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**VOTER EDUCATION
IN SOUTH AFRICA'S
1994 ELECTIONS**

Valerie Møller and Theodor Hanf

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Valerie Møller and Theodor Hanf

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SYNOPSIS

South Africa held its first universal franchise elections in April 1994. Most South Africans had never voted and needed information on the mechanics and significance of voting. A representative sample survey was conducted in June and July 1994 among 2 219 South Africans over 18 years old to assess the impact of voter education on voting behaviour before, during and after the elections.

Survey results indicated that at least nine in 10 voters were reached by the media and a wide range of face to face voter education programmes before the elections. Voter education programmes included pamphlet campaigns, mock elections, drama and workshops.

Younger and better educated first time voters gained easier access to all programmes. Voter information in the form of comic books was equally popular among the younger and better educated and the older and less literate. Voter education was effective in the sense that it reached most voters before the elections.

There were some indications in the survey results that voter education programmes may have speeded up the decision among undecided voters to exercise their democratic right to vote.

Slightly fewer than half of first time voters received voter education from a wide range of voter educators, predominantly the Independent Electoral Commission and the African National Congress (ANC), along with other political parties, civic and religious organisations and trade unions.

In most instances, voter education was perceived to be non-partisan, although better educated voters reported a higher incidence of partisan voter education.

Family and friends played an important support role for voters. First time voters, in particular, discussed voting issues with family and friends although they were less willing to disclose to family and friends for whom they would vote on election day.



It is estimated that three quarters of voters received voter education in their home language or the language of their choice. Voter education messages were perceived to be both salient and easy to understand. Voter education messages concerning democratic principles were regarded as equally important to ones concerning voting skills.

The secrecy of the vote and the freedom to vote for the party of one's choice were considered particularly important issues. Most voters learned about voting in their spare time. More than 87% of first time voters stated that they would not have known how to vote without voter training.

The vast majority of South Africans, and 95% of survey respondents, voted in the April 1994 elections. Survey respondents confirmed that there was little evidence of intimidation and violence on election days.

Reasons for not participating in the elections tended to be personal convictions and illness rather than lack of preparedness or fear of intimidation. The majority felt confident of their new voting skills and that their vote was secret. Most voters indicated that they had voted of their own free will for the party of their choice.

The picture of the party leader and the name of the party were the main cues by which South African voters found the party of their choice on the ballot sheet. First time voters were more likely to look for the first cue, experienced voters for the second.

Most voters knew about the presence of international observers in South Africa and were of the opinion that their presence assisted free and fair elections, especially in strife torn regions of the country. International observers were visible and easily recognised, particularly United Nations observers. Just under a third of voters stated they were aware of the presence of European Union observers. Around half of first time voters saw international observers at polling stations on election day.

The majority of voters accepted the election results and envisaged follow up elections in future. Most voters indicated that they would continue to support the same party in future, particularly if it kept its election promises. Party loyalty was strongest among ANC voters, whose party won the highest number of seats in the new national Parliament.

More than nine in 10 South Africans expressed pride in participating in the first democratic elections and gratification when supporting the party of



their choice. For the first time since quality of life measures have been applied in South African sample surveys, racial inequalities in terms of perceived happiness and satisfaction with life were erased completely in the months after the elections.

Although numbers were small, non-voters of all political persuasions were less likely than voters to express these positive sentiments. Voter education, which motivated and instilled the confidence in first time voters to go to the polls, may have contributed to closing the gap between non-material expectations of racial groups after the elections.

Although voter education may have succeeded in bringing most South Africans to the polls, the need for further voter education is apparent.

Survey results showed that first time voters, particularly people living in rural areas and with a low standard of formal education, were less conversant with basic democratic principles than more experienced voters. Just under one in two first time voters would like to continue their voter education.

These survey findings make a strong case for continued voter education to help South African voters deepen their knowledge of democracy.





CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

On April 27, 1994, South Africans participated in their first universal franchise elections. April 27 is now celebrated as a national holiday to commemorate the birth of democracy in the country.

The election date had been set in mid-1993, which left little time to prepare for an event of such magnitude. An independent body, the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), was established to organise and oversee the elections, and began its work in January 1994.

Most South Africans - roughly 80% - had never voted before and electoral rolls were non-existent. A large proportion of the electorate was living in remote areas and was barely literate.

Many administrative deadlines had to be postponed to allow more time to debate contentious aspects of the elections, including the date of the election, the double ballot system, and whether a cross or a tick should be acceptable marks on ballot sheets.

At the end of March a postponement of the election date was still being considered. Less than a fortnight before the election, not all parties contesting it had registered and submitted their lists of candidates. Only a week before voting was to commence, on Tuesday April 19, Inkatha Freedom Party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi announced that his party would participate in the regional and national elections.

In many parts of the country violence and intimidation hampered preparations for election day and placed voters under considerable pressure not to vote or to vote for a party not of their choice. There were no less than 165 'no go' areas, in which a dominant party excluded political rivals.

During election week a state of emergency still applied in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, one of the areas experiencing violent conflict.

Despite all this, an estimated 20 million people went to the polls on April 27 to vote in South Africa's 'liberation' election. All the world was watching



the historic - and euphoric - event. Archbishop Desmond Tutu captured the mix of happiness and excitement when he said he was 'walking on clouds' when he voted:

"It is an incredible feeling, like falling in love." (Pogrund 1994: 165)

Voting behaviour in context

An election is a process rather than an event (Schlemmer and Hirschfeld 1994: 194), and voting behaviour needs to be seen in this context.

Other books written in 1994 traced the dynamics of South African politics which culminated in democratic elections. They included the work of Friedman and Atkinson, Reynolds, Giliomee and Schlemmer with Hauptfleisch, and Schlemmer and Hirschfeld.

The focus of most of the studies was the key political roleplayers in the pre-election negotiation process. *Election '94 South Africa: The Campaign, Results and Future Prospects* (Reynolds 1994) is an example.

Other reports on national and regional sample survey studies reviewed the role of rank and file voters prior to the elections, their demographic profiles, voting intentions, party allegiance and expectations of the new Government (Coetzee and Wood 1993 on the Eastern Cape; Johnson and Schlemmer 1994; Schlemmer and Hirschfeld 1994).

The awesome task of the IEC in running the elections, including overseeing the voter education programme, was described in detail by Friedman and Stack (1994). Drawing on poignant 'on the scene' reports by journalists, Pogrund painted the South African scene on election day.

The violence and intimidation which threatened to derail the negotiations featured as a special topic in many of the works, for example those of Shaw, and of Schlemmer and Hirschfeld. Other analyses of South Africa's transition to democracy took the election outcome as point of departure for discussion of future trends, for example the work of Reynolds, and of Giliomee and Schlemmer with Hauptfleisch.

This study may be unique in that it focuses on one particular enabling factor of the 'small miracle' (Friedman and Atkinson 1994) of the elections: voter literacy. It reviews voting behaviour from the viewpoint of rank and file voters, using the sample survey medium.



In the run up to the elections, the progress of voter education programmes was charted by organisations charged with the task of bringing voter education to the people. This study, which spanned both the pre-election period and election day, surveyed the recipients of voter education to evaluate the success of the voter education campaign.

Most analysts concede that the most telling yardstick for measuring the success of elections is high voter turnout, and that voter education plays an important role in the process (Gilder in Schlemmer and Hirschfeld 1994: 209).

Surveys of voter intentions before South Africa's first universal franchise elections showed good knowledge of the elections and the positive intentions of new voters to go to the polls (Coetzee and Wood 1994).

Schlemmer and Hirschfeld (1994: 72) reported that roughly a year before the election, nearly 75% of South Africa's registered voters intended to vote. Nevertheless, a high voter turnout was by no means a certainty.

A nationwide survey conducted a year before the elections identified low levels of voter literacy and violence and intimidation, as the major obstacles confronting potential new voters (Schlemmer and Hirschfeld 1994: 71).

Violence and intimidation during the election campaign were seen as the wild cards which could jeopardise the success of the voter education campaign from the outset.

Skeptics, who placed little value on voter education in enabling potential voters to cast their vote, nevertheless conceded that the role of IEC monitors and international observers could play a crucial role for inexperienced voters in ensuring access to direct voter education and the ballot box (Friedman and Stack 1994).

This book looks at the many factors - including violence and intimidation and the presence of international observers - which in conjunction with voter education enabled South African voters to bring a new Government of National Unity to power.

If voter turnout is the acid test of the success of voter literacy, we shall never know exactly how successful voter education was in assisting first time voters to cast their vote for democracy.



The miracle of South Africa's first democratic elections was precisely the unexpectedly high voter turnout which prevailed despite all obstacles. But it is hoped that documenting the experience of first time voters will provide many valuable lessons for other elections to come.

This book focuses very specifically on the voter education aspect of South Africa's elections. In the month following the elections, the authors commissioned MarkData to conduct an opinion survey among a representative sample of South Africans over 18 years old to assess the impact of voter education on their participation in and experience of the first non-racial elections.

The sample was stratified to include people from all walks of life in metropolitan, urban and remote rural areas living in different socio-economic circumstances in each of the nine newly designated provinces. Weights were applied to ensure that all categories of South Africans were adequately represented.

In terms of the major population groupings, the weighted sample represented 13 717 335 (63,4%) black, 1 883 488 (8,7%) coloured, 678 950 (3,1%) Indian, and 5 367 308 (24,8%) white voters - a total of 21 647 081 voters. Further technical details are given in the appendix.

Voter education

A free and fair election relies heavily on an informed electorate. The Independent Electoral Commission aimed to inform all potential voters in the country how to participate in South Africa's first democratic elections.

In the run up to the elections massive efforts were made to inform citizens about the mechanics of voting and their democratic rights and responsibilities (Rebehn 1995). Voter education was conducted mainly by non-governmental organisations, ranging from churches to civic bodies, which were affiliated to the Independent Forum for Electoral Education (IFEE).

The approximately 40 member organisations of IFEE, together with members of the Democratic Education and Broadcasting Initiative (Debi) - which promoted voter education on television and radio - aimed to reach every voter in the country before the elections (Diamond 1994). Political parties also ran voter education programmes.



The voter education campaign was difficult and not without danger, especially in regions dominated by a single political party. In mid-March 1994 'Operation Access' was launched by the Independent Electoral Commission's voter education unit to provide monitors and security for political parties wishing to enter 'no go' areas dominated by opposition parties.

In spite of such efforts, innocent lives were lost in the effort to promote voter education. One of the most tragic events in the build up to the elections was the fatal attack on youngsters gathered in a hut in a remote village in KwaZulu-Natal, reputedly to receive voter education. Press reports indicated that the youths who died were under age.

In another area of KwaZulu-Natal, eight young people employed to distribute voter education pamphlets were brutally murdered. According to press reports the youths could not read the contents of the pamphlets they were to distribute (*Weekly Mail and Guardian*, April 15 to 20, 1994).

The book

This book on voters' experiences is divided into three sections which broadly coincide with the pre-election, election, and post-election phases: voter education in the run up to the elections, voting on election day, and an appraisal of the voting experience after the event.

The first section describes aspects of voter education: which voters were reached by different means of communication, when and where, and the messages which were transmitted. The second section describes the actual experience of voting and the motivations underlying voting behaviour. The third section presents voters' evaluation of voting in terms of their future political affiliations and their overall subjective well being.

An additional section addresses a topic which cuts across the threefold division. It concerns the role of international observers in supporting voter education and free and fair elections - as seen from the vantage point of voters. In conclusion, a final section draws on the survey findings to discuss whether voter education made a significant difference to free and fair elections.

Survey respondents are generally referred to as 'potential voters' or 'voters'. Only in the section discussing motivations for voting or not voting is an



explicit distinction made between voters and non-voters in the sample. Weighted figures are used throughout and non-responses are included in distributions unless mentioned.





CHAPTER TWO

RUN UP TO THE ELECTIONS

"Find out what is going on."

"Listen to the radio."

"Watch television."

"Read the newspapers."

"Go to meetings."

"Ask people to explain things to you."

These were headlines in the *Let's Vote* voter education manual.

The mechanics of voting and the significance of votes cast in the April 1994 elections differed from voting procedures and outcomes in previous South African elections.

Important deviations from all-white general elections of the past were the split ballot and proportional representation systems of allocating seats to candidates in the national and provincial assemblies. Therefore all voters, newly enfranchised as well as experienced, required some information on voting issues.

The first question put to participants in the survey was about all the sources of information voters had used to inform themselves about how to vote.

