dinner table conversations, it means that political consciousness is occasionally inculcated into growing minds.

The results further indicate that 47% of the respondents are not interested in partisan politics. This may explain why a significant number of citizens do not vote. It also indicates that there is low political education and involvement which ultimately lead to voter apathy.

In terms of policy issues that were of interest to the respondents in 2019, 31.5% (one-third) said unemployment followed by 24.8% who said poverty. These are two problems that the government has been trying to address with very little success. They directly affect citizens. Hence it is not surprising that they were raised by more than half of the respondents.

Two-thirds of the respondents do not know about political parties that contested the 2019 elections. This is a clear indication that public education is lacking and a concerted effort must be made to sensitise these people to political issues.

The majority of the respondents who do not know about political parties are the youth who live in cities, towns, and urban villages. This finding runs against what is available in the literature as the young people who live in cities, towns and urban villages are usually deemed to be more informed about political issues as compared to people living in the rural areas. This calls for the use of different platforms such as social media, private radio stations and music festivals to disseminate information and reach these people.

A significant percentage of 83.2% of the respondents do not belong to any political group on Facebook. In the same vein, 85.1% do not participate in political debates on social media platforms. There is low political participation as evidenced by the fact that 57.8% of the respondents did not attend a campaign rally in 2019. Furthermore, 83.9% did not work for any political candidate or party and 53.4% were not contacted by a representative of any political party.

4.7 ADDITIONAL STUDY OBJECTIVES

In addition to the three main study objectives (two of which have already been covered in the preceding sub-sections and the third one being covered under part five of the report), the study was supposed to shed light on the manner in which the elections are managed by the IEC; the independence of the IEC; political funding and electoral legal frameworks. The study had to indicate if the afore-mentioned issues have a positive correlation with voter apathy.

The discussion is divided into four parts. The first part covers the manner in which the IEC manages the elections and the counting of ballot papers. The issues covered include the electoral system that is in place; the level of satisfaction that people have with it; the manner in which the IEC performed and managed the 2019 general elections as well as the things that happened including the deployment of security officers at the polling stations. The section also covers the announcement of the elections results and compares the 2019 elections with others which were held previously.

The second part deals with the independence of the IEC, the appointment of the Secretary of the Commission and where the IEC should be housed. The third part deals with the issue of political party funding while the fourth part covers the electoral legal frameworks.

4.7.1 THE MANAGEMENT OF ELECTIONS BY THE IEC

This section deals with the manner in which the IEC manages general elections; perceptions and views of the respondents about the IEC; the appointment of the Secretary of the Commission and the placement of the Commission under the Ministry of Presidential Affairs, Governance and Public Administration.

i) Election management and counting of ballots

Two statements on incidents relating to election management and counting were read out to the respondents and they were expected to indicate if they experienced any of the incidents. The results are as presented in Table 21.

Table 21: Election management and counting of ballots

		Count	Column N %
Statement A People's votes were not accurately counted or not fairly reflected in the results	Never	5675	47.3
	Once or twice	2045	17.0
	A few times	1056	8.8
	Don't know	3232	26.9
Statement A People voted more than once	Never	7078	59.0
	Once or twice	917	7.6
	A few times	534	4.4
	Don't know	3474	28.9

The results of statement “A” show that 47.3% respondents indicated that it never happened, while 8.8 % of respondents indicated that votes were inaccurately counted a few times. In the same vein, 17% indicated that it occurred once or twice that votes were inaccurately counted. Regarding statement “B”, the results indicate that 59% of respondents indicated that it never occurred that people voted more than once while 7.6% and 4.4% of the respondents indicated that it actually happened once and few times, respectively.

ii) Secrecy of the ballot

To this extent, these questions sought to understand the respondents’ perceptions in relation to secrecy of the ballot and by extension whether voters cast their votes with full independence.

The results are as presented in Table 22.

Table 22: Secrecy of the ballot

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Not at all likely	6511	54.2	54.3
	Not very likely	1496	12.4	12.5
	Somewhat likely	1665	13.9	13.9
	Very likely	1141	9.5	9.5
	Don’t know	1188	9.9	9.9
	Total	12001	99.9	100.0
Missing System		18	0.1	
Total		12019	100.0	

The results show that 66.7% of the respondents indicated that it is unlikely that powerful people would find out how they have voted, 13.9 % indicated that it was likely and a small proportion of 9.5% indicated that it was very likely that powerful individuals would find out. On the overall, these results suggest that respondents are confident about the ‘secrecy’ of their vote and about the independence of the electoral process from influence by certain groups and members of society. Therefore, the voters cast their votes freely and independently.

A follow-up question on the secrecy of votes and security was asked with a view to ascertaining the respondents’ perceptions of electoral violence and threats. The results are depicted in Table 23.

Table 23: Perceptions of electoral violence and threats

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Not at all	10843	90.2	90.9
	A little bit	442	3.7	3.7
	Somewhat	219	1.8	1.8
	A lot	227	1.9	1.9
	Don't know	200	1.7	1.7
	Total	11931	99.3	100.0
Missing System		88	0.7	
Total		12 019	100.0	

The results show that 90.9% of the respondents indicated they had no fear of being victims of violence at all. Only 1.9% of the respondents indicated that they feared being victims of political intimidation and violence.

iii) Deployment of security agencies at polling stations

The security officers are always deployed at polling stations to aid in preventing and attending to any disturbances in or near a voting station, preventing intimidation of voters and staff or ensuring the security of all election materials, and particularly ballot material, while at the voting station. For this question, two statements on incidents relating to involvement of security officers in assisting voters to cast their votes were read out to the respondents and they were expected to indicate if they knew if any of the incidents happened. The results are as presented in Table 24.

Table 24: Security agencies at polling stations

		Count	Column N %
Were police or soldiers, rather than election officials, assisting some people to cast their ballot?	Yes	708	5.9
	No	9639	80.3
	Don't know / Can't remember	1660	13.8
Was anyone from the security forces or a political party trying to intimidate voters?	Yes	286	2.4
	No	10050	83.8
	Don't know / Can't remember	1663	13.9

On the first statement, only 5.9% of the respondents said that they have witnessed security agencies assisting voters to cast their votes. Regarding the second statement, only 2.4 % of the respondents claimed to have witnessed intimidation of voters by political parties or security agencies. Firstly, the results suggest that the involvement of security officers in other activities

other than 'provision of security' in the voting stations is minimal at polling stations. Secondly, the police maintain an environment where voters can freely cast their votes without intimidation by anyone, whilst also minimizing their involvement in the actual voting process.

iv) Comparing the October 2019 general elections with others held previously

The respondents were asked to compare the 2019 elections with other elections that were held in past and state if the quality of the October 2019 elections was better, same, or worse than the others?

Table 25: Comparing the October 2019 general elections with others held previously

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Much worse	2094	17.4	17.5
	Worse	2212	18.4	18.4
	Same	3428	28.5	28.6
	Better	1818	15.1	15.2
	Much better	574	4.8	4.8
	Don't know	1867	15.5	15.6
	Total	11993	99.8	100.0
Missing System		26	0.2	
Total		12 019	100.0	

The respondents were asked to compare the quality of the 2019 elections in comparison with other elections held previously. The responses varied quite considerably as 17.5 % of the respondents indicated they were much worse than other elections, 28.6% of the respondents said the quality of the 2019 elections was the same as other elections and 20% thought they were better. Whilst some 20% assessed the 2019 election positively, implying an improvement in electoral quality, relative to other previously held elections, 37.8 % respondents assessed the election negatively. This may suggest a perceived decline in some important respects in the conduct of elections.

The notion of 'quality of elections' however is quite broad, as it may also include such things as party competition, quality of candidates and issues relating to media coverage, and even electoral law.

v) Announcement of accurate results by the IEC in 2019

As a way of establishing if the citizens have trust and confidence in the IEC with regards to announcement of accurate election results, the respondents were asked to reflect on the 2019 elections and state the extent to which they think the results accurately reflected the actual results as counted. While the question is specific to voting, it would give a sense of the respondents' perception of the IEC.

Table 26: Announcement of accurate results by the IEC in 2019

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Not accurate at all	999	8.3	8.3
	Not very accurate, with major discrepancies	1383	11.5	11.5
	Mostly accurate, but with some minor discrepancies	2236	18.6	18.6
	Completely accurate	5649	47.0	47.1
	Don't know	1736	14.4	14.5
	Total	12003	99.9	100.0
Missing System		16	0.1	
Total		12 019	100.0	

The results, as shown in Table 26, indicate that 47.1 % indicated that the results reflect an accurate outcome of the elections, 8.3% of the respondents think that the results are not an accurate reflection of the outcome of elections at all, and 11.5 % of the respondents think that the results are inaccurate with major discrepancies, while 18.6 % think the results of elections are accurate with minor discrepancies. The emergent picture here is that the respondents still have trust and confidence in the IEC regarding its capability of ensuring accurate election results. The respondents generally think that the electoral process (in respect to counting) is *free* of manipulation and fraud.

vi) Evaluating the performance of the IEC's performance in conducting the 2019 general elections

To ascertain the respondents' view of the IEC, they were also asked to assess its performance in the 2019 general elections.

Table 27: IEC's performance in conducting the October 2019 general elections

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Very poor	1344	11.2	11.2
	Fairly poor	2217	18.4	18.5
	Fairly good	4961	41.3	41.4
	Very good	2013	16.7	16.8
	Don't know	1449	12.1	12.1
	Total	11984	99.7	100.0
Missing System		35	0.3	
Total		12 019	100.0	

It can be deduced from Table 27 that 41.4% and 16.8% of the respondents respectively rated the IEC performance in the 2019 election as fairly good and very good. This yields a total of 58.2% which shows a positive evaluation of the performance of the IEC in the previous election. Only 11.2% of the respondents indicated the IEC performed poorly in the last elections while 12.1% said that they do not know.

