



Citizenship, Agency and Deliberative Democracy in Five SADC Countries

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Abstract

SADC is composed of countries that achieved independence through armed struggle and those that achieved this through political struggle. Many commentators have suggested that liberation movements that acquired government through armed struggle have a propensity for coercion in maintaining political power; Zimbabwe the worst at resorting to coercion (RAU 2016).. We examined this thesis by comparing five SADC countries: three that are governed by former liberation movements – Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe – with three countries that earlier achieved independence through political action.

We compared these five countries through the eyes of their citizens, using the Afrobarometer Round 7 surveys in those countries. We attempt to examine whether political history affects citizen agency, looking at a number of variables that might reflect this: political fear, political trust, government performance, and participation. Measures were constructed for each of these variables and we included one further question on desire to emigrate as another measure of citizen satisfaction.

We find that the rank order of satisfaction largely approximates that from the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG), with Botswana ranked highest and Zimbabwe lowest, but with South Africa and Namibia changing places. We find political fear is highest in all countries, Botswana the least, political trust is low in all five, and so is participation. As regards political trust, it was striking that, in all five countries, trust in political parties, both the ruling party and opposition parties, was extremely low. In fact citizen agency is low in all five countries, and only a majority in Botswana are satisfied with their government's performance. Zimbabweans are the most likely to be planning to emigrate. Thus, being governed by a former liberation movement matters less than governance in general.

Introduction¹

Four years ago, RAU examined the propensity for violence in the SADC countries currently governed by former Liberation Movements (RAU 2016). Using the Armed Conflict Local Event Data (ACLED) database,² the study looked at the frequency of reported violent events between 1997 and 2014, in five countries – Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe emerged as the most violent of the five countries, followed by South Africa and Angola: reports on Zimbabwe accounted for 37% of all reported violence on the ACLED database. South Africa accounted for 33% and Angola for 22%. There were marked differences between these countries, however, and most violence in South Africa was described a “riots”, whilst, for Zimbabwe, it was violence against civilians. Elections for all the five countries saw appreciable levels of violent events, with Zimbabwe (46%) and Mozambique (42%) the worst. We concluded, as have many others (Southall 2013; Clapham 2012; Bratton & Masunungure 2011; Dorman 2007; Melber 2010; Ronning 2010), that liberation movements have an unhealthy propensity for violence in pursuit of maintaining political power.

These five countries, all SADC members, are the most recent African countries to attain full independence from colonial powers or settler populations. Most other SADC countries have been independent for at least five decades, and mostly in a peaceful transfer of power from the colonial power, and mostly from Britain. Does this make a difference to the kinds of politics in these older countries, even though very few have seen any form of electoral alternation in political power and governments? Roger Southall, in his masterly analysis of three former

¹ This report was written by Tony Reeler, with the assistance of Shastry Njeru, Senior Researchers at RAU.

² [<https://acleddata.com/#/dashboard>]

liberation movements in power currently – the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa, the South West African People’s Organisation (SWAPO), and the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU-PF) – concludes (broadly) that only Namibia seems to be making the change from a liberation movement to a modern political party (Southall. 2013). He is equivocal about South Africa, but argues that Zimbabwe, under ZANU-PF, is wholly unreconstructed from the ideology and strategy of a liberation movement.

The older SADC countries have seen, at least in some, several changes of regime. Zambia has had three different political parties in government since independence in 1964, and seen five different presidents. Malawi too, after several decades of rule by Banda and the Malawi Congress Party (from 1964 to 1994), has seen electoral alternation and changes of regime in the government. Malawi has even seen the overturning of an election by its Supreme Court, an extremely uncommon event in African politics where opposition political parties endlessly allege rigging and manipulation of elections, but few ever succeed in their legal challenges. Botswana, on the other hand, remains governed by the same party that took power on independence, and, paradoxically for those that claim the electoral alternation is the key to democracy, regarded as both stable and democratic internationally.

How a country is governed clearly affects the views and participation of its citizens. Recent work in Zimbabwe suggests that Zimbabwean citizens have little political trust in the government (RAU 2019 a; RAU 2019b), and that social capital is much diminished (RAU 2015). Furthermore, Zimbabweans are strongly “risk averse” when it comes to public participation, especially political participation (Masunungure et al 2016). All of these findings in a country that is the most polarised of all the countries surveyed by the Afrobarometer (Bratton & Masunungure 2018). However, none of these factors is unique to Zimbabwe, and hence it is interesting to see how different Zimbabwe actually is from its neighbours in SADC. We chose to compare two countries that have long been independent, Botswana and Zambia, with three countries for whom independence came more recently, and with a history of armed conflict in doing so, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

These five countries have very different political histories. Botswana and Zambia became independent through negotiation with the colonial power and political pressure, whilst Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe were forced into bitter violent conflict with their settler populations. Zambia has had multiple changes of government, but in none of the others is there a change from the party that assumed power at independence. For Namibia, South Africa and Botswana, the South West Africa People’s Organisation (SWAPO), the African National Congress (ANC) and the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) were elected without serious dispute, but, in Zimbabwe, every election since 2000 has been the subject of bitter dispute, plausible allegations of electoral manipulation, and very serious political violence.

Citizen agency and political trust

Theoretical framework

Human agency is a critical factor in determining how individuals, households, and communities can respond to different types of issues. Agency is a function of psychosocial factors and how they affect people’s capacity to respond to stressors. In most of the cases these important factors are poorly understood and are rarely accounted for. McLaughlin and Dietz (2008, p. 105) equate “*the capacity of individuals and corporate actors, with the diverse cultural meanings that they espouse, to play an independent causal role in history.*” Agency can be extended to mean collective action. It helps to overcome the view of people as powerless. It recognizes that humans are never just passive in the face of threats. With agency

people cease to be “powerless spectators,” and become “coping actors,” or “adaptive co-managers” (Brown and Westaway, 2011.p.323).

Citizenship builds on a view of people as active participants to be democratically engaged in all situations. This is because citizens are “important stakeholders in the innovation process shaping new routines and enacting system change” (Schot et al., 2016, p.1). Thus, citizens should be seen as engaging politically in a more comprehensive way continually. Therefore, people can act as social and political actors, and citizens can actively engage as individuals, or in larger collectives, for example through engagement with policy activist groups (Radtke, 2014).

A key factor in the participation by citizens in politics is political trust. Trust is both a human passion and a modality of human action: a more or less consciously chosen policy for handling the freedom of other human agents or agencies (Dunn, 2000). Trust can be evanescent or durable. But, as a modality of action, it is essentially concerned with coping with uncertainty over time (Luhmann 1979). There is a large, and often conflicting, literature in political science about the importance of political trust; not that the concept is deemed unimportant, but rather that its contribution to political participation or social capital is very complex. One of the major interests in the concept has been the relationship of political trust to one major aspect of political participation, voting. Elections are obviously important, but so is the continuous participation of citizens in the public life of a country, and this has been an issue of increasing concern, especially around the discussions about social capital. Trust here is an important component of social capital.

Although originally elaborated by Coleman (Coleman 1990), the major association in social capital has been with the work of Robert Putnam (Putnam 1995).³ The concept has been deeply engaged by political scientists (Fukayama 2001), but has not been without its critics (van Deth. 2001; Durlauf 2000). Putnam distinguished two different forms of social capital; *bridging* social capital, which builds links between groups, and *bonding* social capital, which solidifies links between groups. These are not necessarily separated in either time or place, and often operate concurrently (Durlauf 2000). It is useful to see that there may be different processes operating as social capital, but it is also not useful to suggest that they cannot operate concurrently. Furthermore, again as Durlauf points out (Durlauf 2000), there is a very serious problem with assumptions about causality: does social capital create active citizens, or is social capital *created by* active citizens?

The question here is the issue of trust, and it is impossible to conceive of trust as not being an important component of social capital, but it is evident that trust, as measured in studies of social capital, does not necessarily lead to political engagement (van Deth. 2001). Newton argues that there is little evidence of a relationship between membership of voluntary organisations and measures of trust; no close relationship between social and political trust; and social trust is not related to demographic features such as age, income, class or education, but is related more to the “winners” in society (Newton 2001).

