

Exploring the Trends and Factors that Contribute to the Declining Voters' Turnout in South Africa: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Perspective

John Mamokhere¹, France Khutso Lavhelani Kgobe² and Mmbengeni Victor Netshidzivhani³

Abstract

In South Africa, one of the democratic human rights of every citizen as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 is exercising the right to vote. Citizens are offered the right to vote as a form of expressing their voice, public participation, influencing decision-making and holding the government accountable. However, citizens globally are motivated or influenced by different factors when choosing their representatives or rule parties. Some citizens look at the viability of the parties' manifestos, leadership characteristics and behaviour. Given those factors, one of the concerns globally is a steady decline in voting behaviour from eligible citizens and mostly from the youth and to a lesser extent, the elderly. In the South African context, statistics of South Africa, in 2019 outlined that there were 26.1 million registered voters on the voters' roll. But 9 million South Africans who were eligible to vote did not register to do so. This decline indicates the eligible South African electorate's inclination to exercise their voting rights. Based on the above concerns, this study (1) intends to explore the trends in voter turnout and (2) also intends to determine the factors that contribute to declining voter turnout in South Africa. The study further adopted Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory to understand the underpinning motivations behind voting behaviour and motivation. This is a qualitative research design in nature and uses secondary data to validate the study objectives. Based on the recent information and statistics, it is revealed that there is a declining turnout in election participation. Voters' turnout has declined in recent years, from a high of 86.9% in 1994 to 62.66% in 2019. This decline is due to several factors, including disillusionment with the ANC government, poor service delivery, unemployment, corruption, apathy among young voters, and logistical challenges. The study recommends reforms to be employed by the IEC to increase election turnout by utilising an e-voting system to accommodate youth who are daily on the internet and social media platforms.

Keywords: Voters, Vote, E-Voting, Elections, Democratic Human Rights, South Africa, Democracy, Public Participation.

INTRODUCTION

In a democratic state such as South Africa, one of the democratic human rights of every citizen as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 is exercising the right to vote. In 1994, South Africa became a democratic state (Mamokhere, 2020). Mhlongo (2020) and Kgobe (2020) concur that South Africa is a democratic state with a governmental system that allows citizen participation which was attained in 1994, marking a significant shift in the political landscape from the National Party to the African National Congress (ANC). The democratic government came with a reform by introducing the Constitution which prioritises the bill of rights such as the right to vote. "The right to vote in South Africa is one of the fundamental rights recognised by the Constitution" (Mhlongo, 2020). Moreover, post-1994, a new electoral system managed by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) was introduced, replacing apartheid-era voting restrictions based on race (Ndwayi, 2024). The Former Chief Justice of South Africa, Pius Langa described the Constitution as transformative, aiming to eradicate past discrimination and promote human dignity, equality, and freedom. The Constitution enshrined an array of human rights, including the right to make political choices and vote. Voting, a form of expression, is intricately linked to freedom of expression. Through voting, citizens convey their political aspirations, thus ensuring a democratic and inclusive political landscape.

Seanego & Mogoboya (2019) indicate that over the past twenty-five (25) years, following six (6) consecutive democratic elections in South Africa from 1994 to 2019, there has been a significant decrease in voter turnout among eligible citizens. Despite the constitutional guarantee of the right to vote in secret elections for any

¹ University of Limpopo, Department of Research Administration and Development, South Africa, Turfloop Campus, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6940-8886>, Email: johnmamokhere@gmail.com, (Corresponding Author)

² University of Limpopo, Department of Development Planning and Management, South Africa, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7238-0140>