The media

The media brought voter education messages to a large number of potential voters throughout the country.

Radio and television both played an extremely important role in voter education but reached different groups of voters. Radio reached larger proportions of black voters than television, while television reached larger proportions of coloured, Indian and white voters than radio.



Language played a significant role in broadcasting voter education messages. Radio broadcasts in African languages reached more voters than broadcasts in English or Afrikaans. Conversely, televised communications in English and Afrikaans reached a larger proportion of voters than televised broadcasts in African languages.

Voter education information reached people mainly by radio and television, with the print media lagging far behind. Some 68% of the total population received voter education on the air and 66% received televised messages for voters.

Newspapers brought voter education to smaller numbers of voters (41%). This finding is consistent with other survey results, which indicate that 72% of South Africans watch television on week days but only 39% read a daily newspaper.

Taken together, it is estimated from survey results that voter education reached the following proportions of the population by means of radio, television, and the press in combination:

	All South Africans	Black South Africans
Radio	68%	78%
Radio and television	87%	90%
Radio, television and press	88%	91%

If all three media - radio, television and the press - are considered, coverage was close to 90% of the total population. Furthermore, almost all regular television viewers and newspaper readers were reached.

Personal networks

Family, friends and neighbours were also important sources of information for voters. Outside the inner circle of family and friends, political parties, voter education officials, colleagues at work, classmates at school, churches and the trade unions played important roles in disseminating voter information.



Survey results suggest that voter education programmes run by the IEC, civics, political parties, churches and trade unions reached people who were not informed by the media.

Rough calculations indicate that the ANC reached some 2,9% of voters or 627 765 individuals not reached by radio, television and the press. The IEC, including Debi, reached 1,9% or 411 214 people, the churches 0,6% or 129 882 people, the trade unions 0,2% or 43 294 people, and civics and political parties other than the ANC 0,1% or 21 647 people. These calculations do not take into account that some overlap may exist between audiences reached by voter education programmes.

Table 2
Sources of voter information (all voters)

	Total %	Black %	Coloured %	Indian %	White %
Media					
<i>Radio</i>	68	78	51	66	49
* African languages	51	77	11	8	4
* English-Afrikaans	31	20	50	65	47
<i>Television</i>	66	61	79	89	72
* English-Afrikaans	46	31	75	88	70
* African languages	41	57	26	22	10
<i>Watch television on weekdays</i>	72	61	86	92	95
<i>Newspapers</i>	41	37	42	70	46
<i>Read daily newspapers</i>	39	34	50	58	49
Personal network					
Family	57	63	60	60	39
Friends, neighbours	54	64	61	55	26
Work, school	25	28	26	27	16
Church	22	28	21	12	6
Extended network					
Political party	43	54	36	28	18
Voter education	36	49	26	13	9
Trade union	6	8	6	6	1
Sample percentage	100	63,4	8,7	3,1	24,8



Differential access

Table 2 and detailed results in the appendix show that different groups drew on different sources of information. Black and coloured people were more likely than others to seek information on voting from family and friends.

Political parties and voter education organisations played prominent roles in voter education among coloured and black communities. One quarter of black and one fifth of coloured respondents received information from their church. Indian and white voters were more likely to have obtained information from political parties than other organisations.

Better educated people were more likely to be reached by voter education in the press.

Among black people, education was consistently linked to access to a wider range of sources of voter information. Better educated black people were more likely than less educated counterparts to have received information from each source covered in the survey.

Regional differences were observed regarding access to different sources of voter education. African language radio reached above average numbers of voters in the Eastern Cape, Northern Transvaal, and KwaZulu-Natal.

In general, radio served rural black voters, hostel dwellers and squatters better than television. Township dwellers were served equally well by African language television and radio.

People affiliated to different parties received their voter information from different sources. For example, ANC supporters obtained their information mainly from African language radio (69%), African language television (53%), their political party (54%) and voter education officials (48%).

National Party (NP) supporters consulted English-Afrikaans medium television (74%), and newspapers (50%). Only 19% of NP supporters stated that they had received voter education from their party.

Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) supporters were informed mainly by African language radio (71%), their party (48%) and voter education officials (32%).

Democratic Party (DP) supporters relied on English-Afrikaans language television (83%), the press (67%) and their party (45%).



Voter educators

More than a third of the sample, and just under one in two black voters, indicated that they had obtained information on how to vote from voter education officials. This group of survey respondents was asked to identify the organisations providing voter education in their areas.

Among black people, higher educated and higher socio-economic groups generally were more likely to have obtained voter education from officials. Voter educators informed above average proportions of voters in the Eastern and Northern Transvaal (61%) and below average proportions in the North West province.

About 60% of Xhosa and Pedi, but only 28% of Southern Sotho speakers stated that they had learned how to vote from voter education officials. One in two ANC supporters, but only 38% of IFP supporters indicated that they had used this source of information.

Anglicans (53%) and people belonging to mainstream Christian churches (53%) were most likely to state they had had access to voter education officials. Members of the Dutch Reformed Church (35%) were least likely to do so, with members of evangelical and African independent churches in between.

Respondents identified a wide range of organisations involved in voter education in their areas.

Staff of the IEC and ANC officials were among the most visible trainers. About one in three respondents identified their voter education officials as representatives from these organisations.

Special mention was also made of voter education supplied by Debi and the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), and monitors.

In the following paragraphs, for ease of reference, where there have been only a few mentions of Debi's role in voter education they have been grouped with mentions of the IEC's role.

Other groups identified were representatives of political parties, including the NP, IFP, and Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and their women's and youth leagues. In very few cases voters had received voter education from both the IEC and a political party, or from several political parties.



Many civic and non-governmental organisations involved in voter education were mentioned by name.

Organisations identified by black voters included (in alphabetical order) the Independent Mediation Service of South Africa (IMSSA), Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Idasa), Institute for Multi-Party Democracy (MPD), Matla Trust and the South African National Civics Organisation (Sanco). Sidumo, a character in the voter education video *Khululeka*, was also mentioned.

The patterns of exposure to voter education officials appeared to be most similar for black and coloured voters. The pattern among white voters differed markedly. Coloured voters identified mainly the IEC and the ANC and NP political parties as their voter education officials. Smaller numbers of coloured voters also referred specifically to the voter education work carried out by the Matla Trust, and United Nations and peace monitors.

Indian voters indicated that they had received voter education mainly from the IEC, and also from the ANC and the South African Democratic Teachers Union (Sadtu). Smaller numbers of Indian voters also mentioned voter education received from the NP, Voter and Electoral Education Training Unit (Vectu), Diakonia and various civics, including ratepayers associations.

For white voters the most prominent voter education organisations were the IEC, SABC and Debi, United Nations monitors and the NP. Mention was also made by white voters of representatives from the other political parties including the DP, Conservative Party (CP) and Freedom Front (FF), the Rural Foundation, the Department of Home Affairs, and officials from government departments and parastatals.

Specially active voter education organisations

The group of respondents (33% of the total sample, 49% of black people) who indicated that they had received their voter education from officers of various organisations were asked: 'Which organisation in your area was most active in helping people to learn how to vote?'

The listing below gives this subgroup's impression of active voter education agents in their residential areas.



	%
African National Congress	63
Independent Electoral Commission	12
Non-governmental organisations	2
Other political parties	8
Several organisations	2
Don't know	13

The ANC was considered by far the most active voter education organisation in most areas. The IEC followed at a distance. In few instances the IEC, political parties and civics provided voter education in the same area. Only a few respondents mentioned that political parties shared responsibilities for voter education in their residential area.

Regional differences were observable. In the Eastern Transvaal and North West the ANC and IEC were seen to be equally active in voter education. In the Western Cape and Northern Cape the activities of the NP were seen to surpass those of the IEC. KwaZulu-Natal was served not only by the ANC but also by the IFP and the IEC.

In some coloured residential areas the church was seen to be very active in voter education. In some regions coloured and white voters singled out the NP as a particularly active voter education organisation.

Political parties and voter education

The respondents who had received voter information from political parties (43% of the total sample, and 53% of black people) were asked which party had supplied the information. Responses are shown below.

	%
African National Congress	78
National Party	10
Inkatha Freedom Party	5
Democratic Party	2
Pan Africanist Congress	1
Less than 1% mention: FF, CP, AVF, FP, AMP, SACP, Azapo, AWB	



Among the black electorate the ANC, mentioned by 88% of people who received voter education from political parties, was most active in educating voters. Mention was also made of the work of the IFP - 6% - especially in KwaZulu-Natal, the NP (2%) mainly in the Northern Cape and the Free State, and the PAC (1%).

The ANC (64%), to a lesser degree the NP (26%), and also the DP (1%), supplied coloured voters with information on how to vote. Indian voters' needs for information were served mainly by the ANC (85%), and to a lesser degree by the NP (4%), the DP (4%) and the African Muslim Party (2%).

The widest range of political parties supplied white voters with information, and the most prominent among them were the NP (60%), DP (11%), ANC (8%), and FF (5%).

Voter education materials

All respondents were asked about the medium through which they had received information on voting issues. A list of seven voter education programmes was presented to respondents and they indicated whether they had participated in each of them.

Table 5
Participation in voter education programmes

	All South Africans	Black South Africans
	%	%
Speeches, oral presentations	63	73
Pamphlets, booklets	60	70
Comics, picture books	30	38
Film, video	29	36
Role playing the voting process, mock election	17	20
Workshop	14	19
Theatre	11	15

Oral presentations and pamphlets were the most widespread methods of communicating voter information to more than 60% of the electorate. Comic books and films were widely used, especially among black audiences. More than one in 10 voters and over 15% of black voters reported that they had participated in mock elections, workshops or drama to learn about voting.



Black South Africans were first time voters in South Africa's first universal franchise elections, and their participation rate in voter education programmes was generally higher than that of other groups.

It appears that the more active media were favoured by younger and better educated black voters. Participation rates of younger and better educated black voters were higher in the case of video, role playing, workshop and drama events. Voter education in the form of verbal communications and pamphlets appeared to reach black voters of all ages, but the consumption of voter education pamphlets increased with higher education.

It is possible that comic books on voting found greatest appeal among illiterate voters. In the total sample, higher proportions of people with up to Standard Three than with higher education received voter information in the form of comic books. Comic books also reached less educated black voters, but appeared to have even greater appeal to more educated black voters.

About one in five white voters did not respond to questions on participation in voter education events. This finding is consistent with other studies which found widespread disinterest in election issues during the pre-election period among white voters, probably due to experience in earlier elections (Schlemmer and Hirschfield 1994).

Language

In the interests of good communication, voter education materials were prepared in the 11 official languages spoken throughout South Africa. Respondents were asked in what language they were informed about voting.

By comparing the home language of respondents with the medium of voter education, it is estimated that the majority of voters received voter education in their home language.

Afrikaans speakers were least likely to receive voter education in their home language: some 64% of coloured and 41% of white Afrikaans speakers.

The majority of South African voters speak either English, Afrikaans or African languages at home. It is estimated that the following percentages of South Africans received voter education in their home language:



Table 6
Voter education received in home language (all South Africans)

Xhosa	96%
Ndebele	94%
Shangaan	93%
Pedi	91%
Tswana	90%
Zulu	89%
Siswati	89%
English	82%
Southern Sotho	76%
Venda	76%
Afrikaans	47%

Calculations of survey data indicate that at least 74% of black South Africans received voter education in their home language. A further 2% received voter education in several African languages which might have included their own.

Groups whose home language was spoken by a minority were less likely to receive voter education in their own language. However, it was observed that material in the same language group was offered.

Only 15% of black voters received voter education in English or Afrikaans. Sothos were over represented in this group. As this category of voter had, on average, attained a higher level of education, English or Afrikaans may have been the preferred medium of voter education.

Important voter education messages

"It is very important to vote!"

"Everybody should vote!"

"This is our chance to build a new South Africa."

Let's Vote! voter education manual

All respondents were asked the question: 'Of what you learned about voting, which information was very important or useful to you?', followed by a list of seven voting issues.

Respondents could indicate whether voter information was 'very useful or important', 'not so useful or important', or if they 'did not know or had not



been informed' about the matter. A nett importance score was calculated by taking the percentage of total respondents who indicated an information item was 'very useful' and deducting the percentage who indicated the item was 'less useful'.

The results in Table 7 show that matters of principle concerning voters' democratic rights were considered to be of equal importance to more practical voting issues. This pattern of importance ratings persisted regardless of age, education, region or voting experience.