So much for trust and social capital, but what about political trust, trust in governments, political leaders and political institutions? The concept of political trust, as with social capital, has had increasing attention over the past two decades, has been a central part in the thinking of many political theorists over several hundred years, mostly described as *social trust*, as well as central

³ The section that follows draws verbatim on a previous report by RAU. See RAU (2019), *Political trust, social trust and trustworthiness in Zimbabwe?* August 2019. Harare: Research and Advocacy Unit

to economic efficiency and democratic stability. In fact, it is difficult to think of a single human, collective enterprise in which trust is not fundamental in some way.

Political trust can be seen as the property of an actor: one either trusts or distrusts people or institutions. Trustworthiness is the focus for the actor: other persons or institutions are the objects of trust or distrust, and seen as either trustworthy or not. Political trust is obviously very complex, and the causal relations between trust and trustworthiness in the political domain have produced a large and often contradictory literature. Does trustworthiness evoke political trust, or is it the reverse? For example, Hetherington argues that it is declining political trust that causes dissatisfaction with political leaders rather than the converse (Hetherington. 1998): essentially, it is the feelings that citizens have about political leaders that causes dissatisfaction and low political trust, and reflected in the drops over time in approval for government, political leaders, and even institutions.

The directionality of the relationship between political trust and trustworthiness is important. There seems general agreement that “*all agree that government officials who act in a trustworthy manner are more likely to elicit compliance, and virtually all agree that government regulators who trust the people that they are regulating are more likely to evoke trustworthy behaviour and compliance*” (Levi & Stoker 2000. 493). This shifts the problem of political trust away from the attributes of the citizen to the character and behaviour of the government, government officials and politicians.

Some workers have criticised the notion that political trust is a simple one-dimensional construct, arguing that there are at least three forms that can be distinguished: *strategic trust*, *moral trust*, and *deliberative trust*. (Fisher et al 2010). These authors thus argue that these different forms of trust apply differently according to the kind of institution or official appraised. This view is disputed, and Marc Hooghe argues, empirically, that there is only one form of political trust, and that this trust is a result of “*a comprehensive assessment of the political culture that is prevalent within a political system*” (Hooghe 2011. 5).

Newton argues that political trust should focus on aggregate analysis, and when this is done, a number of relationships can be seen (Newton 2001). Firstly, higher levels of social trust in a country lead to higher levels of political confidence. Secondly, “*social capital and a developed civil society help to make good government possible, and good government helps to sustain social capital and the conditions of civil society*”. Thirdly, low levels of social trust and social capital will be associated with low levels of political trust and capital, with a concomitant inability for a country to sustain a developed democracy. Finally, Newton points out a sequential process: high social capital is required for an effective political system, and this can then build strong political capital. However, this process is not necessarily linear, and high levels of social capital do not necessarily lead to high levels of political capital as demonstrated empirically by the relations between trust in people and confidence in parliament for 42 countries (Newton 2001).

In a comprehensive review of political trust and trustworthiness, Margaret Levi and Laura Stoker summarise the field of survey research, and conclude that “*whether citizens express trust or distrust is primarily a reflection of their political lives, not their personalities nor even their social characteristics*” (Levi & Stoker 2000). Kenneth Newton concurs with this view, and argues as follows: “*If the standard measures of social and political trust should be interpreted as judgments about the external world in which people find themselves, then the*

analysis of trust should focus not on individuals but rather on the trustworthiness of society at large."⁴

We should note here that there are complex issues involved with these two concepts, succinctly summarised by Kenneth Newton (Newton 2001):

"There are fundamental difficulties at the heart of social capital theory, and its close cousin, the theory of civil society that threaten to undermine both of them. Briefly stated, they argue that a dense network of voluntary associations and citizens organizations help to sustain civil society and community relations in a way that generates trust and cooperation between citizens and a high level of civic engagement and participation. Therefore, they create the conditions for social integration, public awareness and action, and democratic stability. However, survey research fails to uphold some of the basic claims of these theories". [Newton 2001. 201]

We chose to examine some of the issues around political trust in five SADC countries; Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. We make a comparison between two countries, Botswana and Zambia, who have been independent for five decades or so, and gained independence mostly by negotiation from the colonial power, and three countries that became independent by dint of armed struggle against settler populations. We were interested in five basic questions about how citizens feel about their countries, and whether violent struggle had any long-term consequences:

- Are there differences in Political Fear?
- Are there differences in Government Performance?
- Are there differences in Political Trust?
- Are there differences in Participation?

Here we assume, following the previous discussion that countries in which governments that provide citizens with good public goods and services, and do not rely on coercion (creating political fear) to engender consent, will have citizens willing to participate in public life and evince trust in the government. We also assume that the nature of politics is affected by a propensity for coercion in countries currently governed by former liberation movements (Southall 2013; Clapham 2012; Bratton & Masunungure 2011; Dorman. 2007; Melber 2010; Ronning 2010). Thus, for effective political participation, trust strengthens agency.

Methods⁵

We used the data from the Afrobarometer Round Seven (2017/2018), selecting questions for each of the following themes:

- Political Fear (four questions assumed to reflect aspects of political fear);
- Government performance (six questions on aspects of government's effectiveness in delivery of public goods and services);

⁴ Newton, K (2001), *Trust, Social Trust, Civil Society and Democracy* (p207)

⁵ The data from the Afrobarometer was downloaded and compiled in Excel. [<https://afrobarometer.org/online-data-analysis/analyse-online>] We are grateful for the use of the Afrobarometer data. Any errors are ours.

- Political Trust (eight questions on trust in political parties, state officials and agencies);
- Participation (three questions on participation in community activities).

We also included one of the questions on migration since, following Hirschman (Hirschman, 1980), we wished to see whether dissatisfaction might lead to citizens choosing *Exit* as a response to this dissatisfaction as opposed to *Loyalty* or *Voice*. There have been very large numbers of Zimbabweans migrating in the past two decades, but it was interesting to see whether this was a trend specific to Zimbabwe or found more generally.

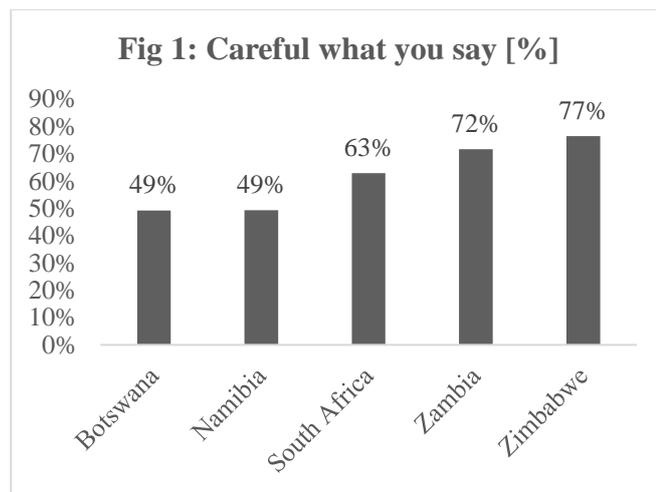
Results and Discussion

We present the results section by section according to the variables indicated above.

Political Fear

As was pointed out at the outset, the countries governed by former liberation movements have tendency to resort to coercive power when the grasp on political power is threatened. Here, it might be expected that political fear would be higher in these countries than in those that obtained independence without resorting to military struggle. However, fear thrives on lack of information and the fearsome regimes are known for cultivating this fear. Below we contrast several indicators of possible political fear asked in questions by the Afrobarometer survey.

The Afrobarometer consistently asks a question about whether citizens are careful about they say in public. The question taps at least being cautious, but also reflects actual fear.⁶ Zimbabweans are the most fearful of the five countries, but Zambians and South Africans are not far behind. It is evident citizens in Botswana and Namibia are cautious too.

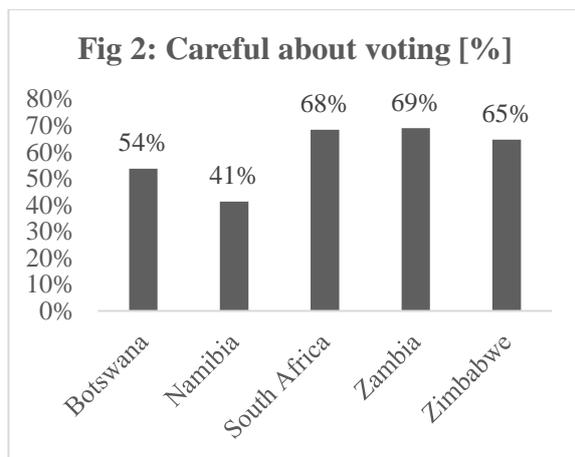


None of the five countries reflects the idea that free speech and publicly expressed opinions are valued in the politics of these countries: rather the findings suggest that people self-censor a good deal, and this makes politics are a risky business.