³ University of Limpopo, Department of Research Administration and Development, South Africa, Turfloop Campus, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6940-8886>

legislative body, as outlined in Section 19(3)(a) of the Bill of Rights in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), many citizens have chosen not to exercise this fundamental right (Seanego & Mogoboya, 2019). This trend, highlighted by van Vollenhoven (2015), prompts an examination of the factors contributing to the decline in voter participation in South Africa. In May 2024 which marks thirty (30) years of democracy, South Africa is set to witness the 7th democratic election. Mathekga (2024) opines that the future of South African elections is uncertain due to signalling potential power shifts and policy changes and the Electoral Amendment Act 2023 which allows for individuals who are not associated with political parties to stand in national elections. Based on this point, the author(s) of this study argue that the ANC is facing several challenges, and it is unclear whether it will be able to maintain its dominance in the long term. The Democratic Alliance (DA) is also facing challenges, and it is unclear whether it will be able to become a viable alternative to the ANC. Overall, South African elections have been characterized by a dominant party system, declining voter turnout and increasing electoral competition. Thus, this study (1) intends to explore the trends in voter turnout and (2) also intends to determine the factors that contribute to declining vote turnout in South Africa.

Theoretical Framework – Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

This study relies on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, introduced by Abraham Maslow in 1943. The theory posits that people have varying levels of needs that ought to be fulfilled in a specific sequence, with lower-level needs taking priority over higher ones. However, Maslow himself suggested that this sequence is not rigid, therefore, the needs change differ from one person to another due to their preferences or choices. This theory is relevant in this study because the study seeks to explore voting behaviour, influence, and choices. The study uses the theory to understand “what is the motivation behind”, “how people vote” and “why people vote”. Figure 1 below depicts a pyramid of the hierarchy of needs at the bottom and higher-order needs at the top.



Figure 1: Maslow’s Hierarchy of Need Theory

Source: McLeod (2018)

In the context of voting motivation and decision-making by citizens, Mamokhere (2021) indicated that Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs which is a motivational theory can provide some insight into the factors that contribute to citizens’ decisions, choices, and motivational factors. Here's how the theory is applicable in this study context as presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Motivation needs and application in the study context.

Motivation Needs	Explanation	Relevant Source(s)
Physiological Needs	At the most basic level, citizens need food, water, shelter, and other necessities to survive. During the election or voting period, communities often make their choices or decisions based on their physiological needs like water, food, and shelter. For example, citizens often vote for political parties or individuals whose promises or manifestos resonate directly with their physiological needs. Most citizens are concerned about poor service delivery such as water and electricity shortages, therefore, a party with a clear strategic plan has the potential to influence citizens voting choices and	Maslow, 1943; Maslow, 1987; McLeod, 2018; Mamokhere, 2021.

	behaviour. The absences of the needs in the manifestos often lead individuals demotivated and not participate in elections.	
Safety Needs	Once people's physiological needs are met, they need to feel safe and secure. In the context of service delivery protests, communities may be protesting because they don't feel safe in their neighbourhoods, or because they feel that their safety is being compromised by the lack of essential services such as policing and emergency services. During elections, citizens often vote for parties that prioritise their safety by looking at how the government intends to eradicate crimes; the country's sovereignty, free from corruption and a safe living and work environment.	Maslow, 1943; Ntsala & Mahlatji, 2016; Mamokhere, 2021.
Love and belonging	After their physiological and safety needs are met, people need to feel that they belong and are loved (Maslow, 1943; Maslow, 1987). It can be argued that individuals may be motivated to support political candidates or parties that they perceive as addressing their sense of belonging and love needs. Politicians who effectively communicate empathy, understanding, and a commitment to addressing community concerns such as basic service delivery may resonate more strongly with voters who feel a lack of belonging or connection within their jurisdiction	Maslow, 1943; Maslow, 1987.
Esteem Needs	Once people feel a sense of belonging, they need to feel respected and valued. In my knowledge, this could translate into voters seeking acknowledgement of their cultural identity, socioeconomic status, or contribution to society. Political parties that address these needs by affirming the dignity and worth of individuals, especially within diverse communities, may get support. Conversely, parties that fail to respect or acknowledge these needs may struggle to connect with voters who seek validation and respect in their political choices. Today, most of the manifestos by different political parties focus on corrupt-free governance and they promise good governance.	Maslow, 1947
Self-Actualization Needs	The final level of needs is self-actualization needs, which includes the need for personal growth and self-fulfilment. By making an appeal to their needs for self-actualization which includes self-actualization and personal development. One might persuade citizens to vote for a particular political party. By highlighting possibilities for people to reach their full potential and follow their dreams, political parties can modify their language and programs to appeal to these requirements. Initiatives that support social mobility, entrepreneurship, education, and job development can appeal to voters' aspirations for personal growth and fulfilment. Furthermore, voters looking to make a significant contribution to society and the larger community may be drawn to political parties that support innovation, societal advancement, and cultural development. Parties can entice voters to support them by presenting themselves as advocates for both individual and group growth and offering the chance to satisfy their need for self-actualization.	Maslow, 1987; Sindane, 2010