Table 7

Useful voter information: Nett usefulness scores¹ (all voters)
(100% = maximum usefulness)

	Total %	Black %	Coloured %	Indian %	White %
* My vote is secret	80	94	78	78	45
* I can vote for whom I please	76	83	83	79	54
* My right to vote or not to vote	68	75	77	64	48
* How to vote: procedures at the polling station	64	79	74	65	21
* Which documents entitle me to vote and how to get them	54	69	70	62	11
* The difference between the first and second ballot	49	61	43	65	20
* I can vote for the same or different parties on the two ballots	42	46	41	56	29
Weighted sample percentage	100	63,4	8,7	3,1	24,8

¹ Percentage indicating that information was 'very useful' minus percentage indicating information was 'not so useful'.

The secrecy of the vote was identified as a particularly salient issue by all South Africans. In the minds of black South Africans the secret vote was by far the most important issue.

The freedom to vote for the party of one's choice and the right to vote or not were also considered very important by a large majority of all South Africans. For coloured, Indian and white voters, the most important voter education issue concerned the right to vote for the party of their choice.



Clearly, information about voting procedures and documents to prove eligibility at the polls were considered very important by first time voters, but less so by other voters.

Information on the double ballot system was considered less important by some voters. However, Indian voters appeared to have found this information more important than others.

With a single exception, less than 5% of the total sample and first time voters made use of the 'no information/don't know' response category with regard to any information item. The fact that only a fraction of the total respondents in the survey indicated that they were not informed of issues, or could not judge their importance, may be taken as a good indication that voter education covered issues of real concern to voters.

The issue of separate ballots for the national and provincial assemblies was decided late in the run up to the elections, and some voters might have participated in voter education events before that. This may explain the slightly higher proportions of 'don't know/not informed' responses to the two items referring to the separate ballots (5% and 6% respectively, compared to less than 3% for the other five information items).

The nett importance scores of white voters were consistently lower, which can be taken as an indication that experienced voters required less voter information.

About a fifth of the white sub-sample, predominantly Afrikaans speakers, did not rate the items on the list and, among those who did, below average percentages indicated that voter information issues had been very useful or important to them. However, the general response pattern still obtained among white voters: democratic principles were considered more important than practical voter issues.

Non-partisan voter education messages

The following question was put to all respondents: 'Were you told about how to vote, which party to vote for, or both?'

Seventy-nine per cent of the total sample, and 90% of the black sub-sample, were informed only about the mechanics of voting during voter education



sessions. Three per cent were told only which party to vote for and 9% received both messages.

The proportions of the electorate who received the 'who to vote for' message on its own or with other information was 12% for the total sample, and 9% for black, 15% for coloured, 30% for Indian and 14% for white voters.

It was observed that higher educated people, both first time and experienced voters, were more likely to state that they had received partisan voter education.

The communicators of voter education were identified and divided into discreet groups: the IEC (including Debi), civics, churches, ANC, other political parties, and trade unions. Further analysis showed that people who were instructed by the civics and the IEC were less likely than others to have received partisan voter education.

People instructed by political parties other than the ANC - and in the case of black voters, trade unions and churches - were more likely than others to have received partisan messages. The ANC, as the single largest supplier of voter education in the analysis, conformed to the statistical average.

The type of voter education programme or the means of communication - whether voters were addressed in speeches or reached through pamphlets, videos, role playing, workshops and drama - appeared to play little difference in terms of influencing voters' party choice.

Voter education: a spare time occupation

The majority of voters - 73% - informed themselves about voting in their spare time. Ten per cent received voter education at their workplace and a further 8% were informed about voting during working hours. People who received voter education from their trade union were more likely than others to have been instructed during working hours.



Table 8
Evaluation of voter education (all voters)

	Total %	Black %	Col %	Indian %	White %
* Essential in order to vote correctly ¹	69	87	66	62	24
* Sufficient information supplied	76	79	74	85	68
* Message clear	85	89	89	94	73
* Learned enough	59	52	65	76	70
Weighted sample percentage	100	63,4	8,7	3,1	24,8

¹ Items paraphrased. See text for wording of items.

Continuing voter education

Voters were asked for their overall evaluation of the information they received on voting. Respondents were asked to endorse statements to indicate whether they felt the information was essential, useful, clear, and sufficient for their needs:

- Without that information, I would not have been able to vote correctly.
- It helped a bit but it was not clear enough. I had to get information elsewhere.
- It confused me.
- I would have liked to have learned more about voting.

An overview of results is given in Table 8. The majority view was that the information received was essential, sufficient and clearly presented. Black voters were adamant that voter education was essential: 87% stated that without this information they would not have voted correctly.

However, smaller majorities indicated that they would not have wanted to learn more about voting. Approximately one in three coloured voters, and one in two black voters, would have welcomed more voter education.



This last finding may be interpreted as a sign of interest in continuing voter and democracy education. If this is the case, the crash course in voter education in which first time voters participated may have whetted their appetites for a more rounded education in democracy and voting skills.

Time factors

↪ The timing of voter education

The voter education campaign began many months before the elections. However, violence and widespread intimidation in some regions hampered progress made in bringing voter education to all South Africans.

In March 1994 'operation access' was launched to ensure that voters could be reached in areas dominated by a single party. A pamphlet campaign aimed to bring voter education to remote areas and to areas under control of parties hostile to voter education.

Table 9 gives the percentages of people who had received voter education by a certain date by region. Two thirds of the electorate had received voter education by February 1994, two months before the election. By April 1994, more than 90% had been reached.

It is important to note that voter education reached virtually the entire black population, who were the first time voters. Only 1% of black respondents stated that they did not receive information on voting.

If only black voters are considered, results suggest that the voter education campaign started earlier in the Eastern Cape, Northern Transvaal and Gauteng, and was slow to start in KwaZulu-Natal. But by February - two months before the elections - voter education had caught up in regions which had lagged behind, and by April there were virtually no differences between regions.

The first set of figures in Table 9 is misleading in the sense that it includes non-responses. Non-response rates among white survey participants were higher than average in the case of questions referring specifically to voter education.

In most regions well over 90% of the electorate received information on how to vote before the election. The comparative figures were only 84% in



Table 9
Timing of voter education by province: cumulative percentages of electorate which had received voter education messages by specific date (all voters, black voters)

	Total	W Cape	N Cape	E Cape	Free State	KZN	E Tvl	N Tvl	Gau- teng	N West
Voters (million)	22.7	2,4	0,4	3,2	1,6	4,6	1,6	2,3	4,6	1,7
South African electorate										
End of 1993	41	23	27	60	46	31	36	57	40	37
February 1994	67	47	46	82	76	68	66	77	63	60
April 1994	91	84	91	95	97	96	95	91	84	84
Did not get information	2	4	4	1	2	1	1	0	2	0
Black electorate										
End of 1993	50	37	44	65	50	36	40	62	57	42
February 1994	77	75	60	85	75	71	70	83	81	69
April 1994	98	100	100	96	98	99	99	99	99	99
Did not get information	1	-	-	1	0	1	0	1	0	1

Columns do not always add up to 100% due to non-responses

provinces which feature relatively large numbers of white voters such as the Western Cape, Gauteng and North West.

⇒ The timing of voting intentions

Table 10 shows the percentages of potential voters who had made up their minds to participate in the elections and to vote for a particular party during the run up to the elections.

By the end of 1993 - four months before the elections - some 57% of potential voters had made up their minds to go the polls. However, half had not decided for whom they would vote. By March 1994 - less than a month before the elections - 21% of South Africans had not yet decided whether they would vote and 28% had not made up their minds for whom to vote.



Higher proportions of coloured voters were still undecided on the eve of the elections: 17% had not made up their minds if they would vote and 24% had not made their choice of candidate in April 1994.

Larger majorities of white voters had already made up their minds to go the polls and to vote for a particular party by the end of 1993. It appears that age and education were important factors in decision making. Generally, younger and less educated voters were more undecided about voting.

Table 10

Timing of voter decisions: voter decisions taken by date of decision (all voters)

	Total %	Black %	Col %	Indian %	White %
Decision taken 'whether to vote or not' in					
1992 or earlier	57	55	38	37	72
January 1994	14	16	9	20	9
February 1994	7	8	7	17	4
March 1994	11	11	24	15	6
April 1994	10	10	17	9	6
No response	1	0	5	2	3
	100	100	100	100	100
Decision taken 'which party to vote for' in					
1993 or earlier	51	50	39	28	59
January 1994	12	13	8	20	8
February 1994	7	8	6	18	5
March 1994	13	12	19	21	10
April 1994	15	15	24	12	14
No response	2	1	4	1	4
	100	100	100	100	100
Weighted sample percentage	100	63,4	8,7	3,1	24,8



⇒ Voter education and the decision to vote

Figures in Table 11 suggest that a link might exist between voter education, its timing, and the decision to vote.

Among black voters who participated in the elections, 46% were undecided about whether or not to vote at the end of 1993, and 54% had made up their minds to vote. The majority of the 'decided' voters had received voter education.

In each of the months to follow, January through to March 1994, the numbers of informed people among 'decided' voters (expressed in cumulated percentages) increased more rapidly than the numbers of black people deciding to vote.

The same phenomenon was observed in the larger group composed of black, coloured and Indian voters (see figures in brackets in Table 11).

There are at least two interpretations of this finding. It is possible that some undecided voters delayed engaging in voter education programmes until they had decided whether they would require information. Alternatively, voter education might have speeded up decision making among voters.

Time	Percentage of voters who had decided to vote		Percentage of decided voters with voter education	
December 1993	54,2	(51,7)	78,3	(74,5)
January 1994	70,6	(67,7)	83,9	(81,6)
February 1994	78,5	(76,6)	90,3	(88,7)
March 1994	90,0	(89,4)	96,5	(95,9)

¹ Figures in brackets give comparative results for black, coloured and Indian voters.

Calculations based on weighted figures. 100% = 1 165 (1 437) respondents who stated they voted in the April 1994 elections.



➤ **Voter education support networks**

Respondents were asked with whom they had discussed voting procedures: that is, if they had informed others about voting or learned about voting from other people. They were also asked if they had discussed which party to vote for with other people.

Discussion partners were identified by means of a list of people including family, friends, workmates and schoolmates, fellow churchgoers and clubgoers, and people one might meet in the pub or the local store.

Findings highlight the importance of the close circle of family and friends as a voter support group. Table 12 shows that South African voters were more likely to discuss voting and party preferences with family than any other category of people. About one in five people did not discuss voting procedures with anyone.

The majority of respondents discussed voting with their family and friends to the exclusion of people at work, school or in their political party. This finding confirms results reported earlier on the large numbers of voters, especially first time voters, who obtained information on how to vote from members of their family and friends.

➤ **My vote is my secret**

"Remember: Your vote is a secret. Nobody will know who you vote for. Nobody can see who you vote for. You can vote for any party you want. If people ask you who you are going to vote for, you do not have to tell them."

Let's Vote! voter education manual

"How to deal with intimidation: You do not have to answer any questions from anyone about how you are going to vote. If someone forces you to give an answer, you do not have to tell them the truth."

Special election issue, *Community News* (April 1994:11)

A secret vote is very important because different parties are fighting, so if the other party knows who you vote for, then they may kill you.

Gauteng voter cited in *Daily News* (April 18, 1994)

While most people were keen to discuss voting issues with family and friends, many did not wish to disclose how they intended to vote to anyone



- not even family. Two thirds of black voters indicated that they kept their vote secret (Table 12). Many white voters did not respond to the question concerning the people with whom they discussed voting procedures. Presumably, voting procedures did not warrant discussion as they were familiar enough from previous general elections in which only white South Africans had participated.

However, almost all white survey participants responded to the second item concerning the people with whom they had discussed their party choice in the elections. White voters were more likely than their coloured and black counterparts to discuss whom they intended to vote for with people in their ken. Of all groups in the survey, Indian voters appeared to have fewer inhibitions about sharing their voting secrets with other family members and close friends.

Table 12

The role of family and personal networks in voter education (all voters)

	Total %	Black %	Col %	Indian %	White %
Got information on voting from ¹					
Family	57	63	60	60	39
Friends	54	64	61	55	26
Discussed voting with					
Family and friends	57	62	59	68	44
Work, school	7	7	7	12	6
Political party	3	4	2	0	1
Other	2	3	2	2	1
Nobody	23	23	21	17	22
Non-response	8	1	9	1	26
	100	100	100	100	100
Discussed which party to vote for with					
Family and friends	41	30	47	78	63
Nobody	54	65	49	19	63
Other	5	5	4	3	4
	100	100	100	100	100
Weighted sample percentage	100	63,4	8,7	3,1	24,8

¹ See Table 2





CHAPTER THREE

ELECTION DAY

"For once, there was peace across the land."