Here, it should be borne in mind that political partisanship is factor underestimated in understanding African politics, at least in the eyes of African citizens. For example, using a measure of “political partisanship”, Bratton and Musungure (Bratton & Musungure 2018), show some interesting differences between these five countries. Zimbabwe is the most polarised of 32 countries: in ranked order, are Zimbabwe (1), Botswana (7), South Africa (14), Zambia (24), and Namibia (25). Zimbabwe, Botswana and South Africa are all above the average.

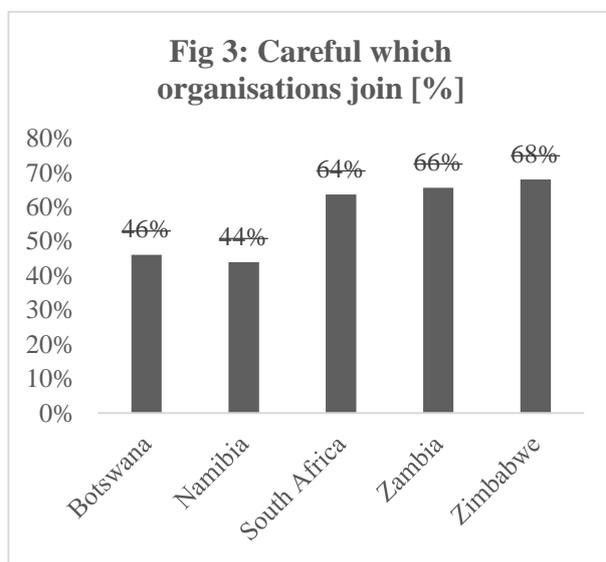
⁶ “In your opinion, how often, in this country: Do people have to be careful of what they say about politics?”
 Converted to binary variable: 1=(often, always); 0=(Rarely, Never, Refused, Don’t know)

Voting, however, would seem less threatening, at least on face value, since most voting is by secret ballot.⁷



In contrast, most of the citizens in these five countries, Namibia apart, all see voting as very problematic. This seems a good reflection of how combative elections are in Southern Africa, with most elections being two-horse races. In virtually every country, half or more than half are careful about voting, and this says a considerable amount about people’s fears that their vote be discovered.

For example, in Zimbabwe there are endless anecdotes about devices to see for whom one votes, but, more seriously, there have been reprisals for voting against the ruling party (CSV 2009). Earlier, the violence in the 2000 Parliamentary elections in Zimbabwe followed the Constitutional Referendum where a majority rejected the proposed government-driven constitution. However, dissenting votes were cast in significant numbers by citizens in the three Mashonaland Provinces, provinces that were strongholds for ZANU-PF. ZANU-PF won every single seat, many unopposed, in the 1995 parliamentary election, and yet the violence in the lead-up to the 2000 election was more extreme in these provinces, actually 47% of all reported violations (ZHRNGOF. 2001).



If people are careful what they say, and careful about voting, are they careful about what organisations they join? ⁸ Clearly, many citizens from Botswana and Namibia are, and so are a majority of South Africans, Zambians and Zimbabweans. The trend here to citizens being very careful in public and about their affiliations is widespread across the region. This might suggest that partisan politics are a factor, but, according to a measure of partisanship, they are not equally divided (Bratton & Masunungure. 2018).

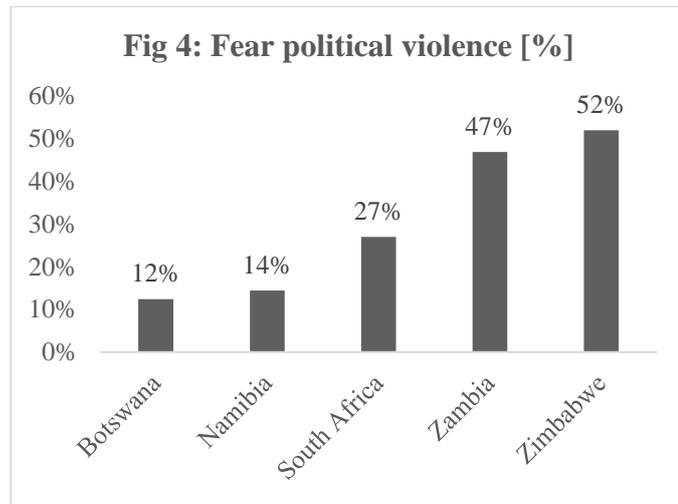
As pointed out above, whilst Zimbabwe is the most polarised African country, Botswana and South Africa also have Partisan Trust Gaps greater than the average. Namibia and Zambia are markedly less polarised, over 40 Partisan Trust Gap points lower than Zimbabwe. However,

⁷ “In your opinion, how often, in this country: Do people have to be careful about how they vote in an election?”
Converted to binary variable: 1=(often, always); 0=(Rarely, Never, Refused, Don’t know)

⁸ “In your opinion, how often, in this country: Do people have to be careful about what political organizations they join?”
Converted to binary variable: 1=(often, always); 0=(Rarely, Never, Refused, Don’t know)

political partisanship may thus not be the whole explanation, and we next examined political fear, whether or not citizens fear political violence.⁹

This contrast only added more complexity. Zimbabweans and Zambians are substantially more afraid of political violence, whilst most Botswana, Namibians and South Africans are not. What explains this? It could be both cultural and institutional qualities in those countries. The trend, irrespective of the magnitude of the frequency, fits that seen in Figure 1.



Zimbabweans are the most careful about what they say, who they vote for, and most fearful about political violence.

Therefore, Political Fear should not be seen as peculiar to Zimbabwe. In one or another, Political Fear is significant factor in the eyes of the citizens of these five countries. Majorities are careful about expressing their views, careful about voting, careful about which organisations they join, and in fearing political violence. This is irrespective of the government in place, or whether the government is a former liberation movement or not.

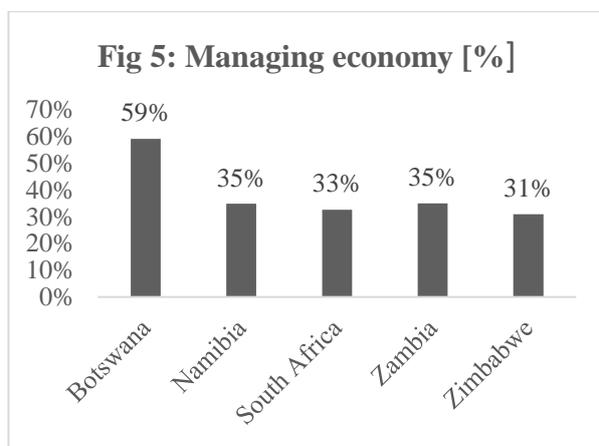
As can be seen in all the figures above, Zimbabwe ranks highest in all forms, followed by closely by Zambia and South Africa. Zambia, however, is ranked much lower than both South Africa and Namibia in terms of political partisanship, both of whom are governed by former liberation movements. Botswana ranks much higher on political partisanship than Namibia or South Africa, but has the least forms of political fear in all the four measures we used. Bear in mind the fact that the Political Partisan Gap, developed by Bratton and Masunungure (Bratton & Masunungure 2018), is constructed through calculating the differences between those who trust the ruling party *somewhat* or *a lot*. It should be pointed out here, that citizens of all five countries still do not trust the ruling party nor the opposition very much overall (seen Figures 10 & 11). Illustrating this point, in Botswana only 49% support the ruling party, and 19% support the opposition, but its citizens express the lowest degree of political fear.