4.7.2 THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE IEC

In an attempt to establish respondents' perception of the IEC, two statements were read out to the respondents, and they were expected to indicate the one that best reflects their views. The results as depicted in Table 28 are as follows

Table 28: Perceptions about the IEC

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Not accurate at all	536	4.5	4.5
	Statement 1: The Independent Electoral Commission performs its duties as a neutral body guided only by law	6535	54.4	54.4
	Statement 2: The IEC makes decisions that favor particular people, parties or interests	3787	31.5	31.6
	Don't know	1145	9.5	9.5
	Total	12003	99.9	100.0
Missing System		16	0.1	
Total		12 019	100.0	

The results indicate that 54% of the respondents agree with the first statement that the Independent Electoral Commission performs its duties as a neutral body guided only by law while 32% agree with the second statement that the IEC makes decisions that favour particular people, parties or interests. And 9.5% of the respondents said that they do not know while 4.5% agreed with neither.

This is a positive perception of the IEC by more than half of the respondents. However, the IEC must strive to increase the number of people who view it in a positive way. One of the things that it has to do is to be more visible throughout the year rather than at the time when the registration process for general elections starts. It must constantly educate the citizens on its mandate and the importance of voting.

Four statements were read out to the respondents, and they were expected to indicate whether they strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. The results as depicted in Table 29 are as follows

Table 29: The independence of the IEC

		Count	Column N %
The Secretary of the Commission should be appointed by Parliament and not the President	Strongly disagree	711	5.9
	Disagree	683	5.7
	Neither agree nor disagree	610	5.1
	Agree	3070	25.6
	Strongly agree	5560	46.3
	Don't know/haven't heard enough	1363	11.4
The IEC should report directly to Parliament	Strongly disagree	824	6.9
	Disagree	853	7.1
	Neither agree nor disagree	591	4.9
	Agree	3110	25.9
	Strongly agree	5242	43.7
	Don't know/haven't heard enough	1383	11.5
The IEC should be removed from Office of the President	Strongly disagree	742	6.2
	Disagree	682	5.7
	Neither agree nor disagree	512	4.3
	Agree	2767	23.0
	Strongly agree	5989	49.9
	Don't know/haven't heard enough	1313	10.9
The IE Commissioners should be appointed by Parliament and not the President	Strongly disagree	613	5.1
	Disagree	680	5.7
	Neither agree nor disagree	631	5.3
	Agree	3049	25.4
	Strongly agree	5653	47.2
	Don't know/haven't heard enough	1358	11.3

The results indicate that 72% of the respondents agreed with the statement that said the Secretary of the Commission should be appointed by Parliament and not the President while 70% of the respondents agreed with the statement that said the IEC should report directly to the Parliament.

For the same reason, 73% of the respondents agreed with the statement that the IEC should be removed from the Office of the President. And lastly, 73% of the respondents agreed that the IEC Commissioners should be appointed by Parliament and not the President.

These results demonstrate the respondents' agreement to reforms suggested to strengthen the IEC. The results suggest that while the respondents generally trust the IEC and its ability to conduct credible elections, they still think that reforms would improve the performance of the IEC.

Notable here again is the significant number of respondents who did not know anything about these suggestions. Over 10% of the respondents to each one of the statements showed that they did know about these suggestions. These are of course intricate matters that may have a bearing on the IEC and may not necessarily be attributed to ordinary members of the public.

4.7.3 POLITICAL PARTY FUNDING

In relation to political party funding, two statements were read out to the respondents, and they were expected to indicate the one that best reflects their views. The results as depicted in Table 30 are as follows

Table 30: Statements on political party funding

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	Not accurate at all	333	2.8	2.8
	Statement 1: Political parties in Botswana should be publicly funded to put all parties on an equal footing.	6699	55.7	55.8
	Statement 2: Political parties should continue to be responsible for raising their own funds from their supporters.	4513	37.5	37.6
	Don't know	463	3.9	3.9
	Total	12008	99.9	100.0
Missing System		11	0.1	
Total		12 019	100.0	

The results indicate that 56% of the respondents agree with the first statement that political parties should be publicly funded while 38% agreed with the second statement that they should not be publicly funded. In the same vein, 2.8% agreed with neither statement while 2.8% said that they do not know.

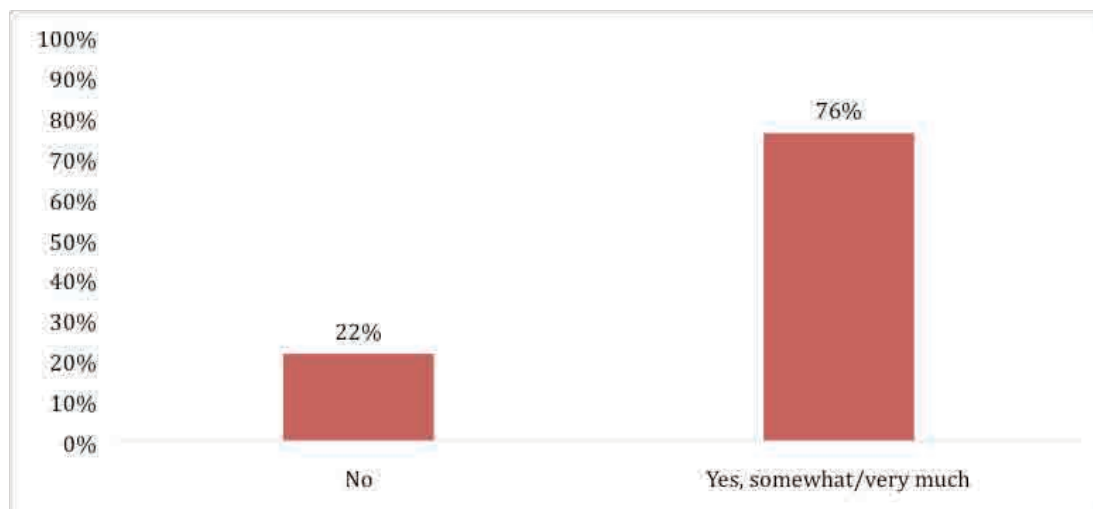
4.7.4 ELECTORAL LEGAL INSTRUMENTS

This part focuses on the electoral system that is used in Botswana and the views that are held by the citizens. The interviews started with the current electoral system that is in place and then moved to other issues such as their level of satisfaction and the effect of changing the current system on their likelihood to vote.

i) The current electoral system

The respondents were asked to state if the current electoral system encourages them to vote or not. The results are provided in Figure 25.

Figure 25: Does the current method of deciding who wins the election, encourage you to vote?

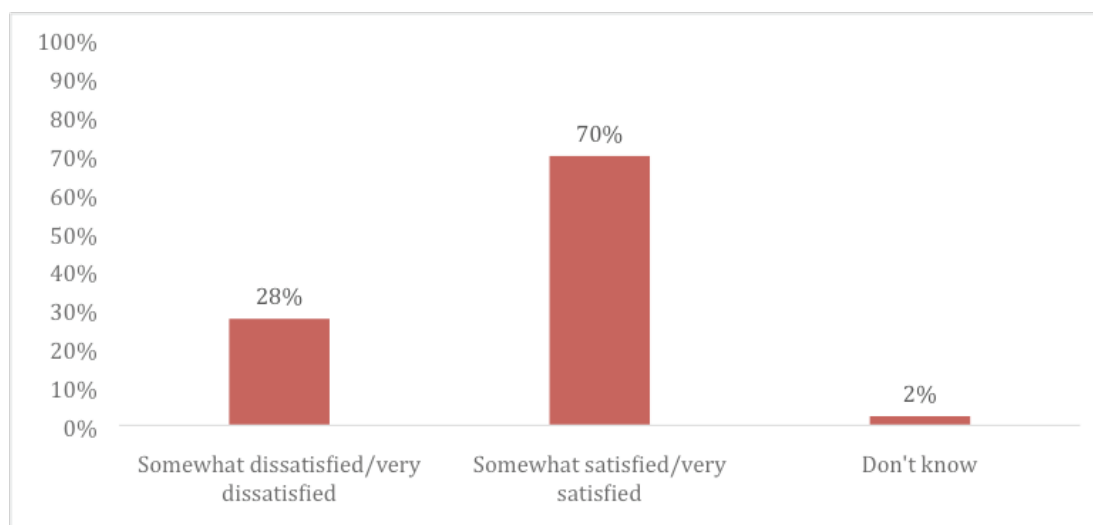


Cumulatively, 76% of the respondents stated that the current method of deciding who wins the election 'somewhat' and 'very much' encouraged them to vote; 22% said the current method does not encourage them to vote while the remaining 2% said that they do not know. This means that a majority is happy with FPTP and that the system encouraged them to vote.

ii) Satisfaction with the system of winner takes all

In Botswana general elections, the candidate with the most votes wins the election. The respondents were asked to state how satisfied they are with the present electoral system. They had to indicate if they were very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. The results are presented in Figure 26.