Newsline

"Bomb scares, long queues and hiccups at the voting stations could not dampen the determination and enthusiasm of thousands of people...to cast their historic vote for a better South Africa."

Brian King, *Sunday Tribune*, May 1, 1994

"If you consider what this country has gone through - the violence, racial divisions and the short time to prepare - it is a near miracle that people are voting as they are doing."

Interview with a monitor, Northern Transvaal,
in the *Daily News*, May 3, 1994

Survey respondents were asked about their personal experience of election day as voters and non-voters.

In the sample as a whole, 95% reported that they had voted. A slightly higher proportion of black people than other groups stated that they went to the polls. The racial breakdown of voters was 97% blacks, 91% coloureds, 91% Indians and 93% whites.

The survey identified below average proportions of voters among the following survey categories: people under 25 years, English, Afrikaans and Tswana speakers, members of Dutch Reformed and evangelical churches, and Conservative Party (CP) supporters.



Pressure to vote

By election day most South Africans were eager to vote. In response to an item which inquired whether voters had been called to the polls, the majority (81%) replied they had turned out on election day of their own accord.

External persuasion or pressure to vote was highest in black communities, where approximately one in four voters had responded to calls to vote. Influence was predominantly local and included that of local headmen or leaders (6%), street committees (4%), unions and civics (3%), and self defence units (1%).

Smaller numbers of voters listened to family and friends (0,7%) or heeded the calls of party leaders (0,7%), teachers and employers (0,2%). Some voters stated they had responded to the IEC (0,1%) and radio broadcasts (0,1%) calling South Africans to turn out on election day.

Better educated voters were more likely to have voted of their own accord. Above average proportions of older and less educated black voters, rural voters in the former homelands, IFP supporters and members of African independent churches reported that they reacted to calls from their local headmen to vote. Traditional local leaders also played an important role in urging ANC supporters to vote.

Make your mark

"Remember to put only one cross on each paper - nothing else."

Let's Vote! voter education manual

The survey included a specific item which asked voters how they had marked their ballot sheets. In the run up to the elections South Africans spiced their speech with voter education slogans such as 'making your mark'. Voting symbols, including the tick and the cross, were prominent in advertisements for a whole range of consumer goods and services.

Ballot sheets used in the elections listed parties in alphabetical order, starting with the PAC, whose place at the top of the sheet had been determined by a televised draw. The Inkatha Freedom Party registered only



after the ballot papers had been printed. IFP stickers were pasted to the bottom of ballot sheets to accommodate the last minute change.

Each line on the ballot sheet contained, from left to right, the full name of the party, the logo, acronym, a picture of the party leader, and a cell in which voters could make their tick or cross.

Prospective voters had been instructed, during voter education, on how to make their tick or cross next to the party of their choice on the ballot sheet. Confusion may have been created for some voters on election day due to the fact that not all voting stations were supplied with valid ballot papers.

Initially, ballot sheets without the IFP sticker were deemed invalid. However, this ruling was later waived as it was too difficult to enforce. In some areas it was reported that IFP voters who were issued ballot sheets without the sticker, wrote in their choice by hand.

Respondents in the survey were asked: 'What did you look for on the ballot paper in order to draw your cross: name of party, letters of party, symbol of party, picture of leader?'

About equal proportions of voters who responded to the item - about four in 10 - identified the party of their choice by the picture of the leader and name of the party (Table 13). A further 11% looked for the logo. Black voters tended to orient themselves by the picture of the leader of their party, other voters by the name of their party.

Table 13
Method of identifying the party of one's choice on the ballot sheet (all voters)

	Total %	Black %	Col %	Indian %	White %
By picture of leader	43	52	42	24	21
By name of party	42	32	47	72	67
By symbol	11	13	8	3	6
By letters (acronym)	4	3	3	1	6
Weighted sample percentage	100	63,4	8,7	3,1	24,8

Percentage distribution excludes non-responses



As might be expected the divide between party identification by name and picture appeared to be related to social class distinctions. No doubt, literacy was a significant factor.

More than half of older, less educated, and African independent church members among black voters looked for the picture of their leader in order to make their mark on the ballot sheet. Majorities of Indian and white voters identified the party of their choice by name rather than by picture.

Voters who made their cross next to the picture of their leader were concentrated mainly in rural areas of former homelands and in migrant labour hostels in urban areas.

The majority of NP (62%) voters looked for the name of their party on the ballot sheet while the majority of IFP voters (60% in all, blacks 66%) and approximately 49% of ANC voters scanned their ballot paper for the pictures of party leaders Mangosuthu Buthelezi and Nelson Mandela. A substantial percentage of ANC voters (14%) also identified their party by its distinctive symbol.

Voting behaviour

Non-voters were asked to report their reasons for not participating in the polls. The voters participating in the survey were asked about their motivations for voting and their experiences at polling stations. Voters were also asked for which party they had voted.

All survey participants were then invited to state their views on why the main contenders in the elections enjoyed support. Lastly, a series of questions explored future voting behaviour in relation to expectations of party performance.

Reasons for not voting

Only a small fraction of the sample - about 4% - did not vote in the elections. Non-voters were asked to state their reasons for not going to the polls. As only some 99 individuals speak for 4% of South Africa's non-voting population, generalisations based on the detailed results below should be treated with caution.



Reasons for not voting can be divided in six broad categories. In order of importance, South Africans did not vote for reasons of conviction, ineligibility or lack of proof of eligibility, illness, fear of intimidation, inconvenience, and indecision over whom to vote for.

Table 14 gives the breakdown of reasons for the two largest groups of black and white non-voters. The racial breakdown of non-voters was 35% black, 17% coloured, 7% Indian and 41% white.

Table 14
Reasons for not voting in the April 27 elections
(black and white non-voters)

	All non-voters ¹ %	Black non-voters %	White non-voters %
Personal convictions			
Dislike of politics, religious, party not contesting elections, right not to vote	40	24	63
Ineligibility			
No identification papers, too young	25	35	14
Personal			
Illness	15	19	7
Fears			
Intimidation, ballot not secret, papers to be stamped	9	17	5
Undecided			
Which party to vote for	4	2	5
Inconvenience			
Distance to polling station, transport problems	2	-	5
Other, non-response	5	3	1
	100	100	100
Weighted	893 493	314 456	368 689
Weighted percentage of total non-voters	100	35	41

¹ Respondents who did not participate in the elections.



While illness was a major disincentive to participate in the elections among all groups of voters, access to polling stations was only a minor one.

A minority of non-voters were prevented from voting because of fear of intimidation or fear that the ballot would not be secret. Similarly, a mere fraction of non-voters said they went to the polls only to be turned away because they were not eligible to vote.

The major reasons preventing black voters from reaching the polls were lack of identification papers, illness and intimidation. Minor disincentives included dislike of politics, religious grounds, and the personal conviction that one had the right not to vote.

White non-voters, who were in the absolute majority, endorsed a wider range of reasons than other people who did not go to the polls. Predominant among these were dislike of politics, religious principles, or the fact that their party was not contesting the elections.

Some white non-voters stated that they were exercising their democratic right not to vote or simply did not want to participate in the elections. Another viewpoint was that the elections had not been free and fair from the outset. A policeman indicated that he was barred from voting because he was in uniform on election day.

Coloured non-voters indicated that their reasons for not voting were illness, lack of identity papers, and dislike of politics.

Among Indians, the majority of non-voters were still undecided at the time of the elections. Other reasons for not voting included ineligibility, illness and personal conviction.

People who declined to participate in the elections on religious grounds belonged mainly to African independent churches and conservative churches. Above average numbers of people who did not vote on religious grounds included the survey categories: IFP and Conservative Party supporters, and Zulu and Tsonga speakers.

Some of the reasons for not voting described were anticipated and provided as fixed response categories. Respondents obviously considered the given list of reasons inadequate for their purposes because they added several new reason categories.



Noteworthy is that not a single respondent gave lack of confidence as his or her reason for not voting: 'I was not certain what to do in the polling station'.

Nobody stated that spouses or local leaders had prevented or dissuaded them from voting. Only a few non-voters endorsed the fixed items concerning intimidation or fear - 'I was intimidated and afraid' - and the secret ballot - 'I didn't believe my vote would be secret'.

Another possible disincentive for black voters who feared reprisals after the elections was mooted before the Inkatha Freedom Party stated it would contest the election. Results show that this disincentive never materialised. Only one white voter in the survey indicated that his or her reason for not voting was: 'I did not want my identification papers or knuckles to be stamped.'

Motivations to vote

"South Africa, Wednesday, April 27, 1994. It can be remembered in many ways, with many emotions...When the people began to form these lines they became a new people, spontaneously and unintentionally.

"...Black South Africans learned what whites already knew: how to vote. White South Africans learned what blacks knew: how to wait. They did it together, in marvellously straggly multi-coloured queues in areas where the polling was working, and in lines of astonishing forbearance and determination in areas where it was not.

"...The old South Africa's final revenge lay in the fact that predominantly black areas suffered most of the difficulties, but even this unbearable frustration was borne.

"...The intangible feeling of new South Africanness - it is difficult to capture it more closely - was reflected in a thousand different exchanges, vignettes, shards of conversation.

"...The aged of the country, caring so much about voting that they waited and even died in order to declare on the future for younger generations...They grasped their precious votes, the repository of dignity, to their hearts and celebrated."

Shaun Johnson, *Daily News*, April 29, 1994.



"I do not mind the distance that I have to walk to vote. It is the distance to end all distances."

Northern Transvaal voter, cited in *New Ground*, 1994, 11:25

"I have waited all my life for this day. No long queue is going to stop me".

Elderly voter cited in *Weekly Mail and Guardian*, April 22 to 28, 1994

The large sub-sample of people who went to the polls in April 1994 were invited to endorse statements describing a range of motivations to participate in the first universal elections in South Africa. Table 15 shows results for black and white voters.

Table 15
Motivations to vote in the April 27 elections (black and white voters)

	All voters ¹ %	Black voters %	White voters %
I wanted to support my party	97	98	94
I felt proud to take part in the first elections for all South Africans	91	97	74
I am sure my vote was secret	91	92	87
When you get the opportunity to vote, you should use it	89	88	91
I knew the voting procedures well	84	81	92
There were enough monitors and security personnel at the voting station	89	89	88
There were no security problems	86	84	89
There were too many voters at the polling station and I had to wait a long time	63	77	32
I had to travel a long way, but I went to the polls anyway	30	39	12
Weighted (thousands)	20 655	13 351	4 971
Weighted percentage of total voters	100	64,6	24,1

¹ Respondents who stated they voted in the election.



⇒ Attractions

The overwhelming majority of South African voters went to the polls because they wanted to support their party. More than nine in 10 voters felt proud to be part of South Africa's first all race elections and were confident that their vote would be secret.

Most voters felt an obligation to exercise their democratic right to vote. The majority of new voters felt confident of their voting skills at the polls.

⇒ Deterrents

Voters unanimously agreed that the polling stations were adequately staffed with monitors and security personnel. About one in three voters had travelled long distances to the polls and/or experienced long queues at the polls - but such inconveniences did not deter them.

Among black voters, the determination to back their party and feelings of pride in voting for the first time were by far the strongest motivations to go to the polls.

Results suggest voter education lessons had been learned well: more than nine in 10 black voters were sure their vote was secret and more than eight in 10 were confident of their voting skills.

Significantly more black than coloured, Indian or white voters had to travel long distances and wait at the polls. Black voters (16%) were also more likely than other voters (between 5% Indians and 11% coloured) to report security problems at the polls.

White voters were equally determined to see their parties win seats in the new Government of National Unity. However, on average, the more experienced white voters showed less pride in voting in South Africa's first non-racial elections than black, coloured or Indian voters.

As experienced voters, white respondents were more likely than first time voters to state that they were well versed in voting procedures. However, a slightly larger percentage of white than black voters questioned the secret ballot. The response pattern suggested that the polling stations they frequented were well managed and accessible.



Who did you vote for?

Respondents were asked who they voted for in the elections. Survey results are shown below.

Party	%
African National Congress	60,9
National Party	20,8
Inkatha Freedom Party	4,7
Freedom Front	2,6
Democratic Party	1,5
Less than 1% PAC, ACDP, FP, CP, AVF, combinations	1
Non-response, did not vote	8,5
Total	100

The distribution of votes above compares favourably with the official election results, although IFP support is under represented.