Government Performance

When we raised the issue of political trust, it seems obvious that government’s resorting to coercion in order to obtain compliance from their citizens is highly unlikely to develop political trust. However, this might be offset by a government’s ability to deliver the kinds of public goods and services that would make citizens content with their lot. Thus, we compared the five countries on measures of government performance: managing the economy, narrowing income gaps, addressing the needs of youth and women, and dealing with corruption. These are only a

⁹ “In any society, people will sometimes disagree with one another. These disagreements occasionally escalate into physical violence. Please tell me whether, in the past two years, you have ever personally feared any of the following types of violence? [If yes] Have you actually personally experienced this type of violence in the past two years? Violence at a political rally or campaign event?” Converted to binary variable: 1=(Yes, feared but didn’t experience; Yes, feared and experienced); 0=(No, never; Refused; don’t know)

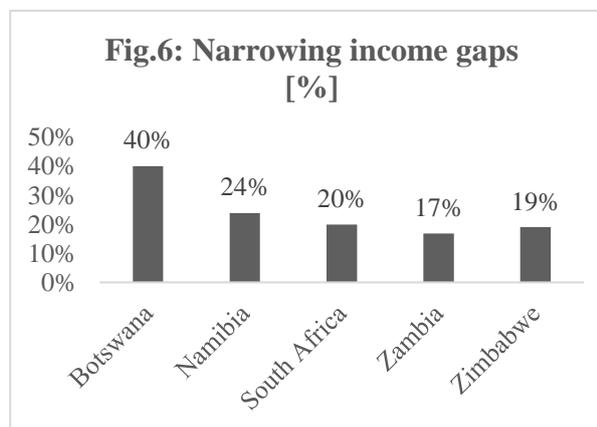
small sample of the very wide range of public goods and services that a government can deliver, but these five indicators seemed sufficient for our purpose.



When it comes to managing the economy, only the citizens of Botswana seem content.¹⁰ Two-thirds of the other four countries do not believe that their governments are doing a good job. Zimbabweans are marginally more critical than the others, but Namibians, South Africans and Zambians are not happy either. Of course, South African has one of the highest income disparities in the world, but Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe do have large populations of very poor people.

These are all countries where the economies are very different. Zimbabwe has seen a catastrophic decline in its economy since the late 1990s, with a short revival between 2009 and 2013, but since then a steady decline has followed, leaving most of the work force dependent on the informal sector for their livelihoods. Reporting about employment and unemployment is a vexed question, as different methodologies give very different results. The African Development Bank (AfDB) in its recent report on Southern African economies sees unemployment across the SADC region as much lower than do the citizens as captured by the Afrobarometer. The views of citizens might not accord with the hard data, but this does not make these views unimportant when it comes to looking at citizen participation, political trust, and the like.

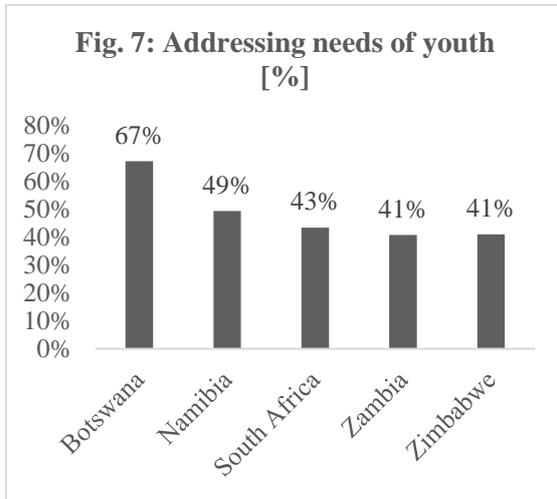
Much the same picture emerges when asking about narrowing come gaps as about managing the economy in these countries.¹¹ If anything, the citizens have an even more pessimistic view, with only those from Botswana having a sizeable percentage claiming that the government is having some kind of effect on lowering the income gap. There is little to choose in the pessimism of the other four countries (Figure. 6 over)



¹⁰ “How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven’t you heard enough to say? Managing the economy. Converted to binary variable: 1=(Fairly well; Very well); 0=(Fairly badly; Very badly; refused; don’t know).

¹¹ How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven’t you heard enough to say? Narrowing income gaps. Converted to binary variable: 1=(Fairly well; Very well); 0=(Fairly badly; Very badly; refused; don’t know).

The critical issue for a country having a large youthful population is the availability of education and jobs, and here we are interested in how well the governments of these five countries are doing in this respect.

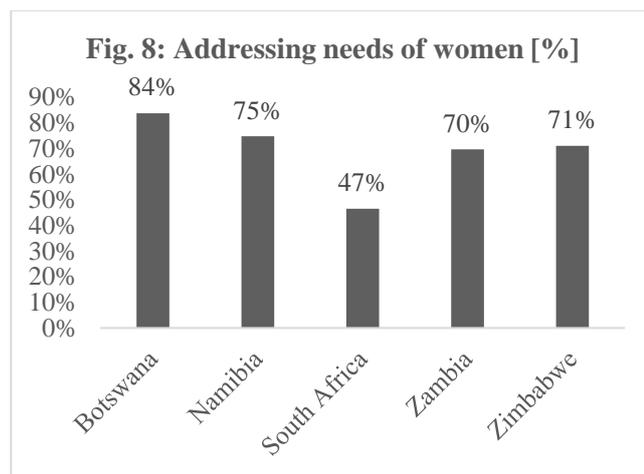


It would appear that only Botswana is meeting the aspirations of its citizens in addressing the needs of the youth.¹² Namibians are significantly more satisfied than South Africans, Zambians or Zimbabweans, but still most (67%) Namibians are dissatisfied with how well their government is doing. All these five countries, in common with most African countries, have significantly large “youth bulges”: all five countries have more than 60% of the population under 35 years

There is debate about the socio-political significance of “youth bulges” following Huntington (Huntington. 1996), but a number of researchers conclude that this demographic is (or can be) associated with increased crime and civil disturbances (Cincotta 2008; Urdal 2006; Urdal 2004). There is also the view that youth bulges may provide an economic dividend as in the case of China, but this obviously means significant employment opportunities for youth. It would be useful exercise to examine the involvement of the youth in these countries in crime and civil disturbance, but this was outside the scope of the present study.

Women are mostly a disadvantaged group in most countries, but particularly in African countries where patriarchy remains very strong, seen in many different ways, but the SADC region has committed itself to addressing this through the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development, signed in 2008.

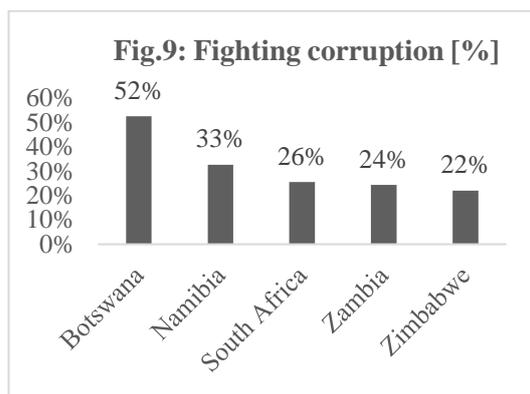
The citizens of these five countries, South Africa apart, see their governments doing a good job in addressing the needs of women: close to three-quarters of Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe say this.¹³ The South African response is interesting because the country has the highest percentage (45%) of women in parliament, and Botswana, by contrast, has less than 10% (RAU. 2020).



¹² How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say? Addressing the needs of youth. Converted to binary variable: 1= (Fairly well; Very well); 0=(Fairly badly; Very badly; refused; don't know).

¹³ How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say? Addressing the needs of women. Converted to binary variable: 1= (Fairly well; Very well); 0=(Fairly badly; Very badly; refused; don't know)

One other very important issue for the citizens of all these countries is that of corruption. South Africa is undergoing intense examinations of corruption presently, and Zimbabwe regarded as one of the most corrupt countries in the world.¹⁴ Zimbabwe was rated the 160th most corrupt out of 180 countries by Transparency International in 2019, Zambia the 105th, South Africa (73rd), and Namibia (52nd), whilst Botswana is seen as having little corruption (34th), the second least corrupt country in Africa. How does this correspond with the view of their citizens?¹⁵ Bear in mind that the nature of the corruption that SADC countries are combating is often carried out by an elite, closely linked to the government, and hence dealing with the corruption can be detrimental to the interests of this elite. For example, a recent report provides evidence for the links between state, party and a numbers of “cartels”.¹⁶



It is evident that the citizens’ views match the international rankings. The citizens of Botswana by a small majority see the government doing a good job in fighting corruption, but none of the others, Zimbabweans least of all.