Figure 26: Satisfaction with the system of winner takes all

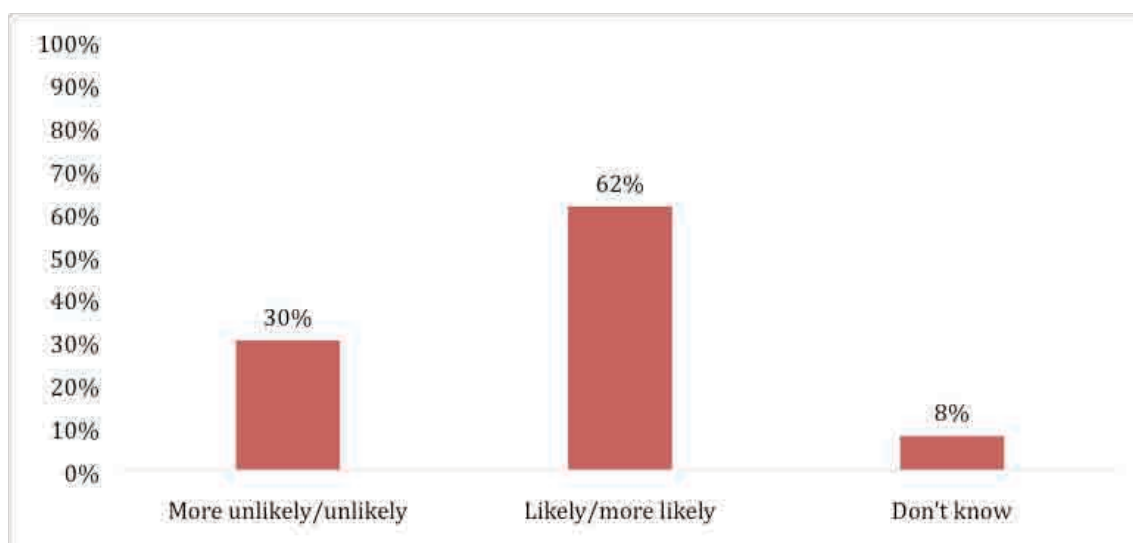


Cumulatively, 70% of the respondents stated that they were 'satisfied' and 'somewhat satisfied' with the present electoral system. Needless to state, 70% denotes a high level of satisfaction with the present electoral system called First-Past-The-Post (FPTP). Thus, the foregoing finding unambiguously belies calls for an alternative electoral system by Botswana scholars, notably, Molomo (2000; 2004). Molomo (2000:109) argues that the FPTP electoral system has failed Botswana in that 'democracy is also about ensuring that electoral responses reflect the will of the people' and that the FPTP electoral system 'has fared poorly in this regard'. In a way, it can be argued that a majority of the respondents were not concerned with academic debates that pit one electoral system against one another, for example, First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) versus Proportional Representation (PR).

iii) Change of electoral system

As a way of extending the discussion on the FPTP system, the respondents were asked to state if the use of a different system of deciding who wins elections (electoral system) is likely or unlikely to motivate people to vote. Their responses are captured in Figure 27.

Figure 27: Does using a different system of deciding who wins elections (electoral system) likely or unlikely to motivate people to vote?



Cumulatively, 62% of the respondents stated that having a different system of deciding who wins elections (electoral system) is 'likely' and 'more likely' to motivate people to vote. It can be deduced that a majority of the respondents were wedded to the belief that the electoral responses was the best conduit to reflect the will of the voters.

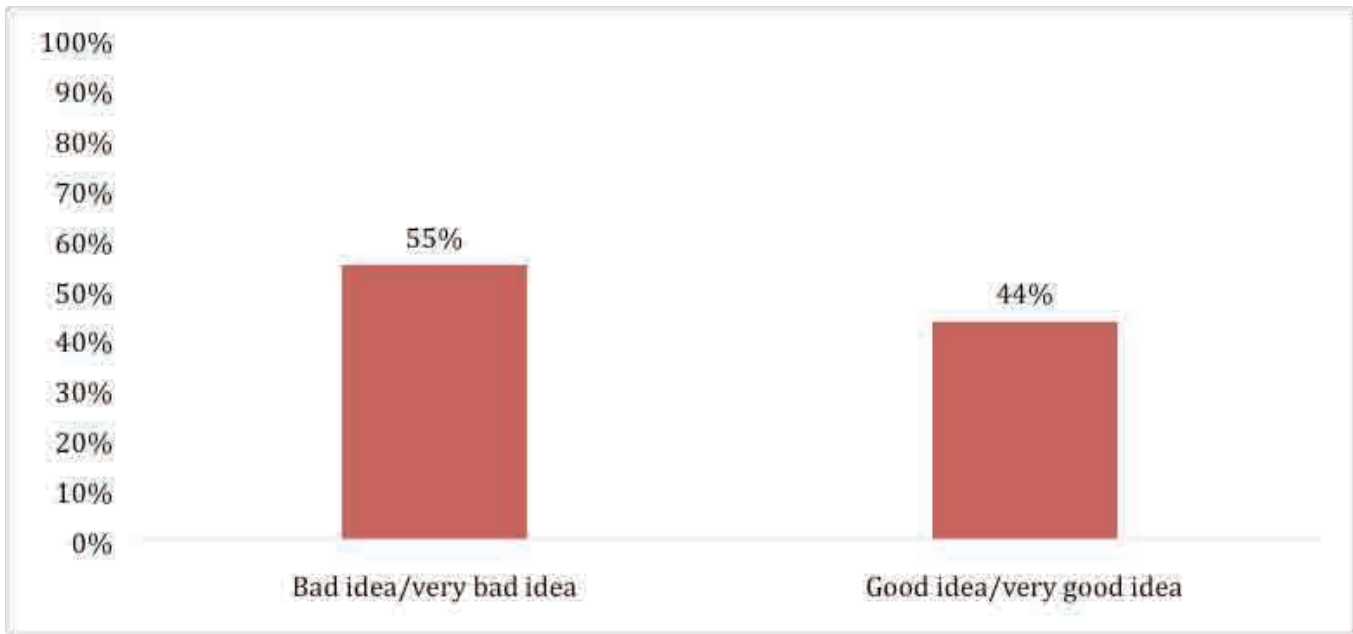
It is vital to note that a different electoral system means a non-FPTP system such as Proportional Representation or hybrid Proportional Representation which will motivate people to vote. These results may be viewed and interpreted in two ways: one, they may be viewed as a contradiction, for one cannot say one is happy with the current electoral system (FPTP) in one breath (see figure 26) and reverse oneself in the next breath that one will be motivated to vote if a non-FPTP system was put in place (see figure 27). The likely explanation is that the question was misunderstood. This is a plausible conjecture given that issues such as electoral systems are regarded by many votes to be exercises in philosophising and arcane academising. The

second way of interpreting the results is that whilst the respondents are satisfied with the FPTP system, the introduction of another system may not encourage them to vote as long as it is better than the one currently in use.

iv) Compulsory voting

In countries like Australia, it is mandatory for citizens to register and vote. So, in an attempt to establish if the citizens favour the introduction of a law that compels them to vote, the respondents were asked the question: “Do you think it is a very good, good, bad or very bad idea for Botswana to adopt a law requiring people to vote”? The results are presented in Figure 28.

Figure 28: Is it a very good, good, bad or very bad idea for Botswana to adopt a law requiring people to vote?

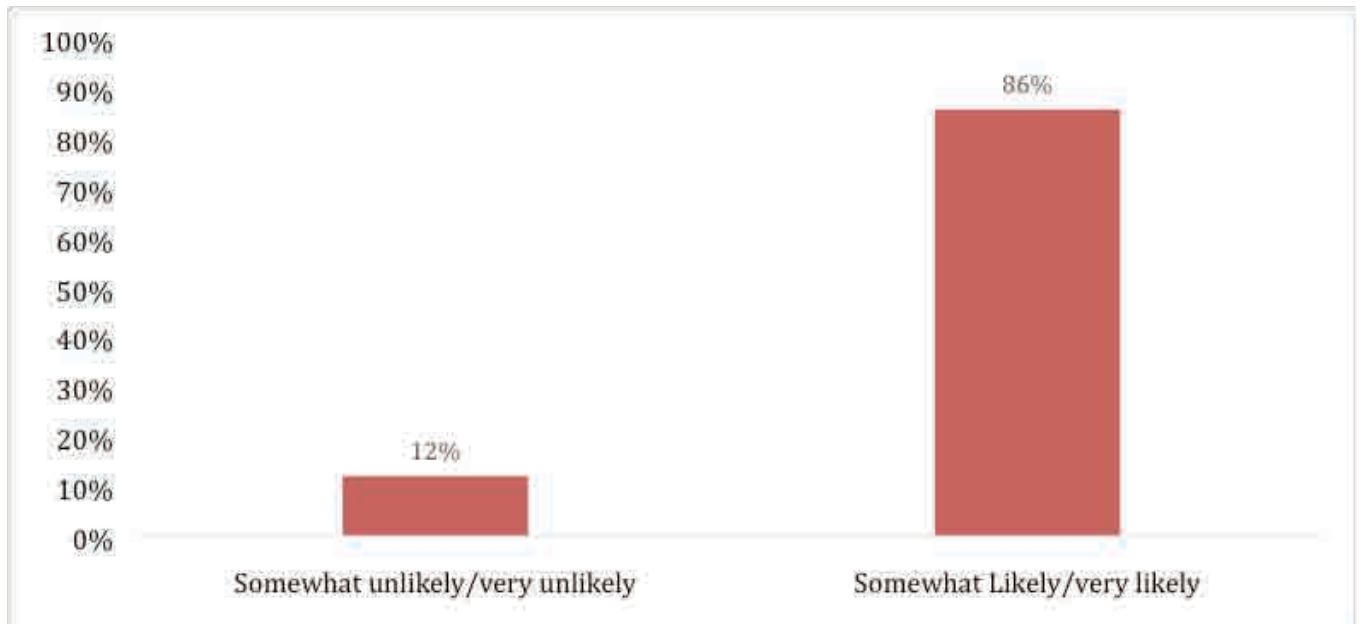


Cumulatively, 55% of the respondents stated that it was a ‘bad’ or ‘very bad idea’ for Botswana to adopt a law requiring people to vote. It can be argued that this reasoning was based on the belief that voting was a free enterprise. Hence, people should not be forced to vote and sanctioned if they do not participate in an election.

v) One’s likelihood to vote in 2024

As a follow-up to the question posed above as well as to check if citizens who are currently eligible to vote are willing to do it in 2024, the respondents were asked the question: “How likely are you to vote in the next general election? Are you very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely? The results are indicated in Figure 29.

Figure 29: One's likelihood to vote in the next general election?



Cumulatively, 86% of the respondents stated that they were 'very likely' and 'somewhat likely' to vote in the next general election scheduled for October 2024. This shows that a majority of the respondents still see value in partaking in elections.