Compiled by the author/s (2024)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a qualitative research methodology as it benefited heavily from secondary data as a design for collecting relevant data. Based on the nature and setting of this study, the author(s) has analysed the secondary data also referred to as the existing literature about the voter trends and factors contributing to declining voter turnout in South Africa. By adopting the qualitative research method, the authors were able to draw a meaningful conclusion from this study. **Table 2** below presents the inclusion and exclusion criteria undertaken in this study:

Table 2: Research Publications Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication Date	Publications published from 2009 to the present (April 2024) about trends in voter turnout and factors leading the declining voters 'turnout.	Publications published before 2009 and publications not relevant to the Study objectives.
Type of Populations	Original Research Articles: Peer-reviewed journal articles; Conference proceedings; Published thesis and Dissertations, Peer-review books, commentaries, and other internet sources about trends in voter turnout and factors that contribute to poor participation in national, provincial, and local elections only in South African context.	Book reviews and editorials were excluded.

Language	Only English Written publications were considered.	Other Languages publications
Relevance of Publications	publications that talk about trends in voter turnout and factors that contribute to poor participation in the national, provincial, and local elections only in the South African context.	Publications not relevant to the research topic in question
Geographical limitation	Only publications that focus on South Africa were considered to understand the trends and factors that contribute to declining voter turnout.	Publications that do not focus on South Africa.
Sample Number of Publications	The study considered fifty (n=50) publications as the target sample, but only twenty-seven (n=27) were included in this study because they were more relevant.	Twenty-three (n=23) publications were excluded as they were considered irrelevant to the topic and did not focus on South Africa's elections.

Compiled by the author/s (2024)

Table 2 above presents the criteria used to explore the inclusion and exclusion of publications in the literature review. This study demonstrated a rigorous and systematic approach to data collection and analysis. The author conducted an extensive electronic search across various databases, including Google Scholar, Google, DOAJ, Scopus, and university repositories. The search was conducted over four months from January 2024 to April 2024 and included only sources published in English to ensure consistent quality across all studies. The author/s thoroughly reviewed fifty (n=50) research publications, acknowledging, and citing only twenty-seven (n=27) that were deemed relevant. The author/s used purposive sampling techniques, removing duplicate publications, and carefully selecting studies to ensure the quality and reliability of the data. The author/s employed the thematic content analysis approach to analyse the secondary data, which was reviewed from publications in different databases. While this study is limited to qualitative research methodology only, the author's systematic approach and unbiased selection process ensure the reliability of the data. Moreover, ethical considerations were considered, with all publications used being freely available in the public domain. Overall, this study serves as a valuable resource for anyone seeking to understand the trends in voter turnout and factors that contribute to poor participation in national, provincial, and local elections in South Africa.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