Official results give the distribution of 19 533 498 votes for the national assembly as follows: ANC 63% (252 seats), NP 20,5% (82), IFP 10,8% (43), FF 2,3% (9), DP 1,7% (7), PAC 1,2% (5), African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) 0,5% (2).

The ANC won the majority of legislative seats in all provinces with the exception of the Western Cape, where the NP gained a majority, and KwaZulu-Natal, where the IFP won a majority.

Survey results suggest that a fraction of voters, mainly the electorate in the Western Cape, made use of the double ballot system to vote for different parties into the national and provincial parliaments.

Motivations for supporting parties

Respondents were asked to supply their views on reasons why people had voted for the major contenders in the April 1994 elections: the ANC, the NP,



and the IFP. The party platforms identified by survey respondents are summarised for the three parties.

⇒ **African National Congress**

The party appealed to the masses and had the largest following in the country. A common viewpoint was that the ANC had promised houses, jobs and a better standard of living for common people in the run up to the elections, and would keep its campaign promises.

The ANC and its leader, Nelson Mandela, were champions of human rights, freedom and democracy. The party had prevailed in the struggle against apartheid.

Supporters and non-supporters stated that the ANC attracted a large following due to its determination to remove power from whites and give black people a chance to govern.

Non-ANC supporters also emphasised the party's mass appeal. They agreed that its campaign promises attracted votes but questioned whether the party would be able to keep them.

A fraction stated that the ANC stood for peace and unity. A minority view among non-supporters was that the ANC resorted to intimidation to gain support. A fraction stated that they had voted ANC because the party had provided better voter education or had helped them apply for identification documents in order to vote.

⇒ **National Party**

The dominant viewpoint was that support for the NP rested mainly with its leader's strong campaign promises of peace and a better life for all. FW De Klerk inspired trust in his following. He had initiated change in South Africa, had released Nelson Mandela, and set the country on the course of transition to democracy.

The NP wanted or needed to provide a strong opposition or presence in the Government of National Unity. Its experience appealed to loyal supporters. They had been well served by a party which had proved itself. Its financial expertise would ensure economic stability.



Substantial majorities of supporters and non-supporters described the party as 'being for whites'. For some NP voters it was the logical choice for whites 'who must stand together'.

A small minority of non-supporters were wary of the party's reborn image. In their view NP following consisted mainly of whites who had supported apartheid, they did not trust a black government and feared they might suffer under its rule. Mainly voters who feared change voted NP. A fraction of non-supporters intimated that the NP had bribed voters with handouts of food.

⇒ **Inkatha Freedom Party**

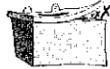
The IFP was viewed mainly as a party representing the interests of Zulus, who were loyal to their King and trusted their political leader, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, to keep campaign promises for a better life including housing, jobs, pensions, and peace and freedom. A minority stated that the IFP incorporated both traditional and Christian values.

Respondents sympathetic to the IFP stated that the party was known for its moderation and stood for federalism, self determination and practiced good race relations. It had attracted white as well as black votes. A few respondents, supporters and non-supporters, pointed out that Zulus and whites were 'good friends'.

Non-supporters openly opposed to the IFP accused the party of collaborating with the white regime during the apartheid era and of promoting violence in the run up to the elections. Others referred to the backwardness of the IFP's constituency, which was slow to embrace democracy.

A few respondents, including supporters, were of the opinion that some IFP votes could be attributed to intimidation, corruption and the lack of time it had had to take voter education to people in KwaZulu-Natal.





CHAPTER FOUR

THE AFTERMATH

A number of items probed whether survey participants had considered voting for another party in the run up to the elections, and if they would vote for the same or a different party in the near or distant future.

A substantial majority (77%) stated they would vote for the same party if 'it keeps its promises', and 70% stated they would re-elect their party unconditionally 'whatever happens', and less than a third (32%) indicated they 'might vote for another party' in 'other elections in future'.

Less than one quarter (24%) were of the opinion that it 'was dangerous to talk about politics and voting intentions', and 21% thought 'there might be no more elections'.

Survey categories which were more likely to indicate unconditional support for parties included lower income groups, and black and coloured voters. People in the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal were less likely than people in other provinces to state unconditional support.

If parties were to meet their promises, coloured and Indian voters were more likely than others to re-elect the party of their choice. Above average percentages of respondents in the following survey categories indicated that they might switch their party allegiance in future: higher educated and higher socio-economic status individuals, whites, Indians, and DP and FF voters.

Survey respondents in KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape, and Xhosas, Zulus and Ndebeles were most likely to indicate that disclosing voting intentions might be dangerous. Above average percentages of Xhosas, and survey respondents in the Eastern and Northern Cape, endorsed the notion that there might be no future elections.



Reactions to elections outcome

Respondents were asked if their election expectations had been fulfilled and if they liked the results. They were also asked how they felt about their personal life after the elections.

The majority of South African voters expected the results and were satisfied with the outcome. Generally black, coloured and Indian South Africans were gratified by the election results, although they came as no surprise.

The reactions of black and white South Africans were the most extreme, with black South Africans overwhelmingly satisfied with the results and the majority of whites stating that they had hoped their parties would do better in the elections.

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that negative reactions were rational: less than 2% of South Africans described themselves as 'bitter and disappointed'.

After the elections the vast majority of South Africans endorsed the viewpoint that 'things will really change in the new South Africa'. This viewpoint was shared by black, coloured and Indian voters, but was less widespread among white voters. The results shown in Table 17 give an overview of popular reactions to the election results.

	Total	Black voters	White voters
	%	%	%
* Result expected: liked	74	94	30
Result expected: disliked	20	3	61
Result unexpected: disliked	3	1	5
Bitter and disappointed	2	1	2
* Things will really change	83	92	63
Decisions will be much the same	16	8	35
* Satisfied with life 'as a whole'	80	81	79
Generally happy	85	87	82



The survey categories which expressed higher than average dislike of the election results included people in the Western Cape, people over 55 years, Afrikaans speakers, Freedom Front, Conservative Party and IFP supporters, and members of Dutch Reformed Churches and conservative churches.

Above average percentages of squatters believed things would change, while higher socio-economic groups, members of Dutch Reformed Churches and conservative churches were more likely to believe things would remain the same.

The small number of people who had not voted in the elections were significantly less happy and satisfied with life than voters after the elections.

Vignettes of voter groups

Reactions to the elections were closely linked to party affiliation. Results consistently showed that the winning parties had the largest following of faithful supporters before the election and were most likely to retain their following in future.

Table 18 gives an overview of survey results broken down by party choice in the April 1994 election. Bold figures show party loyalty before and after the elections and future trends.

The following vignettes or composite pictures summarise results on party support in the pre- and post-election phases, and reactions to the election outcome. The situation of the five largest groups of voters - ANC, NP, IFP, FF and DP voters - are outlined.

⇒ African National Congress voters

Eighty-five per cent of ANC voters stated they would not have known how to vote if they had not received voter education. ANC voters were least likely among all voters to have contemplated voting for another party, and most inclined to dismiss the idea of voting differently in future elections.

Their responses suggested full confidence in their party's performance in the Government of National Unity. Of all voters, ANC supporters were most confident of their victory and euphoric about the outcome. They had



Table 18

Party support before and after the April 27 elections (selected voters)

	Total sample %	Voted in the April 1994 elections				
		ANC %	NP %	IFP %	FF %	DP %
Before the elections¹						
Considered voting for other parties:						
No	-	56	36	27	27	17
Yes	-	30	44	58	55	73
After the elections¹						
Would vote for the same party	-	95	82	57	89	56
In future						
Would vote for the same party						
* If promises are kept	77	81	79	62	78	76
* Unconditionally	70	77	68	59	66	41
* Might vote for another party	32	25	43	42	44	66
Dangerous to talk about politics and voting intentions						
	24	22	23	38	28	18
There may be no future elections						
	21	22	19	28	19	8
Reaction to outcome of elections²						
Expected outcome - positive						
	74	98	30	48	12	65
- negative						
	20	1	59	31	80	30
Unexpected outcome - negative						
	3	0	6	12	4	0
Bitter and disappointed - negative						
	2	0	3	19	4	0
In the new South Africa things will really change						
	83	94	64	70	51	62
Perceived well being						
Satisfied with life 'as a whole'						
	79	82	79	67	66	77
Overall happiness						
	84	87	83	75	70	93
Weighted proportion of total sample						
	100	61,9	20,8	4,7	2,6	1,5

¹ Calculated results, no figures are available for the total sample.

² Columns do not add to 100% due to small number of non-responses.

Note: Bold figures indicate party loyalty before and after the elections.



anticipated the election results and welcomed them. Eighty-two per cent stated they were satisfied with life and 87% were happy in the months after the election.

⇒ **National Party voters**

Just over a third of NP voters had considered voting differently in the run up to the elections. Their votes would have gone mainly to the DP, FF, ANC, IFP and parties on the right.

If elections were held tomorrow about four in five NP voters stated they would support the NP again. However, in future, more than 40% might vote differently. Although the majority of NP voters had expected the outcome of the elections, more than half were dissatisfied with the election results. Life satisfaction and happiness scores of NP voters were several percentage points lower than those of ANC voters.

⇒ **Inkatha Freedom Party voters**

Seventy-eight per cent of IFP supporters were of the opinion that they would not have known how to vote correctly if they had not participated in voter education. More than half of IFP supporters indicated that they had considered voting for another party before the elections, with the NP being the favourite alternative.

About 57% stated they would vote for the IFP if elections were held soon, and a similar proportion would remain faithful to their party in future. Just over 40% thought they might vote for another party in future.

IFP supporters expressed greater fear about the future than members of other parties and their reactions to the outcome of the elections were more varied. An above average percentage stated that it was 'dangerous to talk about politics'.

The majority (79%) had expected the outcome of the elections but only 48% stated that they 'liked it'. An above average percentage of IFP supporters (19%) 'were bitter and disappointed' about the outcome. However, 'bitter and disappointed' voters were no more likely than other IFP voters to state they would change their party allegiance if an election were held soon.



Some 67% of IFP voters expressed satisfaction with life and 75% expressed happiness.

↪ **Freedom Front voters**

The Freedom Front was a minority party in the April 1994 elections. At the time of the survey, one in four FF supporters stated they would cast their vote in their party's favour again. However, more than half had considered voting NP, CP or IFP in the run up to the elections.

Reactions to the election results were mainly negative, although few FF voters stated they were bitter or disappointed. Life satisfaction ratings were on par with those of IFP voters, while happiness scores were below those of the ANC and NP voters.

↪ **Democratic Party voters**

Of all voters, the small numbers of DP supporters were most liberal in their party alignment and most generous in their acceptance of the election results.

Most DP voters had considered giving their vote to a wide range of parties except ones on the right of the political spectrum. If elections were held tomorrow about 56% would vote DP: the ANC and NP would be the main alternative choices. Results suggested that in future DP voters would make their support contingent on party performance.

DP voters were least disappointed in the outcome of the election despite winning few seats in Parliament. This positive outlook was reflected in their aggregate sense of personal well being after the elections. Below average percentages of dissatisfied and unhappy individuals were found in the ranks of DP voters.





CHAPTER FIVE

INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS

"All the world's an observer in SA's poll."

"Observer status has been granted by the Independent Electoral Commission to 26 local and 77 international organisations. These range from the European Union, United Nations, Organisation of African Unity, and the Commonwealth..."

Weekly Mail and Guardian, April 22 to 28, 1994

An estimated 5 000 international observer missions were stationed in South Africa for several months to assist the IEC with its task of organising free and fair elections. The survey examined the role that international observers played in the lives of ordinary South Africans in the run up to the elections and on election day.

Respondents were asked if they knew that international observers had been in South Africa during the election period. People who knew of the presence of international observers were then asked if they had seen international observers at various pre-election events and at the polling station on election day.

They were also asked how they had recognised the observers: that is, had the international observers been wearing blue or yellow shirts. All respondents were asked to identify the various organisations which had sent missions to observe the elections.

Lastly, an item probed the opinion of voters as to whether the presence of international observers had made a difference to democratic elections. Table 19 gives an overview of results.



Observers before the election

Survey results indicated that 72% of South Africans knew about the presence of international observers in the country. As this question was essentially a knowledge question, people who were better informed generally tended to know about the international presence.

Above average percentages of the following survey categories knew about the presence of international observers: younger and more educated people, regular newspaper readers and television viewers, higher income groups, whites, Afrikaans, English, and Zulu speakers, and members of political parties with a predominantly white following.