4.8 SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

The summary of results is done in four parts. The first part focuses on issues related to management of general elections by the IEC. The second part deals with the perceptions and independence of the IEC while the third part covers issues related to political party funding. And the last part summarises issues related to legal and electoral instruments.

i) Management of elections by the IEC

The performance of the IEC in the 2019 election has been rated as fairly good and very good 41.4% and 16.8% of the respondents, respectively. This yields a total of 58.2% which shows a positive evaluation of the performance of the IEC in the previous election. Only 11.2% of the respondents indicated the IEC performed poorly in the last elections while 12.1% said that they do not know.

In terms of people's votes not being accurately counted or not fairly reflected in the results, 47.3% of the respondents said that it never happened; 17% said it happened once or twice while 8.8% said it happened often times and 26.9% said that they did not know. It is worrisome that a combined figure of 25.8% of the respondents said that it happened once, twice and often. This calls for the IEC to plug all the leakages that may be in the current system that is used to count the ballot papers.

On the issue of people voting more than once, 59% of the respondents said that it has never happened; 7.6% said that it happened once or twice; 4.4% said that it happened a few times and

28.9% said that they do not know. A combined figure of 12% said that some people voted once, twice, and a few times. Regarding announcement of accurate elections results by the IEC, 47.1% of the respondents said that the results were an accurate outcome of the elections; 8.3% said that the results are not an accurate reflection of the outcome of elections at all; 11.3% said that the results are inaccurate with major discrepancies, while 18.6% said the results of elections are accurate with minor discrepancies. The emergent picture here is that the respondents still have trust and confidence on the IEC regarding its capability of ensuring accurate election results. They believe that the electoral process (in respect to counting) is free of manipulation and fraud.

ii) Independence of the IEC

The results indicate that 54% of the respondents are of the view that the IEC performs its duties as a neutral body guided only by law while 32% said that the IEC makes decisions that favour particular people, parties or interests. And 9.5% of the respondents said that they do not know. The above results indicate that the majority of the respondents have a positive perception of the IEC. Notwithstanding these positive results, it is important for the IEC to strive to increase the number of people who view it in a positive way. One of the things that it has to do is to be more visible throughout the year rather than at the time when the registration process for general elections starts. It must constantly educate the citizens on its mandate and the importance of voting.

iii) Appointment of the Secretary of the Commission and the Commissioners

Regarding the independence of the IEC, 72% of the respondents said that the Secretary of the Commission should be appointed by Parliament and not the President. The results also indicate that 70% of the respondents said the IEC should report directly to the Parliament. In the same vein, 73% of the respondents said that the IEC Commissioners should be appointed by Parliament and not the President. Lastly, 73 % of the respondents said that the IEC should be removed from the Office of the President.

iv) Political party funding

The results indicate that 56% of the respondents said that political parties should be publicly funded while 38% are of the view that they should not be publicly funded. In the same vein, 2.8% of the respondents said that they do not know.

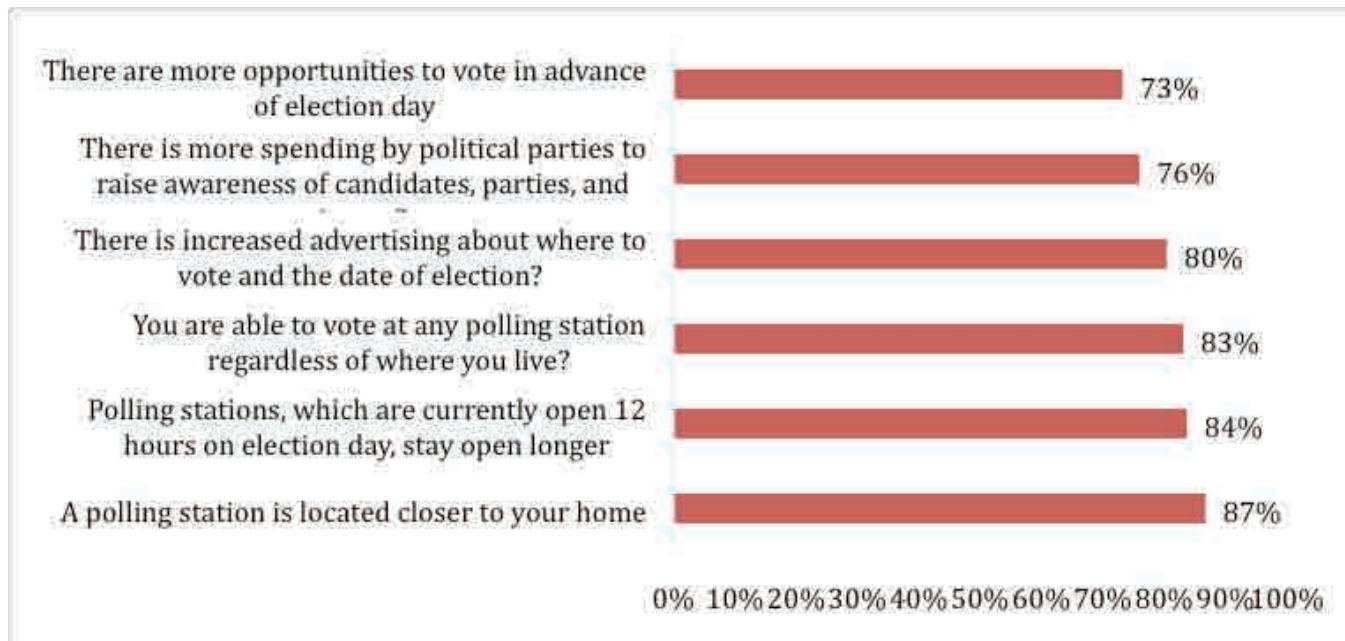
v) Electoral legal instruments

Cumulatively, 76% of the respondents stated that the current method of deciding who wins the election 'somewhat' and 'very much' encouraged them to vote. This means that a majority is happy with FPTP and that the system encouraged them to vote. When it comes to forcing people to vote as it is done in other countries, 55% of the respondents stated that it was a 'bad' or 'very bad idea' for Botswana to adopt a law requiring people to vote. It can be argued that this reasoning was based on the belief that voting was a free enterprise. Hence, people should not be forced to vote and sanctioned if they do not participate in an election.

4.9 PERTINENT ISSUES AND CHANGES PROPOSED BY THE RESPONDENTS

The respondents were asked to tell the interviewers if they were much more likely, more likely, no more likely, or less likely to vote given certain conditions as next enunciated:

Figure 30: Voting in the future and changes to encourage people to vote



i) A polling station is located closer to your home:

cumulatively, 87% of the respondents stated that they were ‘more likely’ and ‘much more likely’ to vote if a polling station was located closer to their homes. This response is not surprising given the fact that there are opportunity costs that are attached to participating in elections. Hence, a polling station which is located closer to potential voters’ homes mitigated these costs. Similarly, a polling station which is located closer to potential voters’ homes enhances their personal conveniences, particularly, older persons (or the aged), the physically infirm or PLWDs (people living with disabilities). Therefore, resources permitting, polling stations must be located closer to potential voters’ homes.

ii) Polling stations, which are currently open 12 hours on elections day, stay open longer:

cumulatively, 84% of the respondents stated that they were ‘more likely’ and ‘much more likely’ to vote if polling stations, which are currently open 12 hours on elections day, stayed open longer. This finding suggests that voters would prefer that polling stations be open longer than 12 hours so that they can undertake their daily chores and still find time to go cast their vote. Hence, the IEC and relevant stakeholders may consider this recommendation. In this regard, it is notable that participants at various election evaluation meetings have mooted this idea which may dissipate voter apathy [or colloquially put, ‘to rock the vote’].

iii) You are able to vote at any polling station regardless of where you live?

Cumulatively, 83% of the respondents stated that they were ‘more likely’ and ‘much more likely’ to be able to vote at any polling station regardless of where they lived. This bespeaks to the fact that voters can register and vote at any polling station regardless of where they live. However,

this is a slippery slope because this could lead to voter trafficking because potential voters can be ferried to places where they are not domiciled. In fact, there are documented cases where some candidates ferried potential voters from their places of work such as Gaborone to register and vote in an election in their home villages. In a reverse fashion, some candidates allegedly ferried potential voters from their home villages to the city to register and vote in an election.

iv) There are more opportunities to vote in advance of elections day:

cumulatively, 73% of the respondents stated that they were 'more likely' and 'much more likely' to vote if there were more opportunities to vote in advance of elections day. Advance voting, also known as early voting, allows voters to cast their ballots before the scheduled election day or period is a common feature in developed countries (see Ekman:2022) but the same is only available to those who manage elections (e.g., security forces) in Botswana. From the survey, it can be concluded that the appetite for advance voting was explicitly demonstrated by a majority of the respondents who were a microcosm of the nation. Given that advance voting is thought to increase voter turnout (Government of Canada:2022), there is merit in expanding the facility.

v) There is increased advertising about where to vote and the date of election?

Cumulatively, 80% of the respondents stated that they were 'more likely' and 'much more likely' to vote if there was increased advertising about where to vote and the date of election. This response is not surprising given that information giving is key during an electoral process. Therefore, it is imperative to properly package and target information on where to vote and the date of election in a digitised world singularly characterised by information overload with pathologies such as misinformation, disinformation, fake news, and deep fakes on social media.

vi) There is more spending by political parties to raise awareness of candidates, parties, and issues?

Cumulatively, 76% of the respondents stated that they were 'more likely' and 'much more likely' to vote there if there was more spending by political parties to raise awareness of candidates, parties, and issues. This response is not surprising given that messaging is key in an election. Thus, political parties must raise awareness of candidates, parties, and policy issues.

4.10 DISCUSSION OF THE MAIN STUDY FINDINGS

The study has three main objectives. These objectives are to:

- a) Establish factors influencing voter apathy among various demographics in Botswana.
- b) Establish whether the level of political awareness has any influence on participation of citizens in the electoral process.
- c) Make significant proposals for the improvement of participation of citizens in the electoral process and Botswana's democracy.