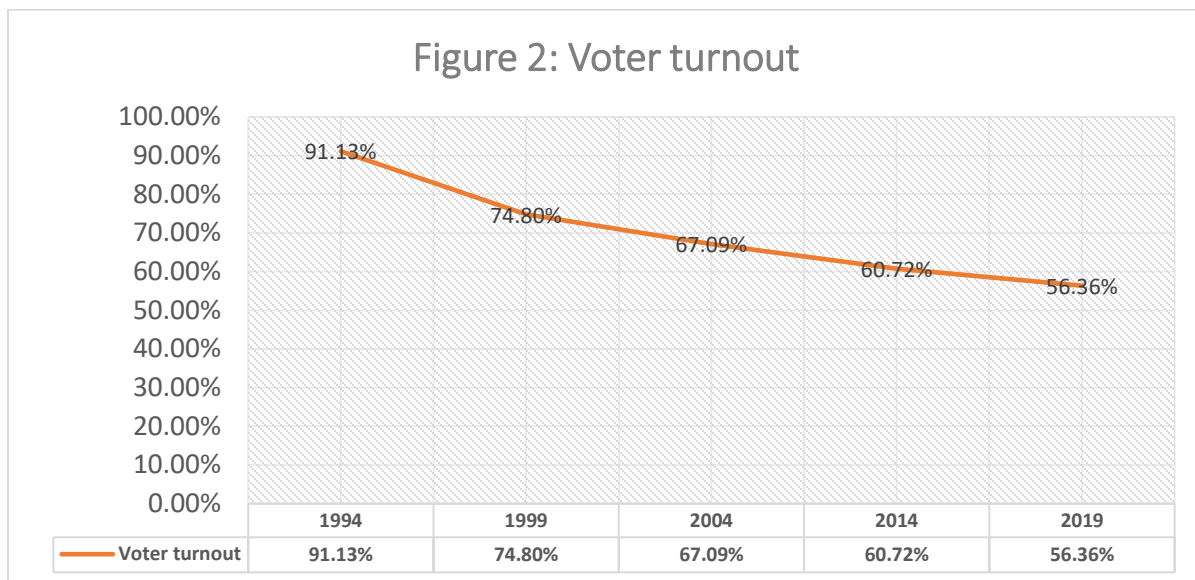
Trends on Voters' Turnout in South Africa

This section intends to understand trends regarding voter turnout in South Africa, highlighting a consistent decrease in the number of people participating in elections over the years – 1994-2019. The 1994 National Election, this election, marked the end of the apartheid regime and the beginning of democracy in South Africa, had a remarkably high voter turnout of 86.87%. This high level of participation was likely due to the historic significance of the election and the enthusiasm surrounding the country's transition to democracy (South African Institute of Race Relations, 2023). During the 2019 National and Provincial Election there was a notable decline in voter turnout. Only 66.1% of registered voters participated in this election, signalling a significant drop compared to the 1994 election. Despite efforts to promote civic engagement, such as voter education campaigns, the turnout fell substantially (Mashudu, 2024). Lastly, in the 2021 Local General Election (LGE), the trend of declining voter turnout continued in the most recent election in 2021. This time, only 45.86% of registered voters cast their ballots. This represents a further decrease from the already diminished turnout in the 2019 national election (South African Institute of Race Relations, 2023; Mashudu, 2024). The table and figure below outline the trends in voter number turnout using Limpopo Province as a case study.

Table 3: Limpopo Province Election Statistics 1994-2024

Years	Registered population	Total valid votes	Spoilt votes	Total votes cast	Voter turnout
1994	1 847 766	1 658 694	25 137	1 683 831	91,13%
1999	2 187 912	1 614 514	21 947	1 636 461	74,8%
2004	2 256 073	1 491 072	22 549	1 513 621	67,09%
2014	2 438 280	1 462 186	18 409	1 480 595	60,72%
2019	2 608 460	1 452 158	18 072	1 420 230	56,36%
2024	2 777 210				

Source: Compiled by Author/s (2024) using the IEC dataset



Source: Compiled by Author/s (2024) using the IEC dataset

Based on Table 3 and Figure 2, it is noted that over the past decades, South Africa has witnessed fluctuations in voter turnout, as evidenced by the data provided above in Table 3 and Figure 2. In 1994, the country experienced a flow of enthusiasm and participation in its first democratic election, with an impressive turnout of 91.13%. This historic event marked a pivotal moment in South Africa's history, symbolizing the end of apartheid and the dawn of democracy. As time progressed, however, voter turnout began to decline. By the 1999 election, participation had dropped to 74.8%, signalling a decrease in the initial passion for the democratic transition. Despite this decline, voter engagement remained relatively high compared to later years. In the following elections of 2004 and 2014, voter turnout continued to decrease steadily. By 2004, only 67.09% of eligible voters cast their ballots, reflecting a gradual erosion of enthusiasm or perhaps growing disillusionment with the political process. This trend persisted into 2014, with participation dropping further to 60.72%. By the most recent national election in 2019, voter turnout had dwindled to 56.36%, marking a notable departure from the high levels of engagement seen in the early years of democracy. This decline may raise concerns about the health of South Africa's democratic institutions and the extent of citizen participation in shaping the country's future.