South Africans were most likely to know of observers sent by the United Nations (UN): 66% indicated that they knew of the UN observer mission. Between 31% and 45% stated that the United States government, the Organisation of African Unity, the Commonwealth, the European Union, the anti-apartheid movement, and churches from other countries had sent observers to South Africa.

Regardless of the organisation in question, men and better educated people were more likely to state that it had sent observers to South Africa. In the Northern Cape and Eastern Transvaal the presence of UN observers was acknowledged by an above average number of voters. The presence of the other observer groups was particularly visible in KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Transvaal and Western Cape.

Larger percentages of South Africans (72%) had heard of the presence of international observers than had actually seen them (62%). The opposite situation held in the large sub-sample of black South Africans.

Roughly two thirds of black voters knew of the presence of international observers and three quarters in this group had also seen observers.

Generally, better educated and informed black voters were more likely to know of the presence of observers even if they had not seen them in action. This was particularly the case with the survey categories: men, higher income earners, and television viewers and newspaper readers.

Almost all people who saw international observers were able to identify them correctly as the people wearing the blue, and not the yellow shirts or jackets.



Table 19
South African voters' experience of international observers

	All South Africans %	Black South Africans %
Knew international observers were present in South Africa before the elections	72	66
* United Nations observers	66	61
* United States observers	45	36
* Organisation of African Unity observers	41	37
* Commonwealth observers	38	34
* European Union observers	31	26
* Anti-apartheid observers	31	28
* Observers from church groups	31	28
Saw international observers¹	62	75
Saw observers at¹:		
* Voter education meetings	13	19
* Demonstrations	11	14
* Rallies	11	15
* Polling station	56	71
Identified international observers correctly by their blue uniforms¹	55	70
International observer presence		
* Promoted free and fair elections	63	76
* Made little difference	25	13
Weighted percentage of total sample	100	63,4

¹ Question only put to respondents who knew of observers.

In the case of Zulu speakers and people resident in KwaZulu-Natal, theoretical knowledge was backed up by practical knowledge. Of all the survey categories, Zulus from KwaZulu-Natal were most likely to have seen and recognised international observers in action.

Observer activities pre-election

In the run up to the elections, South Africans were more likely to see international observers at voter education meetings than at rallies or demonstrations: some 19% of black South Africans saw international observers at voter education events.



Again, Zulus and KwaZulu-Natal residents were more likely than others to have seen international observers at voter education and mass meetings.

Above average percentages of Tswana speakers, and people resident in North West and Northern Transvaal, were more likely than other survey categories to have seen international observers at mass meetings.

Observers on election day

On election day, survey results indicate that about 35% of all South Africans and 53% of black South Africans saw an international observer at the polling station where they voted.

The presence of international observers was reportedly higher in the Eastern Transvaal, KwaZulu-Natal, Northern Cape and Eastern Cape than in other provinces. Rural residents of the former homelands, Xhosa, Zulu, and Tsonga speakers, Anglicans and members of African independent churches were more likely to have noted the presence of the international observers at polling stations.

Voter evaluation of international missions

The following item was put to all respondents: 'Was the presence of the observers helpful for a free and fair election, was it harmful, or did it make no difference?'

Survey results indicated that the majority of South Africans believed that the presence of international observers had made a difference for free and fair elections. About a quarter thought it had made little difference. Very few voters thought the international presence was harmful.

Viewpoints were very different for black and white South Africans. Black South Africans, many of whom had personally witnessed the presence of observers, were more likely than their white counterparts to attribute some of the success of the elections to the presence of international observers.

Approximately three quarters of blacks compared to only a third of whites declared that the international presence had been helpful. About 55% of



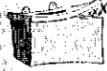
whites but only 13% of blacks thought the international presence had made no difference. The views of coloured and Indian voters were less extreme than those of black and white South Africans.

Above average percentages in the following survey categories stated that the presence of international observers was helpful: younger people, ANC supporters, and people resident in the Eastern Transvaal and Gauteng.

In the black sub-sample, people supporting the positive role of international observers included the younger and better educated, regular newspaper readers and television viewers, and Anglicans and Roman Catholics.

Above average proportions of people who had seen international observers on duty either during voter education meetings, rallies or demonstrations and at polling stations, believed that the presence of international observers had made a real difference to free and fair elections.





CHAPTER SIX

DID VOTER EDUCATION MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

"Democracy can't be achieved from a standing start all at once. We must aim to improve democratic choice from one election to the next."

RW Johnson, *Sunday Tribune*, April 17, 1994

Voter education and confidence building

Survey results indicate that the Independent Electoral Commission's stated objective to reach all South African voters throughout the country was nearly achieved.

Approximately 91% of first time voters were reached through the media. Voter education programmes launched by the IEC and other organisations, including political parties, may have reached a further 2% to 5% of first time voters.

Further analysis of survey results showed that the voter education campaign was least successful among rural and illiterate voters. Age factors were less important (Møller 1995).

Voters reported that the information they received was easy to understand and useful. The fact that potential voters gave up their spare time to attend information meetings, mock elections, theatre and workshops is a sign that voter education met a popular need.

Voter education did reach voters in time before the elections. Indications are that the timing of voter education campaigns may have speeded up the decision of many voters to participate in the elections.



Voter education messages appeared to have got through to the electorate. Voters reported that they had supported the party of their choice and were confident that their vote was secret.

Although the vast majority expressed pride in exercising their vote, a few non-voters insisted that it was their democratic right not to participate in the election. Voters stated that they discussed voting issues mainly with family and friends, but felt no need to divulge their party choice even in this closed circle.

A crude indicator of the success of voter education was the fact that so many black first time voters went to the polls despite great difficulties. Certainly, lack of violence during the week of the elections contributed to a high voter turnout.

But voter education, through its dissemination of democratic principles of mutual tolerance, may have prepared the electorate to anticipate a positive outcome. Voter turnout therefore may be taken as an indication of first time voters' confidence in their ability to vote and to defy intimidation.

A high proportion of the electorate conceded that they would not have been able to vote without the information they received from voter educators. Approximately 87% of black voters, 85% of ANC and 78% of IFP voters, stated they would not have known how to vote without voting information.

Not a single respondent in the survey reported staying at home on election day because he or she was not sufficiently familiar with the technical aspects of voting. A high proportion of first time voters (81%) expressed confidence that they were well versed in voting procedures on election day. Election results reportedly showed fewer spoilt papers than anticipated - an estimated less than 1% (Reynolds 1994: 189).

Voter education and quality of life

An indirect and less tangible, but perhaps equally telling, indication of the impact of voter education is the personal happiness which appears to have accompanied voting.

Voter education sent out the message that casting a vote was a great moment of achievement. Therefore, a telling indicator of the effects of voter education which got people to the polls may be the sense of happiness achieved in the aftermath.



Press reports described voting on April 27 as the most gratifying moment in the life of the nation. No doubt it was also a significant moment in individual lives.

For more than a decade, quality of life studies have revealed a glaring gap in the life satisfaction and happiness of black and white South Africans - sentiments which have spilled over into most aspects of life.

After the release of Nelson Mandela black optimism increased but appeared to have no tangible effects on life satisfaction and happiness, according to a 1991 Markinor Gallup poll.

It is possible that the election, which erased years of depressed well being in the fleeting instance of casting a vote, achieved more than all the campaign promises of political parties could ever hope to achieve.

In the afterglow of the elections, the euphoria of black first time voters was tangible and registered in survey responses. For the first time that happiness and life satisfaction indicators have been measured in South African quality of life studies, black life satisfaction and happiness scores were on par and even surpassed those of whites (Møller 1994).

Not surprisingly, ANC voters scored higher than most on happiness and life satisfaction (Table 18). Although numbers were small, it is also telling that people who did not go to the polls scored below average on life satisfaction and happiness. Noteworthy is that both black and white non-voters expressed lower than average happiness and life satisfaction.

The need for continuing democracy education

In the short time available for voter education in the lead up to the election, instruction - of necessity - concentrated on the technical aspects of voting.

In order to test the lasting impression of other aspects of voter education, a number of survey items probed the acceptance of basic democratic principles.

They included the multi-party system, the notion of a government controlled by an elected Parliament and subject to the influence of civil society, an independent judiciary, free trade unions, and a free press. Presumably, people who had received voter education could have been exposed to these ideas and would find them convincing.



Majorities of survey respondents endorsed each of the democratic options. There was widespread support - more than 70% of the total sample, and 67% to 69% of the black sub-sample - for the notion of a government open to influence by various groupings of civil society and controlled by an elected Parliament, and for trade unions free to negotiate on behalf of their members.

Lower percentages - 56% to 58% of the total sample, and 43% to 51% of the black sub-sample - favoured multiple political parties 'each with its own plan for the future', judges 'who apply the law regardless of government wishes', and 'a government which allows newspapers to criticise government and enjoy freedom of expression' versus 'a government which controls what newspapers may write to prevent disunity'.

It is possible that some respondents rejected the latter three options because the wording of the items evoked images of disunity or lack of cooperation with a Government of National Unity.

A maximum score of 100% was assigned in the case of respondents endorsing all six democratic principles described above. Aggregate scores broken down by survey categories are shown in the appendix.

The democracy scores correlated strongly with education and urban-rural lifestyle. Generally, higher educated people and people living in metropolitan areas were more likely than their less educated and rural counterparts to endorse principles of democratic governance.

A gap between scores achieved by white and black voters can be attributed mainly to different levels of education and urbanisation. There were no differences in the aggregate scores achieved by people who had been trained by different voter educators.

However, black voters who said they would have wanted to learn more about voting scored below average on the democracy test, while black voters who stated they had 'learned enough' from voter education programmes scored above the average.

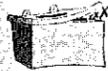
It was reported earlier that just under half of first time voters wished to learn more about voting. This finding was interpreted as an expressed need for further training in democracy rather than a flaw in the South African voter education campaign.



The fact that people who wished to learn more about voting were not familiar with basic democratic principles, such as the freedom of the press, further supports the need for ongoing democracy training in South Africa.

The crash course in voter education in the run up to the elections may have succeeded in whetting appetites for further training in democracy. Continuing education in democracy and political tolerance may ensure that voters will be even better prepared for the next round of democratic elections in 1999.





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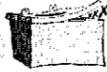


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APPENDIX

METHOD AND SELECTED INDICATORS

The Method

The questionnaire was designed by the authors. The task of data collection was commissioned from MarkData, Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), Pretoria, South Africa, to be done as part of its regular nationwide omnibus survey.

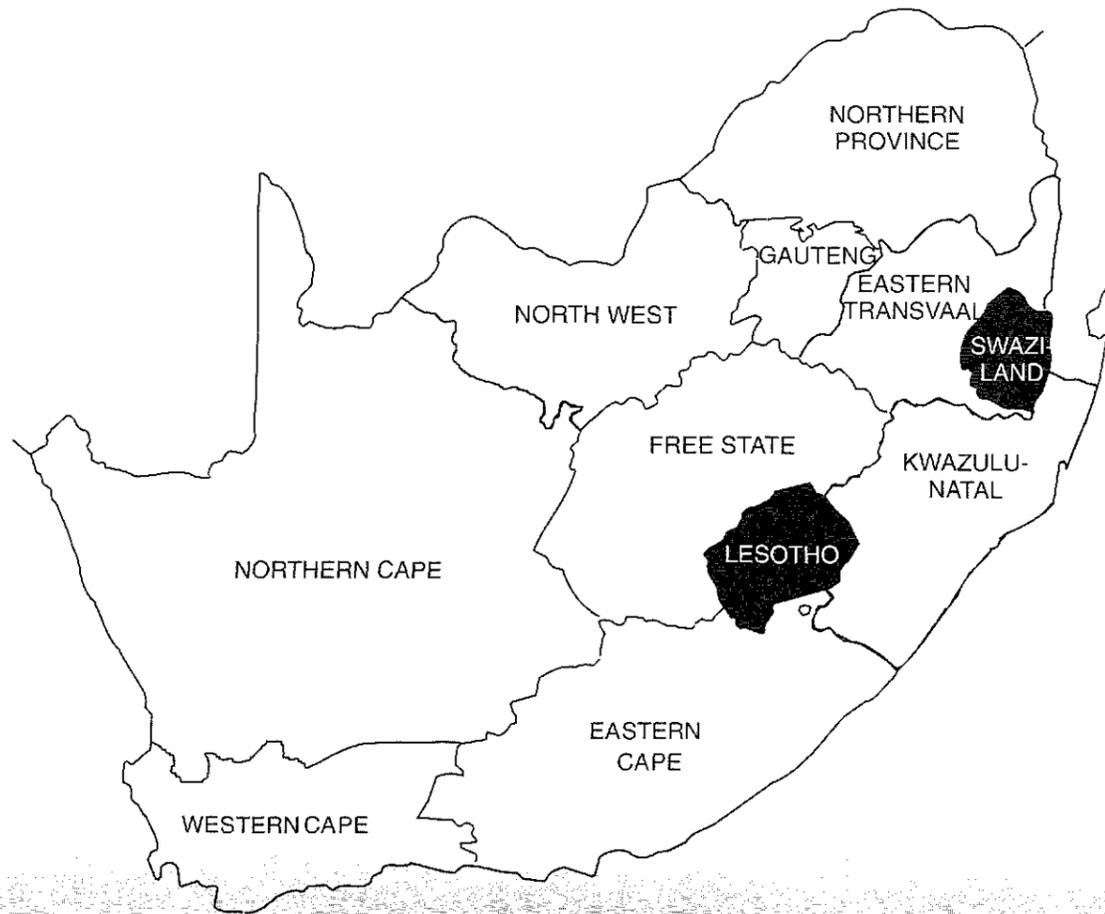
The fieldwork was completed during the period May 30 to July 17, 1994. A total of 2 219 respondents was selected by means of a multiple stage cluster probability sample design initiated by the HSRC.