One final issue is that of managing crime. There are endless reports about crime (and violent crime) in South Africa, and crime is a serious issue for citizens, as is the effectiveness of the government is dealing with crime. Crime, and GBV, also is an important issue for women. Official data on organised crime does not suggest that South Africa is unusual. A study by the Institute for Security studies in 2000 showed the Botswana police reporting almost as many types of organised crime as the South African police (Gastrow 2001). This data was based only on whether any of 34 types of organised crime were detected by the countries police service, and did not estimate the extent of each type. South African police estimated that 22 of the 34 types of organised crime were present in the country, Botswana 21/34, Namibia 18/34, Zambia 16/34, and Zimbabwe 16/34. Thus, while it is evident that crime is a problem in each of the five countries, it is interesting to see what citizens think their governments are doing about it.

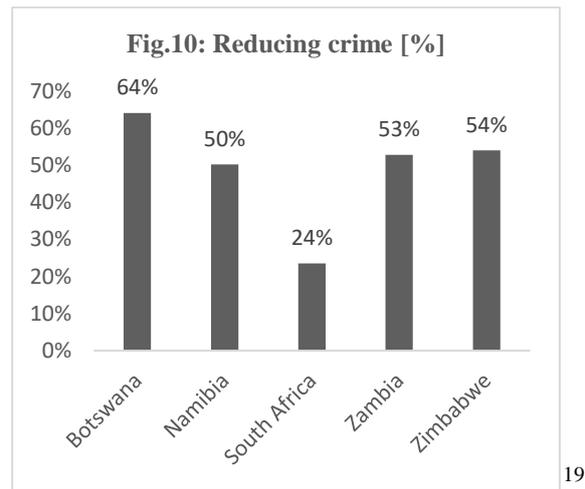
¹⁴ Zimbabwe: Explosive cartel report uncovers the anatomy of a captured state, Daily Maverick, 9 February 2021.

<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-02-09-zimbabwe-explosive-cartel-report-uncovers-the-anatomy-of-a-captured-state/>

¹⁵ How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven’t you heard enough to say? Reducing crimes. Converted to binary variable: 1= (Fairly well; Very well); 0=(Fairly badly; Very badly; refused; don’t know)

¹⁶ Zimbabwe: Explosive cartel report uncovers the anatomy of a captured state. Daily Maverick. 9 February 2021 <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-02-09-zimbabwe-explosive-cartel-report-uncovers-the-anatomy-of-a-captured-state/>

In most of the five countries, small majorities of citizens think that their governments are doing a good job in reducing crime.¹⁷ Botswana and South Africa are an interesting contrast: both police services report many types of organised crime, but it would appear that Botswana deals with this much better than South Africa, and, to a lesser extent, Namibians, Zambians and Zimbabweans feel their countries are mostly doing a good job. The most probable explanation for the difference between South Africa and the other countries has been suggested already, and that is much greater amount of violent crime in South Africa.¹⁸



South Africa is ranked the eighth most violent country out of 167 countries world-wide, but Namibia and Botswana are ranked 21st and 22nd respectively. Zambia ranks 46th and Zimbabwe comes last, ranked 55th. However, it must be borne in mind that these are statistics about criminal violence and not political violence, and, as pointed out earlier, Zimbabwe is the most violent of the five when it comes to political violence.

Overall, only the Botswana are content with their government's performance in dealing with all these areas. Apart from reducing crime and dressing the needs of women, Namibians, South Africans, Zambians and Zimbabweans all feel that their governments are doing a poor job in managing the economy, lowering income gaps, addressing the needs of the youth, and fighting corruption. If governments are doing a poor job in dealing with the aspirations of citizens, then creating a climate in which political fear is high, and becoming active citizens is low due to political fear, then governments of these countries will presumably not engender much political trust from their citizens.

The next issue was to see how this affected the citizens' trust in government, since government performance and political trust are related as pointed out earlier.

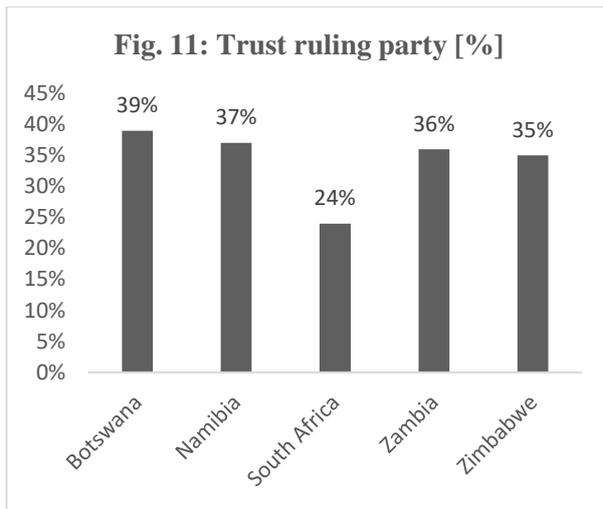
Political Trust

In order to examine political trust, we chose eight questions about trust in political parties and government officials. We began by looking at political parties.²⁰

¹⁷ How well or badly would you say the current government is handling the following matters, or haven't you heard enough to say? Reducing crimes. Converted to binary variable: 1= (Fairly well; Very well); 0=(Fairly badly; Very badly; refused; don't know)

¹⁸ Index Mundi (2017), *Intentional homicides (per 100,000 people) - Country Ranking*, [\[https://www.indexmundi.com/facts/indicators/VC.IHR.PSRC.P5/rankings\]](https://www.indexmundi.com/facts/indicators/VC.IHR.PSRC.P5/rankings)

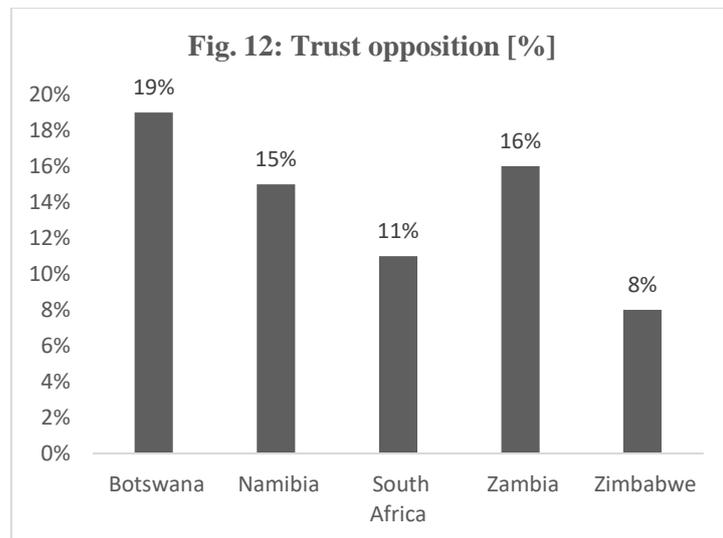
²⁰ How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? The Ruling Party. Converted to binary variable (1=A lot; Somewhat) (0=Just a little; Not at all).



In none of the five countries do the ruling parties get much of a vote of confidence, and this does seem to bear out the theoretical point made earlier; citizens trust governments that act in a trustworthy manner. Not even the citizens of Botswana have much trust in the ruling party. This would all seem logical where citizens have high degrees of political fear, generally do not see the government doing a good job in providing public goods and services, and not dealing effectively with corruption.

Given this, it seems surprising that only in Zambia has there been any kind of political alternation since independence. The answer seems to lie in part with the manner in which elections take place – both Zambia and Zimbabwe have had disputed elections – but also with the calibre of opposition political parties. The Afrobarometer pointed out many years ago that no opposition party that had a popularity gap of 20% points or more would be likely to overturn the ruling party (Logan 2008). To some extent, Zimbabwe is an anomaly here: the MDC had a 16% advantage over ZANU-PF in 2005-2006, lost the 2005 elections, and, even when they won in 2008, were unable to turn that advantage into persuading SADC and others into getting ZANU-PF to concede political power (RAU.2012). This special case of Zimbabwe still does not vitiate the general point: it is the weakness of the opposition that keeps poorly supported ruling parties in power.

This point is supported by asking about trust in opposition political parties.²¹ In none of the five countries do citizens express much trust in their opposition parties, with Zimbabweans the least. 80% or more of the citizens in all the five countries do not trust the opposition. There is a complex argument around this phenomenon, some arguing the centrality of the “big man” (Logan.2008 (a)), and the additional effect of traditional leadership (Logan. 2008 (b)).