Factors that Contribute to the Declining Voters' Turnout in South Africa

This section intends to explore different factors that contribute to the decline in the number of voters in either National or Provincial elections. However, it is critical to highlight the evidence of a decline in number of voters per age population. According to Bartlett (2019), “the voting-age population (VAP) is simply the number of people living within the country of voting age (that means over 18 years old in South Africa, as in most countries). This number is usually accurately known from census data”. Below is a graph comparing the VAP turnout of South African parliamentary elections to the major elections in the UK, the US and France as outlined in the study by Bartlett (2019).

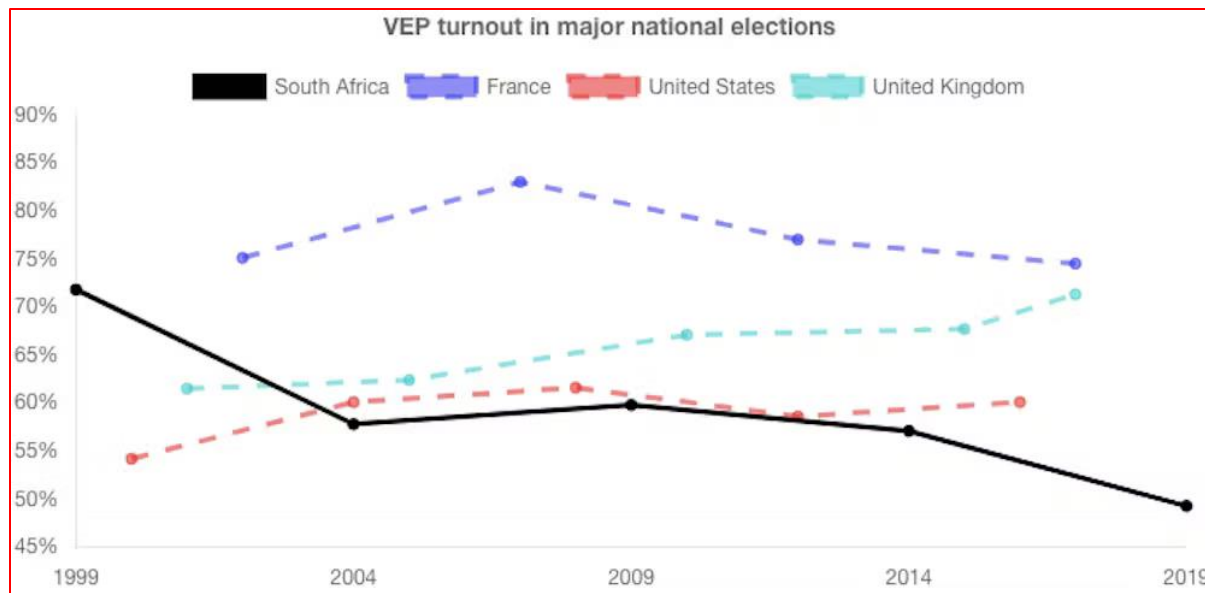


Figure 3: Voting-Age Population in Major National Elections in Selected Countries

Source: International IDEA, Eurostat, United States Elections Project, Schulz-Herzenberg, C & Southall, R. (eds), Election 2014 South Africa: The campaigns, results and prospects, Jacana Media & Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2014.