The study was to, among other things, determine whether perceptions about the following have any influence on participation of citizens in the electoral process:

- The management of elections by the IEC.
- The independence of the IEC.
- Political party funding.
- Electoral legal frameworks.

Below is a presentation of the main study findings.

1. WHY DO PEOPLE NOT REGISTER AND VOTE

Out of 12 019 respondents, 71% said that they voted while 29% said that they did not vote. Several factors which contribute to an increase in voter apathy were identified. These are lack of knowledge about the political parties that contest the elections; lack of interest in partisan politics; lack of recall mechanism; the absence of credible and ethical political candidates coupled with lack of responsiveness by the government.

i) Lack of knowledge about political parties

The study reveals that 32% of the respondents were not knowledgeable about the political parties that contested the 2019 general elections and the policies that they promised to formulate and implement when voted into power. It was also revealed during the focus group discussions that a significant percentage of the citizens still fail to differentiate between primary elections held by political parties and national elections. Some people decide not to register for national elections the moment their preferred candidates lose primary elections. This calls for more education by the political parties and the IEC.

ii) Lack of interest in partisan politics

The results indicate that 47% of the respondents are not interested in partisan politics while the remaining 53% are interested. Lack of interest in partisan politics basically means that the potential voters do not register as they are not aware of what the various political parties promise to offer if they assume reins of power.

iii) Lack of credible and ethical political candidates

The study indicates that 84% of the respondents believe that voter apathy is influenced by the absence of credible and ethical potential candidates or representatives and another 84% attribute it to failure by politicians to deliver on their promises. The calibre of the political candidates was also presented during the two focus group discussions with councillors; and unemployed youth in Serowe and in Ghanzi. They admitted that some candidates deliberately mislead and misinform the citizens during campaigns by promising them things (i.e., developmental projects) that they know are not possible to deliver as the District Development Plans/Urban Development Plans (DDPs/UDPs) and the National Development Plans (NDPs) are not synchronised with the electoral cycle.

This means that the plans are finalised before the citizens go to the polls thus making it extremely difficult for people who win the elections to submit new projects and change the approved plans. The deceiving behaviour of politicians and the ambiguous promises they give to the people results in people losing trust and believing that politics is just a hoax. The foregoing point was raised and discussed vociferously at a focus group discussion in Masunga.

The study findings also reveal that 80% attribute voter apathy to lack of responsiveness by the government. Failure of the government to deliver on the pledges made on the eve of elections and lots of promises that take long to be executed, or not done at all have also been identified as an important factor that discourage people from voting during the focus group discussions in Ghanzi and Serowe.

iv) A weak relationship between the political representatives and electorates

The results indicate that 67.1%, 80.5%, 82.0% and 76.4% of the respondents stated that they never contacted the local government councilor, a Member of Parliament, a political party official and a traditional leader, respectively, during the past five years. Only 13% of the respondents stated that they often contacted a local government councilor in the past five years.

It is, therefore, clear that there is a weak relationship and disconnect between the respondents and local government councilors, Members of Parliament, political party officials and traditional leaders. This calls for the closing of the chasm because the four are the link between the community and the government. All four are domiciled in the community and are, therefore, readily reachable. On its part, though, the community must make use of these offices/officers.

v) Lack of recall mechanism for underperforming politicians

This issue was brought to light during the focus group discussions in Serowe, Ghanzi, Ramotswa and Tlokweng. The participants lamented the fact that in the current system that is in place, citizens have no way of recalling Councillors and Members of Parliament who fail to execute their duties and responsibilities diligently. Once elected to leadership positions, some politicians become answerable only to themselves or to their political parties and pay no attention to the needs and demands of the people who voted for them. This tendency or bad behaviour of the politicians has, therefore, been presented as one of the factors that discourage people from registering and voting.

2. WHO EXACTLY DOES NOT VOTE

The results indicate that 30.4% of the people who did not vote in 2019 were male while 27.5% were female. They also show that 71.6% of these people were aged between 18 and 25 while a cumulative percentage of 62.2 were aged between 26 and 55. Cumulatively, 63.2% of these people live in cities, towns and urban villages while a cumulative percentage of 66.2 have secondary and post-secondary education. And a cumulative percentage of 59.4 are not employed. All these responses yielded an average of 28.7%.

The majority of the respondents who do not vote and know very little or nothing about political parties are the youth who live in cities, towns and urban villages. This finding runs against what is available in the literature as the young people who live in cities, towns and urban villages are usually deemed to be more informed about political issues as compared to people living in the rural areas. This calls for the use of different platforms such as social media, private radio stations and music festivals to disseminate information and reach these people.

3. LOW LEVELS OF POLITICAL EDUCATION AND VOTER APATHY

There are low levels of political discussions among friends and family members as evidenced by the fact that 36.9% of the respondents stated that they sometimes talked to their family or friends about politics and current events. In the same vein, 34.9% said that their families occasionally talked about politics and current events when they were growing up. Hence, the conclusion that can be reached is that if politics and current events are occasional subjects of family conversations, it means that political consciousness is occasionally inculcated into growing minds.

A very important result to note is that 47% of the respondents stated that they are not interested in partisan politics. This is likely to have a positive correlation with low political education and the high rate of voter apathy.

In the same vein, two-thirds of the respondents do not know about political parties that contested the 2019 elections. This clearly indicates that public education is lacking and a concerted effort must be made to sensitise these people to political issues.

A significant percentage (83.2%) of the respondents said that they do not belong to any political group on Facebook and 85.1% do not participate in political debates on social media platforms. Hence, there is low political participation as evidenced by the fact that 57.8% of the respondents said that they did not attend a campaign rally in 2019. Furthermore, 83.9% did not work for any political candidate or party and 53.4% were not contacted by a representative of any political party.

The issue of political education and awareness was discussed at length in a focus group discussion at Serowe South, Ramotswa and Tlokweng. The participants indicated that some of the electorates cannot differentiate between political party primary elections and the national general elections. When their preferred candidates lose primary elections, they do not register to vote for other candidates at the national level.

The participants further indicated that the unfortunate situation as described in the foregoing paragraph is compounded by the fact that some politicians usually take advantage of the ignorant electorates and discourage them to register and vote as they will now be seen to be empowering a rival. So, they are sometimes encouraged not to participate in national elections so that all the people who won the party primary elections can also feel the brunt.

4. MANAGEMENT OF ELECTIONS BY THE IEC

This part covers the manner in which the IEC is viewed and assessed by the respondents as well as suggestions in terms of what needs to be done to make it more transparent and efficient.

i) IEC's performance of its main duties and responsibilities

The findings reveal that the majority of the respondents (54%) still have faith, trust and confidence in the IEC in terms of how it performs its duties and responsibilities. They are of the view that it operates in a neutral way as guided by the law.

ii) Announcement of accurate results by the IEC in 2019

The study indicates that 47.1 % of the respondents believe that the IEC announced an accurate

outcome of the elections in 2019 while 18.6 % think the results of elections are accurate with minor discrepancies. On the contrary, 8.3% of the respondents think that the results are not an accurate reflection of the outcome of elections at all, and 11.3 % of the respondents think that the results are inaccurate with major discrepancies. Whilst these results reflect positively on the integrity of the IEC with a cumulative percentage of 65.7, it must also be noted that a cumulative percentage of 19.6 of the respondents believe that the results are not an accurate record.

This means that the IEC must make a concerted effort to address any deficiencies that may be associated with the counting of ballot papers. It also calls for more education and information dissemination to the citizens on how the counting is done. One of the issues that was raised during the focus group discussions in Ghanzi, Maun East, Maun West and Serowe, is that the counting of votes should be done at the polling stations to allay fears of cheating or rigging of election results. It was further suggested that transparent ballot boxes should be used.

iii) Appointment of the Secretary of the Commission

The results indicate that 72% of the respondents agreed with the statement that said the Secretary of the Commission should be appointed by Parliament and not the President while 70% of the respondents agreed with the statement that said the IEC should report directly to the Parliament.

These results are not surprising as opposition political parties have always complained about the independence of the IEC as a department in the Ministry of Presidential Affairs, Governance and Public Administration. In the same vein, 73% of the respondents agreed that the IEC Commissioners should be appointed by Parliament and not the President.

iv) Removal of the IEC from the Ministry of Presidential Affairs, Governance and Public Administration

Further to the issue raised under item (iii), 73 % of the respondents agreed with the statement that the IEC should be removed from the Ministry of Presidential Affairs, Governance and Public Administration. The IEC is deemed to be a national organisation that should serve the citizens without creating an impression that it is controlled by the President.

Its removal from the Ministry of Presidential Affairs, Governance and Public Administration will lay to rest arguments that it can be manipulated and used by the sitting President or the ruling party to win elections. These arguments were presented by some of the respondents, key informants and were covered in focus group discussions in Serowe South, Ghanzi North, Ghanzi South, Kweneng South and Selibe-Phikwe East.

5. POLITICAL PARTY FUNDING

The results indicate that 56% of the respondents agree with the statement that political parties should be publicly funded. The contention here is that such a move will enable political parties to compete fairly. As one of the key informants stated, *“Voting gives voice to the public and the government cannot always second guess the electorates. Democracy too requires the participation of all eligible members of the public and it is strengthened by participation at all levels. Hence, it must be viewed and treated as a public good which should be made available to all citizens”*.

In relation to the issue of political party funding, one of the key informants argued that the key campaign methods that are used by political parties still remain traditional, freedom square, hard copy manifestos. These do not appeal to the youth. Even the working adults are missed because freedom squares traditionally take place during the day while workers are on their way home. Hence, there is need for political parties to be given the much-needed financial resources so that they can use the available social media platforms, use private radio stations and newspapers to sell their parties to the electorates.