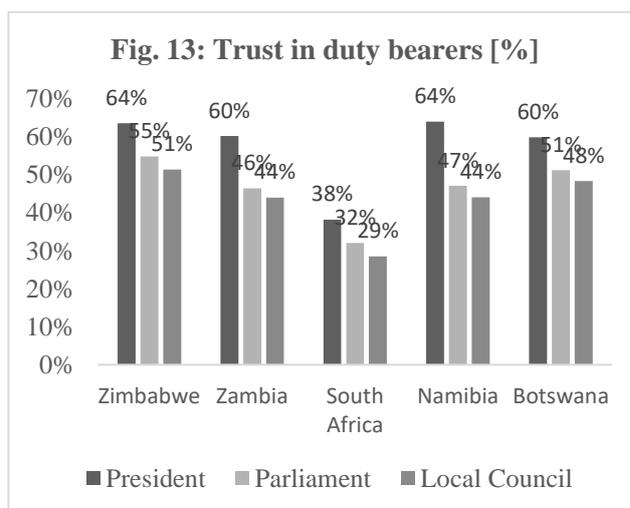


²¹ How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? Opposition parties. Converted to binary variable (1=A lot; Somewhat) (0=Just a little; Not at all).

There is considerably more to be said about trust in political parties, but, for the purpose of this comparison, it is enough to point out that citizens in these countries have little trust in their ruling parties and even less trust in the opposition.

Trust in political parties may not be the same as trust in the institutions of the state, and most citizens are more likely to have greater experience in encountering public officials than with political leaders. Bearing mind the points made earlier by Kenneth Newton and Marc Hooghe (Newton. 2001; Hooghe. 2011), political trust is most likely based on an aggregate analysis of the state and the government, and hence even the performance of officials will come into this analysis.

This is not the place to examine the effect of the electoral system, and rather we merely used the questions from the Afrobarometer to inquire about comparative views of trust in the executive, and the legislative bodies. The electoral systems are not equivalent: Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe all have presidential elections, whilst South Africa and Botswana have a president elected by parliament. Further, the countries also vary by the electoral system itself: South Africa and Namibia have Proportional Representation (PR) systems, whilst Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe use the First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) system. Thus, here we examined two different sets of officials; those comprising the government, the president, parliament, and local councils, and those that provide direct service to citizens, the police, the army and the courts.



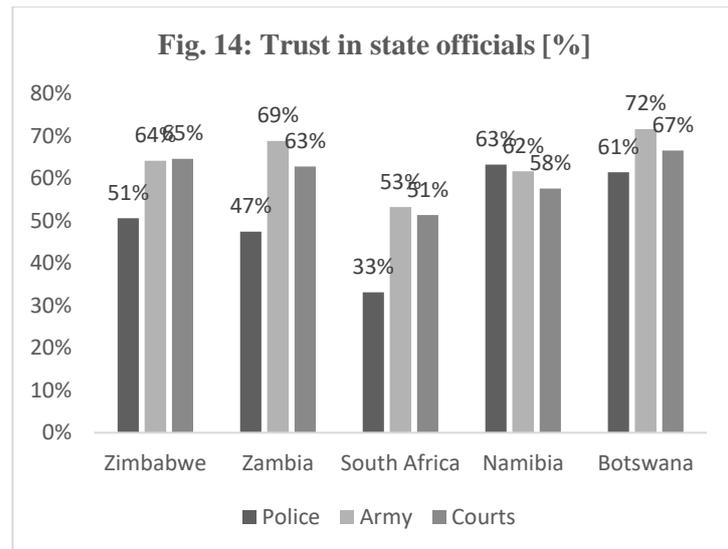
Firstly, it is evident that there is decreasing trust between the various bodies, with the greatest trust in the presidency (the big man effect?) and the least in local government. This holds for all the five countries.²²

Secondly, there are few differences in the frequency of trust for four of the five countries – Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe – but very low levels of trust for any of the duty bearers by South Africans.

It is also an interesting indication of the value placed by citizens on various features of the political system. Presidents are clearly the most important by a very long way, a duty bearer with whom virtually no citizen will have any intimate contact, or possibility thereof. They can have more contact with parliamentarians, but Zimbabwe research, for example, shows this is highly infrequent and mostly restricted for most parliamentarians to election times. Those with whom it most possible to have contact are the least trusted. Perhaps this is some kind of “familiarity breeds contempt”, or, more likely, local councillors can be subjected to the most realistic assessment on their performance.

²² How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? President, Parliament, Local Councils. Converted to binary variable (1=A lot; Somewhat) (0=Just a little; Not at all).

When it comes to state officials,²³ the police are the least trusted by citizens from Botswana, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.²⁴ Botswana shows the greatest trust in all three sets of officials, while South Africans again show the least trust in any of the three officials, and markedly less trust in the police the others.



However, despite all the minor differences, it is evident that the citizens of these five countries, by small majorities, trust the police the army and the courts.

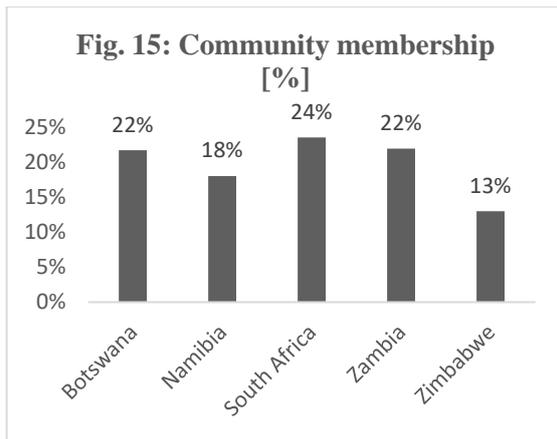
Overall, the citizens do not have much trust in political parties, but greater trust in the institutions, but these very crude measures really need unpacking through further research, and bear in mind that the data is nearly five years old. One wonders what the responses might be in 2021 after the political changes, and the Covid-19 pandemic, in Zimbabwe, South Africa, Zambia and Botswana since then.

Participation

All the preceding should have an effect upon citizenship and participation. An earlier study on Africans suggested that Africans generally were “voters, but not yet citizens” (Bratton & Logan. 2006). The point was that demanding accountability from governments was uncommon in many African countries. In Zimbabwe, for example, a number of studies have shown low levels of participation in public life, which seemed a factor of Zimbabweans’ propensity for *risk aversion* (Masunungure et al. 2016).

However, not all of these countries have had such an extended recent history of political violence, and hence could show higher degrees of participation, unless, of course, the effects of poor government performance and low political trust were inhibitory factors for participation.

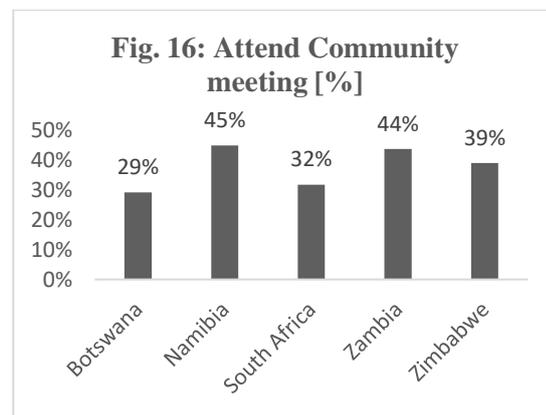
²³ *How much do you trust each of the following, or haven't you heard enough about them to say? Police, army, courts.* Converted to binary variable (1=A lot; Somewhat) (0=Just a little; Not at all).



In answer to question about belonging to some form of community organisation (other than a church), few citizens in any of the five countries had a positive response.²⁵ More than three-quarters in every country do not belong to a community group, with Zimbabwe being significantly the worst of all.

South African is the best, which may be the legacy of the power of labour and civil society during the latter part of the liberation struggle, but both Zambia and Zimbabwe have had strong civil society movements involved in the political struggles for multi-party democracy, new constitutions, etc. This is not however a general property of the citizenry at large it seems.