Based on the above Figure 3, we see that since the 2004 elections, the voting-eligible population turnout in South Africa has consistently been much lower than in the UK and France, and a little lower than in the US. Also, voter turnout plunged dramatically in the 2019 South African elections, from 57% to 49%. However, in other countries, there is a rise in the number of eligible voters who are dedicated to transforming their country and voicing their concerns. Based on this discussion, it is now clear that there is an evident decline in voter turnouts. Therefore, it is now important to explore different factors contributing to this concern. Seanego & Mogoboya (2019) concur that there has been a progressive decline in voter turnout over the years and there are several reasons behind this. Below are some of the key factors that lead to a decline in voter turnout in South Africa:

Unfulfilled Promises by Political Parties

Masinga (2021) implies that the decline in voter turnout in South Africa can be attributed, in part, to unfulfilled promises by political parties. Over the years, many parties have made ambitious pledges in their manifestos to address pressing issues such as poverty, unemployment, and inequality. However, the failure to deliver on these promises has led to a growing sense of disappointment among eligible voters. As citizens become increasingly sceptical of politicians' ability to effect meaningful change, they may feel discouraged from the electoral process and opt not to participate. This lack of trust in political institutions and representatives undermines the legitimacy of the democratic system and contributes to voter lack of interest. Masuku & Jili (2019:2) cited in Fransman & von Fintel (2024) indicate that “a large body of literature has emerged identifying persisting public service delivery challenges faced by South Africa over the years. The South African government’s tardiness in the provision of basic services to its citizens and numerous unfulfilled promises have caused much frustration

and public service delivery protests among its citizens (Masuku & Jili, 2019:2). Due to the inability of the government to provide the services that the majority of South Africans have waited for, the exuberance that accompanied the dawn of democracy has now been replaced by growing signs of unhappiness and lack of participation in electoral processes” (Nengwekhulu, 2009:341).

Perpetual Poor Service Delivery

Mamokhere (2022) indicates that poor service delivery in South Africa is a significant factor contributing to the decline in voter turnout. When citizens continuously experience inadequate access to essential services such as water, electricity, healthcare, and education, it undermines their trust in the government's ability to address their needs and improve their quality of life. Frustrated by persistent service delivery failures, many voters feel discouraged and disengaged from the political process, leading them to question the efficacy of participating in elections. Consequently, as the cycle of poor service delivery persists, voter turnout continues to decline, highlighting the urgent need for government accountability and effective governance to rebuild public trust and encourage civic participation. On the other hand, Wade (2017) confesses that the low voter turnout in South Africa, which is manifested in the decline of voters from the accumulated figures from 1994 to 2014, may be affected by various factors such as poor education, poor service delivery, unemployment, corruption, and crime. He further states that voting can be a difficult challenge to citizens; both the process of registering and turning up at the voting stations (Wade, 2017; Seanego et al., 2019). Moreover, Chapman (2019) indicates that many people do not engage in elections because they think that the political system is unresponsive to their needs. Poor or lack of service delivery is one of the reasons for their abstinence from voting.

Corruption, Nepotism and Unethical Leadership

In South Africa, corruption, nepotism, and unethical practices have contributed to the decline in voter turnout. Citizens' lack of interest in the political system stems from a perceived lack of accountability and integrity among those in power. Rampant corruption scandals have eroded trust in government institutions, leaving voters feeling disempowered and discouraged to vote (Runciman & Bekker, 2021). In Runciman & Bekker (2021) study,

One respondent said:

“According to me ... this thing of voting is useless because there is corruption, and we are not working. This voting this is not working for us”.

The prevalence of nepotism and cronyism further undermines confidence in the fairness and transparency of the electoral process. One respondent captured this sentiment succinctly, expressing frustration that voting feels futile in the face of pervasive corruption and the failure of elected officials to address the needs of the populace. This sentiment reflects a broader trend of voter apathy and poor participation driven by a sense of disillusionment and disenchantment with the political status quo (Bekesiene, Petrauskaite, Kazlauskaite & Markeliene, 2021). As the author of this study, I also hold the view that participating in elections seems futile as political figures often prioritize the appointment of their relatives over merit-based considerations, thereby perpetuating a culture of corruption within government.