6. ELECTORAL LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

A significant percentage of the respondents (76%) are of the view that the current method of deciding who wins the election 'somewhat' and 'very much' encouraged them to vote. This means that a majority is happy with FPTP and that the system encouraged them to vote. Since voting is a free enterprise, 55% of the respondents stated that it would be a 'bad' or 'very bad idea' for Botswana to adopt a law requiring people to vote. People should not be forced to vote and punished if they do not participate in an election.

It is worth noting that the Constitution of Botswana (1966 as amended), Electoral Act (1968 as amended) and Local Government Act (2012) provide the legal and institutional framework for the conduct of elections. While the three, particularly Electoral Act and Local Government Act, provide a legal and institutional framework for the conduct of supposedly free, fair and credible elections, they have been faulted for failing to meet generally accepted elections standards and norms as envisaged by, for example, in the SADC Principles And Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections and African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. Such is the view of both internal and external observers, particularly, SADC (SADC Electoral Observation Missions (SEOMs)), AU (African Union Election Observation Mission – see African Union election observation mission to the 23 October 2019 general elections in the Republic of Botswana) and EU election observation missions through election observation missions reports. To exemplify, the objectives of the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections (SADC:2015) are, inter alia, to promote electoral justice and best practices in the management of elections and mitigation of election-related conflict [2.1.5] and encourage gender balance and equality; and ethnic and religious diversity in governance and development [2.1.6]. Regarding electoral justice, while there are ad hoc electoral dispute resolution mechanisms, there are no specialist courts that deal with electoral disputes. As the 2019 UDC vs IEC court case at the apex court amply demonstrated, ordinary courts have no jurisdiction over elections appeals. In January 2020, the Court of Appeal stated that it did not have jurisdiction to entertain appeals raised by parliamentary candidates in election petitions.

A specialist elections court is, therefore, needed. With regards to gender balance and equality, the electoral system does not engender the same, neither does it provide for gender quotas despite being a signatory of the SADC Declaration on Gender and Development (SADC:1997). The Declaration reaffirms SADC's commitment to eliminating gender discrimination and mainstreaming gender issues in Southern Africa. The signatories promised to ensure 30% representation of women in political and decision-making bodies by 2005. As it is, at both council and parliamentary levels, gender balance and equality is a problem.

Regarding democratic elections as per the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (AU:2007), State Parties re-affirm their commitment to regularly holding transparent, free and fair elections in accordance with the Union's Declaration on the Principles

Governing Democratic Elections in Africa. The Charter enjoins signatories to, inter alia, establish and strengthen independent and impartial national electoral bodies responsible for the management of elections and establish and strengthen national mechanisms that redress election-related disputes in a timely manner.

Regarding an independent EMB, while the IEC bears the adjective 'independence', its independence is not clearly spelt out in the Electoral Act. Operationally, it is under the Office of the President and similarly, it cannot hire its own staff and draft its budget. Regarding national mechanisms that redress election-related disputes, while such are there, the ideal solution is to have specialist courts that deal with electoral disputes.

While, overall, the election observation missions have not outrightly stated that Botswana does not hold free, fair and credible elections, there is room for improvement regarding low hanging fruits; e.g., counting ballots at polling stations, using indelible ink and using transparent ballot boxes. Thus, the Electoral Act must be amended to allow for the realisation of the said low hanging fruits which would be the consolidation of electoral laws. The high hanging fruit would be a replacement of the two Acts with the IEC Act (see Botlhale: 2016).

7. LINKING THE FINDINGS TO THE 2002 STUDY ON VOTER APATHY

The DRP was engaged to do a similar study in 2002 even though the Terms of Reference were slightly different from the ones guiding the current study. Below is a presentation of three similar findings made by the 2002 study and the current one:

- i. Low levels of youth participation in politics: in 2002, it was established that 4.3% and 27.5% of the youth registered and voted in the 1994 and 1999 general elections respectively. The current study indicates that 71.6% of the respondents who did not vote in 2019 are aged between 18 and 25 while a cumulative percentage of 62.2 were aged between 26 and 55.
- ii. Membership of political parties: in 2002, 74.2% of the respondents indicated that they did not belong to any association or political party. The current study has established that 83% of the respondents stated that they were not members of a political party on Facebook.
- iii. Discussion of political issues with friends and relatives: in 2022, 36.5% of the respondents stated that their families never discuss political issues while 24.8% of the respondents gave the same answer in the current study.

Part FIVE

RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAY FORWARD

5.1 Introduction

This part presents the recommendations that are based on the study findings. All the recommendations presented below are important and have not been ranked in terms of importance. They are divided into two groups: one group covers recommendations that require administrative action while the other group covers the ones that require the amendment of the country's Constitution and the Electoral Act.

5.2 Recommendations

5.2.1 Administrative Recommendations

- 1 The IEC should increase advertising about where to vote and the date of the elections so that there is no confusion on the part of voters.
- 2 Since some of the polling stations are far from the voters and therefore discourage them from registering and voting especially when they need transport, it is recommended that more polling stations should be set up as close as possible to the voters.
- 3 The number of booths should be increased at all polling stations to address the issue of long queues which discourage people from voting.
- 4 As per SADC norms and standards on free, fair, and credible elections, the IEC must use transparent ballot boxes to engender transparency.
- 5 On election day, people with disabilities should be given priority and assistance in the manner that is appropriate.
- 6 There should be an inclusion of studies on democracy, elections and citizenship in the curriculum at lower levels of the education system to sensitise and assist children at a tender age to have a better grasp and understanding of the political landscape, as well as the importance of voting and partaking in political activities.
- 7 The public media must be requested to carry weekly political party (educational not propaganda) messages.

5.2.2 Legal Recommendations (Amendment of the constitution and/ or the Electoral Act)

- 8 The counting of ballots should be done at the polling stations to allay fears of cheating or rigging. This recommendation, which has been repeatedly made during elections audit workshops, is in accordance with the SADC Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.
- 9 The IEC should make every effort to reach people with disabilities at home so that they can register and vote. This requires introduction of mobile polling stations.

-
- 10** As per SADC norms and standards on free, fair and credible elections, and indeed practice all over the world, indelible ink must be used during voting to deal with issues surrounding multiple voting.
- 11** Technology could be used to shorten queuing times and, more broadly, to encourage young people to vote.
- 13** People should be allowed to register and vote for their preferred candidate without having to travel to their home villages. This calls for the use of technology.
- 13** Polling stations must be open for more than 12 hours on election day to give people who work on election day an opportunity to cast their votes after work.
- 14** The mandate of the IEC should be expanded to cover voter and civic education, campaign financing and constituency delimitation. This means that the IEC must be given more resources to improve voter and civic education which are of critical importance to ensuring that eligible voters appreciate the importance of registering and voting. This should be a continuous exercise as opposed to the current situation whereby the exercise is carried out on the eve of elections.
- 15** The IEC must be guaranteed institutional independence in law establishing it in the Constitution.
- 16** The Constitution must be amended to remove the IEC from the Ministry for State President and place it under Parliament (just like South Africa's chapter 9 institutions of which the IEC is part of). It must not just be independent, but it must also be seen to be independent for it to enjoy the trust and confidence that it needs to manage credible elections.
- 17** It is recommended that the name of the Election Management Body (EMB) be changed from the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) to the Electoral Commission of Botswana (ECB). The word "Independent" tends to pre-empt questions regarding the status of the EMB as it is assumed that its independence is captured and guaranteed by the name. The proposed change of name is in line with similar bodies in South Africa and Namibia.
- 18** Since some people usually fail to vote as a result of expired national identity cards (Oman), the law must be amended to allow voters to use passports and drivers' licences as forms of identity at the time of voting more so that they both have the Oman numbers and the holders' pictures on them.
- 19** The law must be amended to allow public funding of political parties that contest for state power as a way of leveling the political playfield.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

<i>[Interviewer: Write names in the boxes]</i>			
Town/Village			
Polling District		Polling Station	

Household Selection Procedure

Interviewer: It is your job to select a random (this means any) household. A household is a group of people who currently eat together from the same pot.

Use a 5/10 interval pattern to select a household. That is, walking in your designated direction away from the start point, select the 5th household for the first interview, counting houses on both the right and the left (and starting with those on the right if they are opposite each other). Once you leave your first interview, continue on in the same direction, this time selecting the 10th household, again counting houses on both the right and the left. If the settlement comes to an end and there are no more houses, turn at right angles to the right and keep walking, continuing to count until finding the 10th dwelling.

If no one is at home (i.e. premises empty) after two visits, substitute with the very next household. If the interview is refused, use an interval of 10 to select a substitute household, counting houses on both the right and the left.

When you find a household with someone home, please introduce yourself using the following script. You must learn this introduction so that you can say it exactly as it is written below.

Introduction:

Good day. My name is _____. I am from the Democracy Research Project (DRP), a research agency based at the University of Botswana. The DRP conducts studies on different aspects of democracy in Botswana to assess the quality and development. We do not represent the government or any political party. We are studying the views of citizens in Botswana concerning voter apathy.

Voter apathy is described as lack of interest in elections among voters. It occurs when eligible voters do not register and vote in elections. Some people register but end up not voting.

There is a concern that there is voter apathy in Botswana and this study intends to explore reasons for this phenomenon. We would like to discuss this issue with a member of your household who is a Botswana aged 18 years and above.

Every person in the country has an equal chance of being included in this study. All information will be kept confidential. Your household has been chosen by chance. We would like to choose an adult from your household. Would you help us pick one?

If the respondent is agreeable, he/she must sign the consent form before we proceed.

Note: The person must give his or her informed consent by answering positively and signing the consent form. If participation is refused, walk away from the household and use the day code to substitute the household. If consent is secured, proceed as follows.

Respondent Selection Procedure

Interviewer: Within the household, it is your job is to select a random (this means any) individual. This individual becomes the interview respondent. In addition, you are responsible for alternating interviews between men and women. Circle the correct code number below.

Please tell me the names of all males/females [select correct gender] who presently live in this household. I only want the names of males/females [select correct gender] who are citizens of Botswana and who are 18 years and older.