The HSRC's sample design allowed for stratification by region and socio-economic classification. People 18 years or older resident in South Africa at the time of the survey qualified for inclusion in the sample. In the case of the selected person not being available during the survey period, a substitution was drawn.

Personal interviews were carried out by trained fieldworkers in the employ of MarkData. Interviews were conducted in the respondents' homes in the language of their choice. The questionnaire schedule was printed in English and Afrikaans. In African language regions, questions were translated by the interviewers who were local residents and conversant in the language of the region.

The quality of the interviews and the completed questionnaires was regularly monitored by fieldwork organisers. Ten per cent of interviews were backchecked. The data were initially compiled and processed by the HSRC, and transferred to the University of Natal for further processing and analysis.





LANGUAGE, POPULATION AND ELECTION RESULTS BY PROVINCE

	Total	W Cape	N Cape	E Cape	Free State	KwaZulu/Natal	E Tvl	Northern Province	Gauteng	N West
Dominant languages		Afrikaans	Afrikaans	Xhosa Afrikaans	S Sotho	Zulu English	Siswati Zulu Afrikaans Tsonga	N Sotho Venda Tsonga N Ndebele	Tswana Xhosa Afrikaans English Zulu Ndebele	Tswana
Percentage of total population ¹										
Blacks	76.1	2.1	.7	18.3	7.4	22.9	8.5	16.5	14.0	9.6
Coloureds	8.5	60.9	11.5	12.7	2.1	3.1	.4	.2	8.1	1.0
Indians	2.6	3.2	.2	1.5	.3	76.7	1.1	.4	15.8	.8
Whites	12.8	16.8	2.3	7.2	7.2	11.6	5.7	2.8	41.3	5.1
Voters (million)	22.7	2.4	.4	3.2	1.6	4.6	1.6	2.3	4.9	1.7
Provincial Legislative Seats										
ANC	62.6	33.3	50.0	85.7	80.0	32.1	83.3	95.0	58.1	86.7
NP	19.3	54.8	40.0	10.7	13.3	11.1	10.0	2.5	24.4	10.0
IFP	10.4					50.7			3.5	
FF	3.3	2.4	6.7		6.7		6.7	2.5	5.8	3.3
DP	2.8	7.1	3.3	1.8		2.5			5.8	

¹ Population estimate on election day
Sources: Central Statistical Services 1994; Grobler *et al.*, 1990.

SELECTED VOTER EDUCATION INDICATORS By Race, Gender, Age, Education and Settlement

Weighted percentages	Total	Race				Gender		Age in years			Education			Settlement		
		B	C	I	W	M	F	18 - 28	29 - 43	44+	- Std 5	Std 6- 10	Std 10+	Metro	Urban	Rural
Sample percentage	100	63	9	3	25	41	59	32	34	34	32	36	32	39	17	42
Sources of voter information*																
Radio	68	78	51	66	49	68	68	70	70	65	73	70	61	63	65	75
Radio - African languages	51	77	11	8	4	47	53	55	53	44	68	53	30	36	47	66
Radio - English/Afrikaans	31	20	50	65	47	35	28	32	31	29	14	31	48	40	34	20
Watch TV on weekdays	72	61	86	92	95	76	70	77	72	68	46	78	93	88	81	54
Television	66	61	79	89	72	68	65	71	69	59	48	73	77	80	71	52
TV - Afrikaans/English	46	31	75	88	70	50	44	48	47	43	22	49	68	63	50	28
TV - African languages	41	57	26	22	10	41	41	51	44	30	39	50	34	43	42	40
Read daily newspaper	39	34	50	58	49	48	34	45	42	32	12	46	60	52	43	26
Newspapers	41	37	42	70	46	48	35	48	41	33	19	44	59	53	38	30
Family	57	63	60	60	39	56	57	62	55	53	57	61	52	58	45	60
Friends, neighbours	54	64	61	55	26	53	55	60	56	46	60	56	45	50	45	62
Work	25	28	26	26	16	30	21	32	27	16	17	27	29	28	21	23
Church	22	28	21	12	6	20	23	23	22	20	23	22	20	19	19	26
Political party	43	54	36	28	18	43	43	48	44	37	48	46	34	41	37	47
Voter educators	36	49	25	13	9	35	36	43	36	29	40	38	29	27	32	46
Trade union	6	8	6	6	1	9	4	5	9	3	5	6	6	5	7	6

Legend: Race: Black, Coloured, Indian, White; Gender: Male, Female; Settlement: Metropolitan

* White non-response rates over 10% and up to 25%



Weighted percentages	Total	Race				Gender		Age in years			Education			Settlement		
		B	C	I	W	M	F	18 - 28	29 - 43	44+	- Std 5	Std 6- 10	Std 10+	Metro	Urban	Rural
Date by which voter information was received*																
1993	41	50	29	24	23	42	40	41	43	39	41	43	39	35	42	46
February 1994	26	27	24	48	23	24	27	26	28	24	26	29	23	29	24	24
April 1994	23	21	40	22	23	23	24	26	20	24	29	21	20	23	18	26
No information	2	1	4	2	6	2	2	2	2	4	1	2	3	3	4	1
Voter education medium*																
Speeches	63	73	63	48	40	63	64	67	63	60	71	65	53	51	68	73
Pamphlets	59	70	59	73	31	60	59	65	61	53	60	64	53	59	52	64
Comics	28	38	15	15	7	29	27	34	28	22	30	29	24	22	30	33
Film/Video	29	36	20	24	15	30	28	37	30	21	23	36	28	33	32	24
Theatre	11	15	5	4	2	11	10	14	11	7	10	12	9	8	16	11
Roleplaying	17	20	20	17	7	17	17	21	17	12	16	19	16	18	19	15
Workshop	14	19	13	7	3	15	14	18	15	10	13	16	14	9	18	17
Voter education message*																
How to vote only	78	90	73	66	53	75	81	80	81	74	88	80	67	72	76	85
Who to vote for	12	9	15	30	14	14	10	13	11	12	10	12	13	13	10	11
Evaluation of voter information received*																
Essential	69	87	66	62	24	65	71	73	70	62	84	77	44	61	65	77
Comprehensive	76	79	74	85	68	74	78	78	79	72	77	79	73	77	80	74
Clear	85	89	88	94	73	85	86	87	86	83	87	88	80	84	87	85
I learned enough	59	52	65	76	70	60	57	55	61	59	51	58	67	65	60	52

Weighted percentages	Total	Race				Gender		Age in years			Education			Settlement		
		B	C	I	W	M	F	18 - 28	29 - 43	44+	Std 5	Std 6-10	Std 10+	Metro	Urban	Rural
Discussed voting with																
Family, friends	57	61	59	69	45	54	59	58	60	53	61	60	50	57	53	58
Other	12	14	11	14	8	15	10	15	13	10	12	11	13	9	13	15
Nobody	23	24	20	17	21	22	23	21	19	27	25	22	20	22	25	22
Discussed which political party to vote for with																
Family, friends	41	30	46	77	63	44	39	38	42	43	33	38	52	49	40	34
Other	4	5	4	4	2	6	3	5	4	3	3	5	4	3	4	5
Nobody	54	65	49	19	33	50	57	56	53	54	64	56	43	47	55	61
Voted in the elections																
Yes	95	97	91	91	93	95	95	93	96	96	97	95	95	94	95	97
No	4	2	8	9	7	4	4	6	3	3	3	5	5	5	5	3
International observers																
Knew of them	72	66	70	73	87	79	67	76	75	65	51	75	90	77	76	65
Saw them	44	50	33	37	35	49	41	49	48	36	37	46	50	39	48	48
Presence contributed to free and fair elections	63	76	51	63	32	63	62	67	67	54	65	67	54	55	62	69
Knew of EU observers	31	26	37	41	41	37	27	32	32	30	20	32	42	33	34	28
Democracy score (100% = highest)																
	64	57	66	69	82	67	63	64	65	65	55	63	76	71	64	58



SELECTED VOTER EDUCATION INDICATORS By Province and Language

Weighted percentages	Total	Province								Language			
		W Cape	N Cape	E Cape	Free State	KZN	E Tvl	N Prov.	Gauteng	N West	Afrikaans	English	African
Sample percentage	100	10.5	2.1	15.1	7.2	18.8	6.6	9.7	21.1	8.8	25	12	63
Sources of voter information													
Radio	68	49	61	83	82	83	52	76	60	48	49	57	79
Radio - African languages	51	15	21	73	57	66	40	72	36	44	7	5	77
Radio - English/Afrikaans	31	43	55	20	32	37	21	21	38	15	47	56	20
Watch TV on weekdays	72	85	81	56	67	75	50	67	87	70	91	96	60
Television	66	75	67	62	66	68	46	55	79	57	72	83	61
TV - Afrikaans/English	46	68	62	36	41	44	37	36	61	24	69	82	30
TV - African languages	41	26	24	45	36	50	24	42	42	53	13	20	57
Read daily newspaper	39	57	35	26	27	51	24	30	47	33	47	57	33
Newspaper	41	38	38	36	37	51	26	32	51	28	39	63	37
Family	57	49	67	55	53	64	42	79	56	42	44	50	63
Friends, neighbours	54	45	64	55	51	62	44	80	47	42	35	42	64
Work	25	22	14	19	24	30	17	33	27	21	14	30	28
Church	22	15	17	25	20	18	11	48	18	22	10	10	28
Political party	43	28	45	61	48	49	23	51	38	32	22	26	55
Voter educators	36	17	43	51	22	35	50	57	27	31	15	12	49
Trade union	6	2	11	10	2	7	6	5	5	5	2	3	8

Legend: Western Cape, Northern Cape, Eastern Cape, Free State, Eastern Transvaal, Northern Transvaal, North West; Language: Afrikaans, English, African languages
White non-response rates over 10% and up to 25%

Weighted percentages	Total	Province									Language		
		W Cape	N Cape	E Cape	Free State	KZN	E Tvl	N Prov.	Gau-teng	N West	Afrik-aans	Eng-lish	Afri-can
Date by which voter information was received*													
1993	41	23	27	60	46	31	36	57	40	37	24	24	50
February 1994	26	25	20	22	29	37	30	20	23	23	22	32	27
April 1994	23	37	45	13	22	28	30	14	21	24	27	27	22
No information	2	4	4	1	1	3	1	1	3	1	5	5	1
Voter education medium*													
Speeches	63	55	62	86	80	65	67	69	41	60	48	42	73
Pamphlets	59	48	62	64	51	68	47	72	50	71	34	57	70
Comics	28	13	29	38	34	31	24	27	19	43	11	9	38
Film/Video	29	22	32	21	29	40	26	12	32	43	14	24	36
Theatre	11	7	4	5	10	22	8	10	3	22	3	4	15
Roleplaying	17	22	10	11	24	21	20	19	7	26	11	12	20
Workshop	14	8	29	17	15	17	11	15	6	30	6	6	19
Voter education message*													
How to vote only	78	70	88	88	77	72	93	84	75	77	59	63	89
Who to vote for	12	11	8	8	21	26	2	8	7	5	12	21	10
Evaluation of voter information received*													
Essential	69	51	58	78	74	78	77	77	58	63	35	42	87
Comprehensive	76	83	70	82	86	72	81	76	71	67	67	81	79
Clear	85	90	92	93	94	91	89	75	78	74	74	90	89
I learned enough	59	74	82	47	56	49	78	58	62	53	66	78	52