Whilst few citizens in these countries may belong to community groups, greater numbers are likely to attend community meetings.²⁶ Namibians and Zambians are the most likely of the five countries attend community meetings, with even less from Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

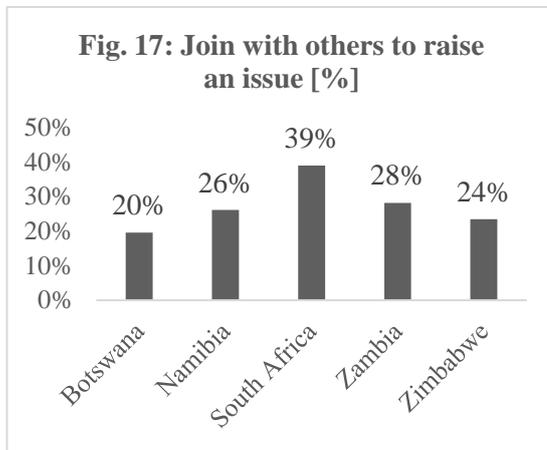


South Africans are less likely to attend meetings than to belong to a community group, both the citizens of Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe are twice as likely to attend a meeting as belong to a group. Those from Botswana show no differences between the two forms of participation

²⁵ Now I am going to read out a list of groups that people join or attend. For each one, could you tell me whether you are an official leader, an active member, an inactive member, or not a member. Some other voluntary association or community group. Converted to binary variable (1=Official leader; Active member); (0=Inactive member; Not a member).

²⁶ Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year. If not, would you do this if you had the chance? Attended a community meeting. Converted to binary variable (1=Yes, often; Yes, several times); (0=Yes, a few times; No, but would do if I had a chance; No, would never do this)

Both belonging to a group or going to a meeting can be very passive forms of participation, and hence we looked for a more “active “ form of participation, using the question about whether citizens would join other to raise an issue.²⁷



Once again, the levels of participation are very low in all five countries: more than three-quarters would never do this. South Africans were much more likely to do so than any of the citizens elsewhere, and accords with data showing that South Africans are much more likely to participate in protests, demonstrations and riots (RAU. 2016).

These findings do not suggest an “active citizenry” in these countries. The reasons are undoubtedly different for each country: Zimbabweans may be “risk averse” due to the Zimbabwe government’s penchant for coercive control, but the other countries may reflect the effects of poor governance, and all that goes with this. Botswana may be exceptional in the belief in the government doing a good job in the main, but it does not seem to translate into making its citizens more active.

In all the foregoing, we examined a range of variables about how satisfied the citizens were with their country, and many of these showed what might be termed indicators of dissatisfaction. Hence, we were interested in whether this might translate into the desire to emigrate.²⁸

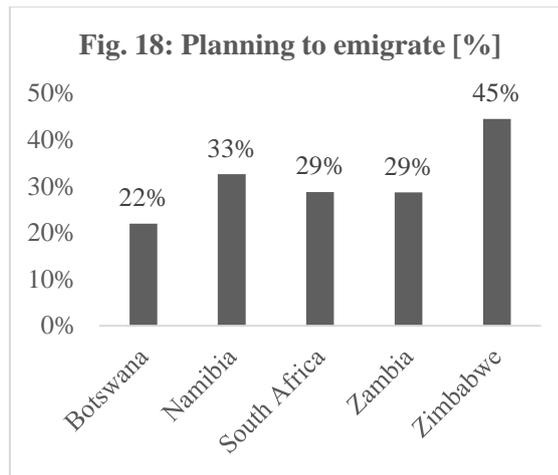
Voice, Loyalty or Exit?

One of the strongest measures of a citizen’s dissatisfaction with his or her country is the desire to emigrate. This can be due to a range of negative aspects of one’s home; war, economic hardship, starvation, etc. For example, there were mass migrations from Mozambique during the extended conflict between Frelimo and Renamo, due to both war and drought. There has also been extensive migration by Zimbabweans into South Africa, mainly since 2000. It may also be the desire to improve one’s lot, and merely because another country offers better opportunities than one’s own.

²⁷ Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year. If not, would you do this if you had the chance? *Join others to raise an issue.* Converted to binary variable (1=Yes, often; Yes, several times); (0=Yes, a few times; No, but would do if I had a chance; No, would never do this)

²⁸ *How much, if at all, have you considered moving to another country to live?* Converted to binary variable (1=A lot; Somewhat); (0=A little bit; Not at all).

As can be seen in Figure 18, Zimbabweans are the most likely to emigrate and Botswana the least. Namibians are the next most likely, with South Africa and Zambia the same in probability.



Of course, there may be entirely different reasons for Zimbabweans and Namibians wanting to emigrate. Zimbabweans, subjected to great adversity and serious political violence, leave to avoid an adverse environment, which is what Zimbabwean refugees actually say. In one study of Zimbabwean refugees in South Africa, 56% indicated they had fled because of political violence and persecution, and further 28% for economic reasons.²⁹ Becoming a refugee is, of course, an extreme version of emigration, but a very hard indicator of dissatisfaction.

By contrast, and looking at South African refugee statistics, Zimbabweans are the largest group of refugees, and Namibians do not even get a mention.³⁰ Thus, if Namibians express a wish to emigrate, this may well be related to wanting an improvement in life rather than fleeing from adversity in Namibia. Nonetheless, if lack of desire to migrate measures something like satisfaction with one's country, then most citizens (Zimbabwe apart) are happy with their country overall.

Types of government

Finally, we looked at the question about whether political history matters: specifically whether liberation movements (and their propensity for resorting to coercive control) had an effect on citizen's agency.

When citizens say that politics is a fearful process, and when there is strong evidence about the use of coercive power, both during and outside of elections, as Uganda has so graphically demonstrated this year (and Zimbabwe for two decades), their opinions become crucial in demonstrating the democratic deficit. Thus, the Afrobarometer surveys, using comparable questions across the years and countries, are such a useful tool for expanding our understanding about comparative democracy and citizen contentedness with their own variety of democracy. If we try to construct a simple summary matrix based on these findings, then the regional profile might look something like this.

Table1: Comparison of countries [average % scores on measures]

	Botswana	Namibia	South Africa	Zambia	Zimbabwe
Political Fear	60%	63%	45%	37%	35%
Government performance (approve)	63%	44%	32%	38%	38%
Political Trust (high trust)	52%	49%	34%	48%	49%
Participation (high participation)	24%	30%	32%	31%	25%
Migration (planning)	22%	33%	29%	29%	45%
Mean	55%	50%	43%	45%	40%

Each of these five countries has been subject of an analysis of their record in democratic governance by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation. In the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) for 2020,³¹ looking at governance for the decade 2010 to 2020, the five rank in two clusters effectively (Table 2 below). Botswana (5th), South Africa (6th) and Namibia (7th) are all close in rank and at the high end of the rankings, while Zambia (21st) stands well above the continental average (48.8) and Zimbabwe ranked below the average in 33rd place (46.1). It is worth pointing out here that, in 2019, African countries overall show a decline in *Overall Governance* for the first time ever, driven by deterioration in *Participation, Rights and Inclusion, Security and Rule of Law, and Human Development*.

Table 2: Drivers of poor governance for Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia & Zimbabwe [IIAG: Scores out of 100]					
	Botswana [5 th]	South Africa [6 th]	Namibia [7 th]	Zambia [21 st]	Zimbabwe [33 rd]
Participation, Rights & Inclusion	67.5	67.2	67.0	48.9	36.0
Security & Safety	72.8	67.6	69.6	56.2	46.4
Human Development	68.5	64.3	60.9	52.7	54.9

According to the IIAG rankings, and using much more comprehensive measures in which citizen's view are only a small part, these countries should rank in order (Table 2): Botswana (5th), South Africa (6th), Namibia (7th), Zambia (21st), and Zimbabwe (33rd). We end up with largely similar results (unexpectedly), with Botswana ranked top, Zimbabwe ranked bottom, and South African and Namibia exchanging ranks. However, ranking apart, in none of these countries, perhaps Botswana apart, do the citizens have very favourable views about their countries.

Thus, using a smaller number of measures, and only the subjective opinions of citizens does not produce a very different picture to that obtained using a very large number of measures. Furthermore, the provenance of the political party in power in 2017 makes no difference. It is the manner of current governing that matters to citizens: whether the party came to power on the back of armed struggle or was the end product of a straight forward (minimally violent) colonial handover matters little in the present.

Conclusions

It is obvious that this is a rather crude comparison in political economy terms, but has the virtue that it draws on what citizens think and say about their countries, and this may be very different

³¹ 2020 Ibrahim Index of African Governance: Index Report, Mo Ibrahim Foundation. London & Dakar.
[<https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/iiag>]

to what researchers conclude in more analytical studies. The political and economic dynamics for each of these countries are very different, and there are many hard measures available for comparisons, economic in particular, but opinion surveys are perhaps an important addition. The ways in which citizens' views on political trust, for example, compliment or contradict these "harder" measures is not trivial. When citizens have no political trust in the government or the ruling party, and the same "untrustworthy" government is continuously re-elected (and in highly disputed elections), this says something about the state of a country's democracy.