Rising Unemployment Rate

Mokgonyana (2023) indicates that the rising unemployment rate in South Africa is making it harder for people to participate in elections as they believe that their voting does not matter. According to Statistics SA, the unemployment rate in South Africa is currently quite high, with many people unable to find work. This means that a lot of individuals feel disconnected from the political process, thinking that their vote won't make a difference in their lives. As a result, the decline in voter turnout could partly be because people are feeling disheartened or uninterested in their prospects, and voting might not feel like a priority when they're facing economic hardships. The study by the South African Institute of Race Relations (2023) indicated that:

"In our democracy, political parties, the provision of proper service delivery and attempt to eradicate unemployment. People will not vote if the dominant idea in their minds is "nothing will change" or "What good is my vote?" The numbers show the ever-growing need to restore our confidence in the democratic process".

AP News (2024) indicates that the African National Congress (ANC) has been in government since the end of the apartheid system of white minority rule in 1994 but has seen its support gradually wane over the last 30 years, largely because it fails to deliver jobs, housing, and services to millions of poor people. South Africa's unemployment rate, already the highest in the world, rose to 32.1% in the fourth quarter of 2023.

Lack of involvement of youth in political participation

Masinga (2021) implies that youth disengagement from political processes and institutions is a significant contributing factor to the declining voter turnout in South Africa. Despite comprising a substantial portion of the population, young people often experience feelings of apathy and disillusionment with political leaders. These sentiments, along with perceptions of systemic corruption and limited access to voter education and political participation, exacerbate the problem. The lack of active involvement from the youth demographic, who represent the future of the country, poses a risk of perpetuating the decline in voter turnout and undermining the democratic legitimacy of elections (Masinga, 2021). Furthermore, the South African Institute of Race Relations (2023) states that:

"These low voter numbers indicate a clear loss of faith...and lack of confidence in the political system. Hence youth are not participating because they lost faith and confidence in the ruling government due to lack of employment opportunities".

Wiese (2011) indicates that "meaningful youth participation involves the recognition and encouragement of the strengths, interests, and abilities of young people by providing them with opportunities to become involved in decisions that affect them. It can thus safely be stated that democracy cannot be consolidated without the people's participation in various processes like the legislative process, and once the youth is allowed to influence these processes, they will also be more willing to participate in government initiatives such as election processes, budgeting, and integrated development planning".

Discussions of Theoretical Findings

The study highlights a concerning trend of decreasing voter turnout over the years, pointing to issues such as unfulfilled political promises, inadequate service delivery, corruption, nepotism, and poor leadership. In addition, some of the issues include increasing unemployment rates and limited youth involvement in political processes as contributing factors. These findings underline the importance of rebuilding public trust, promoting public participation, and addressing the evolving needs of the electorate to reverse the trend of declining voter participation. By recognizing the underlying motivations behind voter behaviour, such as the desire for meaningful change, effective leadership, and opportunities for personal growth, policymakers can tailor their strategies to resonate with citizens at a deeper level. Moreover, the study emphasizes the significance of addressing citizens' needs at different levels of Maslow's Hierarchy, from basic physiological requirements to higher-order aspirations for self-actualization and community development. By understanding and responding to these needs, political parties and policymakers can foster a more inclusive and participatory democracy that reflects the values and aspirations of the South African population.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In conclusion, the worrisome decrease in voter turnout in South Africa poses significant concerns. Several factors contribute to this decline, including unfulfilled political promises, inadequate service delivery, corruption, nepotism, poor leadership, increasing unemployment rates, and insufficient youth involvement in political engagement. Addressing this issue requires rebuilding public trust, and promoting civic engagement through accountability, efficient governance, and voter education initiatives. Ultimately, the democratic process depends on the active participation of all individuals in elections, and it is imperative to exercise the constitutionally guaranteed right to vote to influence South Africa's future. This study further concludes by highlighting the importance of voting due to declining turnout in South Africa. Voting is an essential tool for bringing about change in communities. By using your right to vote, you can elect better politicians who can

deliver better service delivery, infrastructure, jobs, education, and more. Participating in the election process also keeps the government in check by ensuring their competence and accountability. Participating in elections is an important opportunity to make your voice heard and shape the future of South Africa. Democracy depends on the full participation of all people in elections, and you have the constitutionally entrenched right to vote, which is an important right that some people died for in the past.