Weighted percentages	Total	Province									Language		
		W Cape	N Cape	E Cape	Free State	KZN	E Tvl	N Prov.	Gau-teng	N West	Afrik-aans	Eng-lish	Afri-can
Discussed voting with*													
Family, friends	57	53	58	56	68	63	65	59	52	48	47	57	61
Other	12	9	14	22	18	13	9	14	7	7	9	9	14
Nobody	23	26	25	22	13	23	22	20	23	29	19	24	24
Discussed which political party to vote for with*													
Family, friends	41	44	33	32	49	45	39	28	48	37	59	64	30
Other	4	2	3	5	5	7	0	8	2	2	3	3	5
Nobody	54	52	64	63	45	48	61	63	48	61	37	31	66
Voted in the elections													
Yes	95	92	95	99	98	95	98	97	93	94	92	93	97
No	4	7	5	1	2	5	2	3	6	6	8	6	2
International observers													
Knew of them	72	76	67	70	65	77	72	69	75	61	80	84	66
Saw them	44	30	45	51	45	61	48	48	31	40	32	38	50
Presence contributed to free and fair elections	63	47	44	63	65	68	76	77	54	64	35	49	76
Knew of EU observers	31	41	19	20	37	41	25	25	26	39	36	47	26
Democracy score (100% = highest)													
	64	73	56	57	68	61	60	58	73	63	77	77	57

SELECTED VOTER EDUCATION INDICATORS - BLACK SOUTH AFRICANS: Gender, Age, Education and Settlement

Weighted percentages	Total	Gender		Age in years			Education			Settlement		
		M	F	18-28	29-43	44+	- Std 3	Std 4-8	Std 9+	Metro	Urban	Rural
Sub-sample percentage	100	37	63	35	35	30	29	46	25	28	15	57
Sources of voter information												
Radio	78	80	78	78	80	77	72	80	83	77	78	79
Radio - African languages	77	77	76	76	79	75	72	77	81	76	77	77
Radio - English/Afrikaans	20	24	18	24	21	15	9	16	39	27	23	16
Watch TV on weekdays	61	64	59	70	62	48	38	63	82	77	72	50
Television	61	65	59	69	65	47	41	64	79	78	69	51
TV - Afrikaans/English	31	35	28	38	31	22	15	30	50	42	35	24
TV - African languages	57	60	55	63	61	44	38	60	73	75	65	46
Read daily newspaper	34	46	26	46	35	17	5	31	69	52	35	24
Newspaper	37	48	31	47	38	25	17	34	65	51	37	31
Family	63	63	63	67	62	59	54	62	75	68	53	63
Friends, neighbours	64	67	62	67	67	57	58	62	74	68	55	65
Work	28	36	23	33	30	19	15	26	45	33	27	25
Church	28	25	30	29	29	27	20	28	38	28	29	28
Political party	54	56	53	59	54	50	47	55	63	64	47	52
Voter educators	49	51	48	56	48	42	48	42	61	48	48	50
Trade union	8	12	5	7	12	5	6	5	15	8	12	7



Weighted percentages	Total	Gender		Age in years			Education			Settlement		
		M	F	18-28	29-43	44+	- Std 3	Std 4-8	Std 9+	Metro	Urban	Rural
Date by which voter information was received												
1993	50	52	49	50	52	48	43	48	63	49	58	49
February 1994	27	26	27	26	28	25	25	28	26	32	25	25
April 1994	21	21	22	22	17	25	29	23	11	17	14	25
No information	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0
Voter information medium												
Speeches	73	74	73	76	71	73	73	73	74	62	82	76
Pamphlets	70	72	69	74	70	65	63	68	82	76	63	70
Comics	38	42	36	44	37	33	32	36	50	40	46	36
Film/Video	36	39	34	44	35	27	20	39	49	55	43	25
Theatre	15	17	14	19	15	11	8	16	21	14	25	13
Roleplaying	20	21	19	24	20	15	13	21	26	24	29	16
Workshop	19	22	17	24	19	14	14	17	28	15	27	19
Voter education message												
How to vote only	90	88	91	88	90	91	90	90	89	93	91	88
Who to vote for	9	11	8	11	8	9	9	9	10	7	7	11
Evaluation of voter information received												
Essential	87	86	87	89	86	85	85	89	85	91	86	85
Comprehensive	79	78	80	81	81	75	77	80	80	83	86	75
Clear	89	89	89	91	89	88	87	91	90	90	94	88
I learned enough	52	54	51	51	56	51	52	50	56	60	51	49



Weighted percentages	Total	Gender		Age in years			Education			Settlement		
		M	F	18-28	29-43	44+	- Std 3	Std 4-8	Std 9+	Metro	Urban	Rural
Discussed voting with												
Family, friends	61	59	62	59	65	60	59	63	59	63	56	61
Other	14	19	12	17	14	11	11	13	20	11	17	15
Nobody	24	21	25	24	20	28	28	23	20	23	26	23
Discussed which political party to vote for with												
Family, friends	30	30	29	29	31	30	30	28	32	30	31	30
Other	5	8	3	6	5	3	2	5	7	3	3	6
Nobody	65	62	67	65	64	67	67	66	61	67	65	64
Voted in the elections												
Yes	97	98	97	96	98	98	97	97	98	96	97	98
No	2	2	3	4	1	2	3	2	2	2	3	2
International observers												
Knew of them	66	74	61	74	70	52	47	68	85	73	70	62
Saw them	50	55	47	57	52	40	38	48	68	50	56	49
Presence contributed to free and fair elections	76	80	74	79	81	66	66	76	87	77	80	74
Knew of EU observers	26	31	23	30	27	21	18	26	35	25	35	24
Democracy score (100% = highest)												
	57	59	56	59	57	55	53	59	59	62	57	55

SELECTED VOTER EDUCATION INDICATORS - BLACK SOUTH AFRICANS: Province and Language



Weighted percentages	Total	Province								Language				
		W Cape	N Cape	E Cape	Free State	KZN	E Tvl	N Prov.	Gau-teng	N West	Sotho	Xhosa	Zulu	Other
Subsample percentage	100	2.5	.7	19.0	7.5	21.5	7.5	14.2	16.2	10.9	34	23	29	14
Sources of voter information														
Radio	78	57	79	89	84	90	54	83	73	58	72	83	84	74
Radio - African languages	77	51	69	89	82	88	52	78	73	56	70	82	83	69
Radio - English/Afrikaans	20	24	48	11	10	27	12	22	28	15	19	13	25	24
Watch TV on weekdays	61	64	84	46	52	68	35	65	76	64	63	52	65	60
Television	61	54	71	55	52	63	38	60	79	67	63	57	62	62
TV - Afrikaans/English	31	32	54	23	13	29	26	39	46	27	30	26	29	46
TV - African languages	57	45	69	53	48	61	31	46	77	65	59	55	60	46
Read daily newspaper	34	39	24	19	19	50	15	30	48	30	35	23	43	26
Newspaper	37	25	27	30	18	49	21	35	52	34	36	32	43	35
Family	63	43	80	55	47	69	49	86	68	51	63	54	66	72
Friends, neighbours	64	50	71	56	53	68	53	86	70	51	63	55	67	75
Work	28	25	35	18	25	31	20	35	35	25	30	20	27	35
Church	28	28	26	26	22	21	14	52	29	27	31	27	22	36
Political party	54	81	68	68	55	55	26	55	55	40	53	70	49	43
Voter educators	49	46	77	59	22	43	60	61	46	38	47	60	42	49
Trade union	8	0	17	12	1	9	8	6	9	6	5	11	7	10



Weighted percentages	Total	Province									Language			
		W Cape	N Cape	E Cape	Free State	KZN	E Tvl	N Prov.	Gau-teng	N West	Sotho	Xhosa	Zulu	Other
Date by which voter information was received														
1993	50	37	44	65	50	35	40	62	57	42	53	58	40	52
February 1994	27	38	16	21	25	35	31	22	24	28	23	23	31	33
April 1994	21	25	40	11	23	29	29	15	19	29	24	15	28	12
No information	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	2
Voter education medium														
Speeches	73	92	76	96	79	70	71	75	44	72	68	92	69	62
Pamphlets	70	78	85	67	47	71	57	78	69	87	70	70	68	75
Comics	38	41	49	44	33	39	31	29	34	54	34	45	37	41
Film, Video	36	57	48	19	26	44	35	12	56	53	37	28	44	29
Theatre	15	29	3	6	14	27	11	11	5	27	14	9	23	11
Roleplaying	20	38	8	11	30	22	25	20	11	33	21	17	21	21
Workshop	19	32	35	19	17	21	16	17	7	36	18	22	18	19
Voter education message														
How to vote only	90	91	98	92	79	79	98	91	99	93	91	94	85	91
Who to vote for	9	7	2	8	19	21	0	9	1	5	8	6	15	7
Evaluation of voter information received														
Essential	87	92	68	86	93	87	97	83	90	77	86	88	87	84
Comprehensive	79	80	85	82	82	67	86	82	84	80	83	81	73	79
Clear	89	97	92	93	95	89	93	81	88	87	89	93	91	81
I learned enough	52	61	68	40	40	39	78	63	60	62	61	43	46	59



Weighted percentages	Total	Province									Language			
		W Cape	N Cape	E Cape	Free State	KZN	E Tvl	N Prov.	Gau-teng	N West	Sotho	Xhosa	Zulu	Other
Discussed voting with														
Family, friends	61	60	73	56	61	62	71	63	63	56	60	56	61	73
Other	14	17	15	23	22	13	5	15	8	9	13	21	12	11
Nobody	24	22	12	20	16	22	24	21	28	35	26	22	25	16
Discussed which political party to vote for with														
Family, friends	30	16	25	30	34	36	33	24	27	27	26	27	35	33
Other	5	0	6	5	5	8	0	8	2	1	4	4	6	4
Nobody	65	84	68	65	60	55	67	67	71	71	70	68	58	63
Voted in the elections														
Yes	97	100	99	99	99	97	100	98	94	95	97	99	96	96
No	2	0	1	1	1	3	0	2	4	5	3	1	3	3
International observers														
Knew of them	66	61	60	67	51	78	65	67	67	52	58	66	75	68
Saw them	50	35	47	53	38	65	59	48	38	39	39	52	60	53
Presence contributed to free and fair elections	76	70	60	70	76	75	93	80	77	72	74	72	78	86
Knew of EU observers	26	34	21	15	28	38	17	24	19	37	23	22	32	28
Democracy score (100% = highest)														
	57	74	47	53	65	57	51	55	61	57	59	56	57	54



ACRONYMS

ACDP	African Christian Democratic Party
AMP	African Muslim Party
ANC	African National Congress
AVK	Afrikaner Volksfront
AWB	Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging
AZAPO	Azanian People's Organisation
CP	Conservative Party
DEBI	Democratic Education and Broadcasting Initiative
DP	Democratic Party
EU	European Union
FP	Federal Party
IDASA	Institute for Democracy in South Africa
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
IFEE	Independent Forum for Electoral Education
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
IMSSA	Independent Mediation Service of South Africa
MDP	Institute for Multi-Party Democracy
NP	National Party
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SACP	South African Communist Party
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers' Union
UN	United Nations
VEETU	Voter and Electoral Education Training Unit



Learning to Vote

South Africa held its first universal franchise elections in April 1994. Most South Africans had never voted and needed information on the mechanics and significance of voting. A representative sample survey was conducted in June and July 1994 among 2 219 South Africans to assess the impact of voter education on voting behaviour.

Survey results indicated that at least nine in 10 voters were reached by the media and a wide range of voter education programmes before the elections.

Slightly fewer than half of first time voters received voter education from a range of voter educators. In most instances, voter education was perceived to be non-partisan. Voter education messages were perceived to be salient and easy to understand. Most people felt confident of their new voting skills and that their vote was secret.

Nearly all South Africans expressed pride in voting. The act of voting may have succeeded in boosting the well being of all South Africans. For the first time ever, differences between black and white happiness were erased in the months after the election.

Although voter education may have succeeded in bringing most South Africans to the polls, the need for further voter education is apparent. First time voters were less conversant with basic democratic principles than more experienced voters. Just under half of first time voters would like to continue their voter education.

The survey findings make a strong case for continued voter education to help South African voters deepen their knowledge of democracy.

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