In our analysis we asked four general questions:

- Are there differences in Political Fear?
- Are there differences in government performance?
- Are there differences in Political Trust?
- Are there differences in Participation?

Political Fear was an aggregate measure of four questions tapping fear, none used in the IIAG measure of Safety and Security, with Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe ranked the ascending order on views about Political Fear. The IIAG ranks these five countries in a different order on its more general (and non-political measure): Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The first three, Botswana, Namibia and South Africa, are scored high by the IIAG on Safety and Security (Table 2). IIAG uses 13 indices from the Armed Conflict Local Events Database (ACLED) to determine the overall measure for Safety and Security, but no measures of citizens' views on political violence, rather taking the questions on crime from the Afrobarometer.

In the views of citizens about Political Fear, few Zambians (35%) or Zimbabweans (37%) feel that this is not present in their daily lives, the South Africans less so (45%), but the majority of the citizens of Botswana (60%) and Namibia (63%) do not worry about political fear. Thus, asking citizens themselves about political fear generates a different picture on Safety and Security. There is an apparent difference between objective (ACLED) evidence and subjective evidence when looking at Political Fear in these five countries. Bear in mind here that the ACLED data on Namibia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe shows Zimbabwe as the most violent of the three (RAU 2016).

The difference between our measure and the IIAG measure, and the views about Political Fear may also reflect issues around political polarisation, but earlier we noted that, according to the Afrobarometer, Zambia and Namibia are the least polarised of the five countries, but Botswana and South Africa have Partisan Trust Gaps greater than the average (Bratton & Masunungure 2018). Political polarisation, at least in many African countries, is frequently associated with political violence and intimidation, and, thus, it seems that what our measure of political fear reflects is not captured adequately by the IIAG measure on Safety and Security.

When it comes to government performance, the IIAG includes eleven Afrobarometer questions in its index of Human Development, but also many "hard" measures from other monitoring bodies such as the UN agencies, African Development Bank, etc. The Afrobarometer questions used by IIAG do not include any of the questions that we used. Nonetheless, IIAG ranks the five on Human Development in the following manner: Botswana (5), South Africa (1), Namibia (12), Zimbabwe (20), and Zambia (25).

Using our measure of Government Performance, only the citizens of Botswana (64%) are content with their government's performance in dealing with all the six areas: managing the economy, narrowing income gaps, addressing the needs of the youth and women, dealing with

corruption, and reducing crime. Our rankings differ from IAG: Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, with Zambia and Zimbabwe equal (Table 1).

All, except South Africans, feel their government are doing a good job in reducing crime (Figure 10) and addressing the needs of women (Figure 8), and all, to some extent (around 40%) feel that their governments are doing a good job in addressing the needs of the youth (Figure 9). None, except a small majority (52%) of Botswana citizens, feel that their governments are dealing effectively with corruption (Figure 9). Transparency International ranks Botswana as the 35th least corrupt country in the world, whilst Namibia is 57th, South Africa 69th, Zambia 117th, and Zimbabwe 157th out of 180 countries.³² Objectively, all the five countries have problems with corruption, but, in the eyes of their citizens, only Botswana is making credible attempts to deal with this.

Political Trust, as we have pointed out earlier, is an important factor in citizen's compliance with governance, and we tested this for the five countries with eight questions taken from the Afrobarometer. The IAG used only three related questions from the Afrobarometer, on trust in the police, the army and the electoral commission. We used the questions on the police and the army, but also looked at political parties, the president, parliament, local government and the courts. The overall measure of Political Trust (Table 1 above) showed about half of all the countries, South Africa apart (34%), had nearly half their citizens having Political Trust.

However, it was startling to see that very few, less than 40% in each, had trust in the ruling party: South Africans were the least trusting, only 24% (Figure 11). It was even worse when looking at trust in opposition political parties (Figure 12). Zimbabweans had the least trust (8%), but the others were all similarly very low: Botswana (19%), Namibia (15%), South Africa (11%), and Zambia (16%).

This does not sound like a great deal of confidence in politics and political parties, and the gap between ruling and opposition political parties significant. Here we should point out that earlier Afrobarometer work suggested that no opposition political party trailing by more than 20 percentage points behind the ruling party would be likely ever to win the government (RAU 2012). Here Zimbabwe is an anomaly, where the MDC actually led ZANU-PF by 36% to 18% in 2010, but still lost the 2013 elections.

In all five countries, again South Africa different, presidents get high trust ratings with 60% or more expressing trust in the presidency (Figure 13). This is endorsement of the "big man syndrome" (Logan 2008), perhaps not evident in South Africa that has had four presidents in 27 years, two dismissed before the end of their terms, suggesting that South Africans are much less deferential to political power. All five countries have less trust in parliament, still with small majorities, but significantly less than half in any of the five trust their local councils. Most citizen have trust in public officials (Figure 14), but least in the police, especially amongst South Africans.

The IAG, in its measure of Participation, Rights and Inclusion, used very different questions from the Afrobarometer to those we used. We obtained very different results using questions about community group membership (Figure 15), attending community meetings (Figure 16) and joining other to raise an issue (Figure 17). We used these question because we felt that they reflected a better indication of whether citizens were actually participating, exercising their agency. As can be seen in Table 2 (above), our measure suggests very low rates of participation

³² Transparency International (20170020), *Global Corruption Barometer: Citizens' voices from around the world*. [<https://www.transparency.org/en/gcb/global/global-corruption-barometer-2017>]

by the citizens in all five countries, and very different rankings to IIAG. IIAG indicates Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe in that order, whereas we found a different ranking: South Africa, Zambia, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Botswana in descending order (Figure . This is not to suggest that the more comprehensive IIAG measure does not reflect an important reality for these countries, merely that citizens might have a very different view of that reality.

In our view, low participation would seem to be consonant with low political trust, high political fear, and weak government performance. The more global measures of the IIAG may provide a good comparative measure of countries about how democratic and well governed they may be, but it says little about how citizens actually might behave, and this is not trivial. The additional measure we chose, desire to migrate, amplifies this point further.

Few citizens in Botswana, Namibia, South Africa or Zambia are planning to migrate or thinking about this in the near future, but significant numbers of Zimbabweans are, and clearly have been for over two decades (Figure 18). In Hirschman's terms (Hirschman 1980), citizens in Zimbabwe are choosing "*exit*" as the strategy for dealing with their discontent, whilst citizens would seem to evince "*loyalty*", and, given the amount of public protest, "*voice*" in South Africa.

It seems clear that, in comparing our results with those of IIAG, we are largely comparing apples and pears: the point behind the IIAG index is to provide a reliable basis for comparing countries, and not a basis for hypothesis testing. This it achieves through using a very large number of different measures, and citizen's actual voices are a very small proportion of these measures, 33 out of 272 (12%). Obviously, IIAG needs to have a very large number of comparable indicators in order to give the most objective and reliable picture of a country, but the objective picture may be a great variance with how any country's citizens may see their own country.

In answer to our four simple questions, it appears that there are a number of differences in political fear, government performance, political trust, and participation. We have some differences in comparison with the more global assessment of the IIAG, but not much in the overall trend: Botswana ends up top in the eyes of its citizens while Zimbabwe ends up bottom, similar to IIAG. However, according to our measure, Namibians do rather better than South Africans. Being governed by a former liberation movement seems not relevant, and rather citizens judge their government on their current performance, as might be expected from the theoretical and empirical evidence we surveyed.

As Newton pointed out (Newton 2001), judgements made about the polity in which people live are based on the trustworthiness of the society at large. In all these countries, participation (social capital) is low, political trust is low, and political fear is high, even where the government, as in Botswana, is seen as performing well. It would appear that the conditions for an active citizenry are mostly absent, and, whilst not decrying the need for economic upliftment and better delivery of public goods and services, there seems a pressing need to focus more strongly on the conditions that will facilitate more active citizens. The interaction between political fear, lack of political trust and low participation will not be removed by economic policies, but suggests a need to focus on the deep structure of the conditions that make for good citizens, and not merely voters.

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