If this interview must be with a female, list only women's names. If this interview is with a male, list only men's names. List all eligible household members of this gender who are 18 years or older, even those not presently at home but who will return to the house at any time that day. Include only citizens of Botswana

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Women's Names	Men's Names
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9
10	10

Please record the total number of adults (men and women) in the household who are citizens of Botswana. Enter a two-digit number.

ADULT_CT. Total number of adult citizens in the household		
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ADULT_CT. Total number of adult citizens in the household	Day	Month	Year
Date of interview [Interviewer: Enter day, month, and year]			

STRTIME	Hour	Minute
Time interview started [Interviewer: Enter hour and minute, using 24-hour clock]		

Interviewer: If a respondent firmly refuses to answer any question, write “refused” in the answer space and continue to the next question

BEGIN INTERVIEW

Let's begin by recording a few facts about yourself.

Q1. How old are you? [Interviewer: Don't know = 999 [Interviewer: If respondent is aged less than 18 select “Respondent is under 18 years old” and another respondent will be selected. If there are no other respondents to select, continue to the next household to the right.]			
--	--	--	--

Q2. How long have you been residing in this area/constituency

1. less than 3 yrs.	1
2. 3 to 5 yrs.	2
3. Over 5 yrs.	3

Q3. Did you vote in the last general elections held in 2019?

Yes [Skip to Q6]	1
NO	0

Q4. If you did not vote, Why? [Interviewer: Tick all that Apply]

A. Had not registered	1	0
B. Registered but could not travel to the polling station	1	0
C. Did not know the location of the polling station	1	0
D. Was out of the country	1	0
E. Was working on the election day	1	0
F. Could not find Omang and voter registration card	1	0
G. My name did not appear on the voter's roll	1	0
H. Did not want to vote	1	0

Q5. What, if anything, would have encouraged you to vote in the 2019 election? [Interviewer: Tick all that Apply]

A. A united opposition	1	0
B. Possibility of a change of government	1	0
C. A different electoral system	1	0
D. Credible political candidates	1	0
E. Clear and convincing party manifestos	1	0
F.	1	0
G. Other, specify	1	0
H. Did not want to vote	1	0

Q6. Voter turnout has been declining in recent Botswana general elections. In your opinion, why are fewer people voting? [Interviewer: Tick all that Apply]

A Lack of interest in politics	1	0
B. Low chance of influencing the outcome of elections	1	0
C. Lack of information on the importance of voting	1	0
D. Lack of credible political candidates	1	0
E. Long queues at polling stations	1	0

Q7. I'm going to read a list of reasons people sometimes give for not voting. As I read each, please tell me whether the reason was very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important in your decision not to vote in the October 2019 general election.

	Very important	Important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important	[DNR] Don't know
A. Didn't know where or when to vote	5	4	3	2	1	9
B. Not on the voters list	5	4	3	2	1	9
C. My vote didn't matter since it was clear who would win	5	4	3	2	1	9
D. Illness	5	4	3	2	1	9
E. Out of town	5	4	3	2	1	9
F. Too busy	5	4	3	2	1	9
G. My vote didn't matter since it was clear which party was going to win the general election	5	4	3	2	1	9
H. Did not know enough about the parties, policies, or candidates to vote	5	4	3	2	1	9
I. Couldn't relate to any of the election issues	5	4	3	2	1	9

Q8. Besides voting, what other forms of political activity have you participated in the past 5 years? [Interviewer: Tick all that Apply]

Organised and/or attended a protest	1	0
Attended the area MP consultative meeting	1	0
Attended a political rally	1	0

Q9. Are you a member of any civic organization?

Yes	1
No	0
[DNR] Don't know	9

Q11. Which policy issues do you specifically take interest in? [Interviewer: Tick all that Apply]

A. Land	1	0
B. Economy	1	0
C. Human rights	1	0
D. Poverty	1	0
E. Unemployment	1	0
F. Environmental conservation	1	0
G. Corruption	1	0
H. Security and defence	1	0
I. Education	1	0

Q12. In the last election cycle, how often did you receive news about elections?

Never	0
Rarely	1
Sometimes	2
frequently	3
[DNR] Don't know	9

Q13. Are you on any social media platforms?

Yes	1
No	0

Q14. Do you participate in political debates on social media platforms?

Yes	1
No	0

Q15. Are you a member of any political group on Facebook?

Yes	1
No	0

Q16. Voter apathy is said to be caused by factors outlined below. Tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements on the causes of voter apathy. [Interviewer: Probe for strength of opinion: Do you agree or agree very strongly?]

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	disagree	Strongly disagree	[DNR] Don't know
<i>Voter apathy is caused by low levels of political participation/civic engagement</i>	5	4	3	2	1	9
<i>Voter apathy is caused by low levels of political awareness and lack of information about the electoral process</i>	5	4	3	2	1	9
<i>Voter apathy is caused by lack of recall mechanisms for politicians</i>	5	4	3	2	1	9
<i>Failure of politicians to deliver on their promises</i>	5	4	3	2	1	9
<i>Voter apathy is caused by lack of trust of politicians by voters</i>	5	4	3	2	1	9
<i>Lack of interest in politics and public policy matters</i>	5	4	3	2	1	9
<i>Poor performance of political representatives</i>	5	4	3	2	1	9
<i>Absence of credible and ethical potential candidates or representatives</i>	5	4	3	2	1	9
<i>Lack of responsiveness by the government</i>	5	4	3	2	1	9

SECTION E: Voter Climate Survey

Part X: voting behavior

People have many different reasons for deciding whether to vote or not to vote. During the last general election in October 2019, approximately 85% of eligible voters turned out to vote. In this case, the number of registered voters who cast the vote was high.

In question THREE you said you voted in the 2019 election. As mentioned, people have different reasons for choosing to vote.

Q17. Why did you vote in the October 2019 general election? [Interviewer: Tick all that Apply]

A. Wanted to influence public policy with my vote	
B. Wanted to vote out the incumbent area MP or councilor	
C. Wanted to uphold my responsibilities as a good citizen	
D. Wanted to vote out the incumbent government	
E.. Other (specify)	

ALL RESPONDENTS

Q18. Thinking back to the last (2019) general election, which of the following best describes when you decided that you would or would not vote? [Interviewer: Read out options]

As soon as the election was called	1
Soon after the election was called	2
Part way through the election campaign	3
A few days before election day	4
On election day	5
[DNR] Don't Know	9

Q19. Thinking about the last general election in Botswana, held in October 2019, would you say that you followed the election very closely, somewhat closely, not very closely or not at all closely?

Very closely	4
Somewhat closely	3
Not very closely	2
Not at all closely	1
[DNR] Don't Know	9

Q20. Thinking about the various political parties that participated in the election, would you say that you were very knowledgeable, somewhat knowledgeable, not very knowledgeable, or not at all knowledgeable about their policies and election platforms?

Very knowledgeable	4
Somewhat knowledgeable	3
Not very knowledgeable	2
Not at all knowledgeable	1
[DNR] Don't Know	9

Q21. Thinking about the last election, to what extent, would you say the following influenced your decision to vote?

	Not at all	A little bit	somewhat	A lot	[DNR] Don't know
A. The quality of political candidates influenced your decision to vote.	1	2	3	4	9
B. The party campaigns leading to elections influenced your decision to vote?	1	2	3	4	9
C. The state of the economy influenced your decision to vote?	1	2	3	4	9
D. The state of the democracy influenced your decision to vote?	1	2	3	4	9

Part X: attitudes toward voting

Q22. In your view, how critical is it that people vote in elections? Is it essential, very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important?

Essential	5
Very important	4
Somewhat important	3
Not very important	2
Not at all important	1
[DNR] Don't Know	9

IF answer to Q22 is “somewhat important”, “very important” or “essential”,

Q23. Why is it important that people vote? [Tick all that apply]

Opportunity to elect credible leaders	
Election of good leaders to give better developments	
To ensure democracy	
Opportunity to remove bad leaders	
It is civic right	

Q24. Now I'd like to get your opinion on some statements on voting and elections. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with each of the following. [Interviewer: Probe for strength of opinion: **Do you (dis)agree or (dis)agree very strongly?**]

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
A. My vote doesn't really matter in a general election	5	4	3	2	1
B. There is no political party in Botswana that I really agree with	5	4	3	2	1
C. Most of the issues that governments have to deal with are too complicated for voters to understand.	5	4	3	2	1
D. None of the political parties in the last general election had a plan to address the issues that are important to me	5	4	3	2	1
E. Generally, the outcome of general elections has no direct effect on me	5	4	3	2	1
F. When people don't vote, this shows us that the system is not working.	5	4	3	2	1
G. Voting is every Motswana's duty as a good citizen	5	4	3	2	1

Q25. Now I'd like you to think about voting in the future. I'm going to read some changes that some people have suggested might encourage people to vote. As I read each, please tell me if you think you would be much more likely, more likely, no more likely, or less likely to vote.

	Much more likely	More likely	No more likely	Less likely	[DNR] Don't know
A. Polling stations, which are currently open 12 hours on election day, stay open longer	4	3	2	4	9
B. There are more opportunities to vote in advance of election day	4	3	2	4	9
C. You are able to vote at any polling station regardless of where you live?	4	3	2	4	9
D. A polling station is located closer to your home	4	3	2	4	9
E. There is more spending by political parties to raise awareness of candidates, parties, and issues?	4	3	2	4	9
F. There is increased advertising about where to vote and the date of election?	4	3	2	4	9

Q26. As you know, in Botswana general elections, the candidate with the most votes wins the election. In general, how satisfied are you with the present electoral system? Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied?

Very satisfied	4
Somewhat satisfied	3
Somewhat dissatisfied	2
Very dissatisfied	1
[DNR] Don't Know	9

Q27. Does the current method of deciding who wins the election, encourage you to vote?

Yes, very much	2
Yes, somewhat	1
No	0
[DNR] Don't Know	9

Q28. With regard to the last national election in 2019, to what extent do you think the results announced by the [Independent Electoral Commission] accurately reflected the actual results as counted? [Read out options]

Completely accurate	3
Mostly accurate, but with some minor discrepancies	2
Not very accurate, with major discrepancies	1
Not accurate at all	0
[DNR] Don't know	9

Q29. Do you think having a different system of deciding who wins elections (electoral system) is likely or unlikely to motivate people to vote?

Much more likely	4
More likely	3
Less likely	2
Much less likely	1
[DNR] Would make no difference	0
[DNR] Don't Know	9
Unlikely	
More unlikely	

Q30. In some countries, for example Australia, people are required by law to vote. Do you think it is a very good, good, bad or very bad idea for Botswana to adopt a law requiring people to vote?

Very good idea	4
Good idea	3
Bad idea	2
Very bad idea	1
[DNR] Don't Know	9

Part X: Past Behavior

Now, I'd like you to think back and tell me if you were eligible and you voted in the last general elections, that is in:	Yes, voted [DNR]	No, did not vote	No, not eligible	Don't know
October 2019?	3	2	1	9
October 2014?	3	2	1	9
October 2009?	3	2	1	9

Q31. How likely are you to vote in the next general election? Would you say you are very likely, somewhat likely, somewhat unlikely, or very unlikely?

Very likely	3
Somewhat likely	2
Somewhat unlikely	1
Very unlikely	0
[DNR] Don't Know	9

Q32. When you get together with your friends or family, would you say you discuss political matters: [Read out options]

Frequently	2
Occasionally	1
Never	0
[DNR] Don't know	9
[DNR] Don't Know	9

Q33. When you were growing up, did your family talk about politics and current events often, sometimes, seldom, or never? [Read out options]

Often	3
Sometimes	2
Seldom	1
Never	0
[DNR] Don't Know	9

Q34. And how about now? Do you talk to your family or friends about politics and current events often, sometimes, seldom, or never? [Read out options]

Often	4
Sometimes	3
Seldom	2
Never	1
[DNR] Don't Know	9

Q35. Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past five years. [If Yes, read out options 2-4]. **If not, would you do this if you had the chance?** [For No, read out options 0 and 1]

	YES			NO		Don't know [DNR]
	Often	Several times	Once or twice	Would if had the chance	Would never do this	
A. Attended a community meeting	4	3	2	1	0	9
B. Got together with others to raise an issue	4	3	2	1	0	9
C. Participated in a demonstration or protest march	4	3	2	1	0	9

Q36. During the past five years, how often have you contacted any of the following persons about some important problem or to give them your views? [Read out options]

	Never	Only once	A few times	Often	Don't know [DNR]
A. Attended a community meeting	4	3	2	1	0
B. Got together with others to raise an issue	4	3	2	1	0
C. Participated in a demonstration or protest march	4	3	2	1	0

Q37. On the whole, how would you rate the freeness and fairness of the last national election, held in 2019? Was it: [Read out options]

Completely free and fair	3
Free and fair, but with minor problems	2
Free and fair, with major problems	1
Not free and fair	0
Do not understand question [Do not read]	8
[DNR] Don't know	9

Q38. Thinking about the last national election in 2019:

	No	Yes	Don't know [DNR]
A. Did you attend a campaign rally?	0	1	9
B. Did you work for a candidate or party?	0	1	9
C. Did any representative of a political party contact you during the campaign?	0	1	9

Q39. During the last national election campaign in 2019, how often did the media provide fair coverage of all candidates? [Read out options]

Never	0
Sometimes	1
Often	2
Always	3
[DNR] Don't know	9

Q40. During the last national election in 2019, how often, if ever, did a candidate or someone from a political party offer you something, like food, a gift, or money, in return for your vote? [Read out options]

Never	0
Once or twice	1
A few times	2
Often	3
Don't know [Do not read]	9

Q41. In the last national election in 2019, how often did each of the following things happen?
[Read out options]

	Never	A few times	Often	Don't know [DNR]
A. People's votes were not accurately counted or not fairly reflected in the results?	0	1	2	9
B. People voted more than once?	0	1	2	9

Q42. How likely do you think it is that powerful people can find out how you voted, even though there is supposed to be a secret ballot in this country? [Read out options]

Not at all likely	0
Not very likely	1
Somewhat likely	2
Very likely	3
Don't know [Do not read]	9

Q43. During the last national election campaign in 2019, how much did you personally fear becoming a victim of political intimidation or violence? [Read out options]

Not at all	1
A little bit	2
Somewhat	3
A lot	4
Don't know [Do not read]	9

Q44. During the last national election in 2019, did you witness: [Read out options]

	No	Yes	Don't know / Can't remember [DNR]	Don't know [DNR]
A. Police or soldiers, rather than election officials, assisting some people to cast their ballot?	0	1	9	9
B. Anyone from the security forces or a political party trying to intimidate voters?	0	1	9	9

Q45. How much of the time do you think the following try their best to listen to what people like you have to say? [Read out options]

	Never	Only sometimes	Often	Always	Don't know [DNR]
A. Members of [Parliament]	0	1	2	3	9
B. Members of [local government council]	0	1	2	3	9
C. Traditional leaders	0	1	2	3	9

Part X: Background questions

Finally, I would like to ask you some background questions. These help us analyse the information collected.

Q46. Do you have access to the Internet?

Yes	1
No	0
Don't Know	9

Q47. How often do you get news from the following?

	Every day	A few times a week	A few times a month	Less than once a month	Never	Don't know [DNR]
A. Radio	4	3	2	1	0	9
B. Television	4	3	2	1	0	9
C. Newspaper	4	3	2	1	0	9
D. Internet						

Q46. Do you have access to the Internet?

No formal schooling	0
Informal schooling only (including Koranic schooling)	1
Some primary schooling	2
Primary school completed	3
Intermediate school or some secondary school / high school	4
Secondary school / high school completed	5
Post-secondary qualifications other than university, e.g. a diploma or degree from a polytechnic or college	6
Some university	7
University completed	8
Post-graduate	9
Don't know [Do not read]	99

Q49. Do you have a job that pays a cash income? [If yes, ask:] **Is it full-time or part-time?**
 [If no, ask:] **Are you presently looking for a job?**

No (not looking)	0
No (looking)	1
Yes, part time	2
Yes, full time	3
Don't know [Do not read]	9

THANK YOU VERY MUCH. YOUR ANSWERS HAVE BEEN VERY HELPFUL.

END INTERVIEW -- DON'T FORGET TO COMPLETE NEXT SECTION
ALL SUBSEQUENT QUESTIONS SHOULD BE ANSWERED BY THE INTERVIEWER AFTER THE
INTERVIEW IS CONCLUDED

	Hour		Minutes	
ENDTIME. Time interview ended [Interviewer: Enter hour and minute, using 24-hour clock]				

LENGTH. For Office Use: Duration of interview in minutes			
---	--	--	--

50. Respondent's gender

Male	
Female	

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Welcome and thank you very much for agreeing to be part of the focus group. We appreciate your willingness to participate.

INTRODUCTIONS: Moderator and Assistant Moderator(s)

PURPOSE OF FOCUS GROUPS: we have been asked by _____to conduct the focus groups. The reason we are having these focus groups is to find out why a lot of citizens do not register to vote in general elections. Some people register but do not vote on elections day which basically means that the all the people who are elected to councils and parliament are endorsed by a low number of citizens. We, therefore, need your input and want you to share your honest and open thoughts with us on what the problems may be and what can be done to improve the situation.

GROUND RULES:

1. We want you to do the talking. We, therefore, would like everyone to participate.
2. There are no right or wrong answers.
3. What is said in this room stays here.

[Interviewer: Write names in the boxes]

Constituency		Town/Village	
Polling District		Polling Station	

Introduction:

Good day. My name is _____. I am from the Democracy Research Project (DRP), a research agency based at the University of Botswana. The DRP conducts studies on different aspects of democracy in Botswana to assess the quality and development. We do not represent the government or any political party. We are studying the views of citizens in Botswana concerning voter apathy.

Voter apathy is described as lack of interest in elections among voters. It occurs when eligible voters do not register and vote in elections. Some people register but end up not voting.

There is a concern that there is voter apathy in Botswana and this study intends to explore reasons for this phenomenon. We would like to discuss this issue with you. You have been purposely selected due to your unique characteristics; being, knowledge about the subject matter (voter apathy).

DATEINTR	Day		Month		Year	
Date of interview [Interviewer: Enter day, month, and year]						

STRTIME	Day		Month	
Time interview started [Interviewer: Enter hour and minute, using 24-hour clock]				

START OF QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A: ice-breaking questions

1. After being given the above definition, do you understand voter apathy?
2. Why is it important for citizens to vote in general elections in Botswana?
3. Why should the issue of voter apathy in Botswana be a key/major concern?

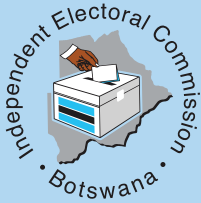
SECTION B: electoral process

1. Why should Botswana vote in elections?
2. Why is voting important in a democracy?

SECTION C: voter apathy

1. What are the key causes of voter apathy in Botswana?
2. Why should the government/IEC be concerned about voter apathy?

-
3. Why should non-state actors be concerned about voter apathy?
 4. Personally, are you concerned about voter apathy? If so/not, why?
 5. Have you engaged your party about voter apathy? If so/not, why?
 6. Is there is a demographic dimension to voter apathy?
 7. Is there is a geographical dimension to voter apathy?
 8. What are your key recommendations to deal with voter apathy in Botswana?



NATIONAL STUDY ON VOTER APATHY IN BOTSWANA

SUBMITTED TO
INDEPENDENT ELECTORAL COMMISSION (IEC)
BY DEMOCRACY RESEARCH PROJECT (DRP)
UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA

10th MAY 2022