REFERENCES

- AP News. (2024). Pressure mounts on South Africa's ruling party as unemployment rises again ahead of election. February 2024. Cape Town: AP News. Available at: <https://apnews.com/article/south-africa-unemployment-national-election-anc-b05d36973be1f005dd8118462373bb7d>.
- Bartlett, B. (2019). South Africa's voter turnout: a mathematician runs the numbers. May 2019. Johannesburg: The Conversation. Available at <https://theconversation.com/south-africas-voter-turnout-a-mathematician-runs-the-numbers-117199>.
- Bekesiene, S., Petrauskaite, A., & Kazlauskaite Markeliene, R. (2021). Nepotism and related threats to security and sustainability of the country: the case of Lithuanian organizations. *Sustainability*, 13(3), 1536.
- Chapman, E.B. (2019). The distinctive value of elections and the case for compulsory voting. *American Journal of Political Science*, 63(1), 101-112.
- Fransman, T., & von Fintel, M. (2024). Voting and protest tendencies associated with changes in service delivery. *Development Southern Africa*, 41(1), 71-90.
- Kgobe, F.K.L. (2020). Effective Planning for Rural Development in A Democratic South Africa: The Prospects of Rural Cooperatives. *Commonwealth Youth & Development*, 18(1).
- Mamokhere, J. (2020). Examining the role of new media in upholding good governance in a democratic system: is there nexus amid media and good governance? *International Conference on Public Administration and Development Alternatives (IPADA)*.
- Mamokhere, J. (2022). Understanding the Complex Interplay of Governance, Systematic, and Structural Factors Affecting Service Delivery in South African Municipalities. *Commonwealth Youth & Development*, 20(2).
- Mashudu, S. (2024). Previous low voter turnout in SA needs voter education. May 2024. Pretoria: IOL. Available at; <https://www.iol.co.za/the-star/news/previous-low-voter-turnout-in-sa-needs-voter-education-c160f403-0376-40b7-8b92-1874eb049de1>.
- Masinga, F.N. (2021). Youth Participation in Electoral Politics In South Africa: Trends, Patterns and Practices. *Youth Participation In Electoral Politics In South Africa*, 151.
- Maslow, A.H. (1943) A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4),370-96.
- Maslow, A.H. (1987). *Motivation and personality* (3rd ed.). Delhi, India: Pearson Education.
- Masuku, M.M., & Jili, N.N. (2019). Public service delivery in South Africa: The political influence at local government level. *Journal of Public Affairs*, 19(4), e1935.
- Mathekga, R. (2024). South Africa's upcoming election could change everything. Pretoria: Geopolitical Intelligence Services. Available at <https://www.gisreportsonline.com/r/south-africas-upcoming-election-could-change-everything/>. Accessed: 14 April 2024.
- McLeod, S. (2018). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. *Simply Psychology*. Available at <https://www.simplypsychology.org/>.
- Mhlongo, L. (2020). A critical analysis of South Africa's system of government: from a disjunctive system to a synergistic system of government. *Obiter*, 41(2), 257-274.
- Mokgonyana, K. (2023). Why young people must vote in the 2024 national elections. March 2023. Johannesburg: Mail & Guardian. Available at <https://mg.co.za/thought-leader/opinion/2023-03-11-why-young-people-must-vote-in-the-2024-national-elections/>.
- Ndwayi, S. (2024). *Negotiating urban informality: narratives of politics and mobility in an informal settlement in Cape Town, South Africa*. Cape Town: University of the Western Cape
- Nengwekhulu, R.H. (2009). Public service delivery challenges facing the South African public service. *Journal of Public Administration*, 44(2):341-363.
- Ntsala, M., & Mahlatji, M. (2016). Service delivery protests resulting in the burning of libraries: a study of selected public libraries in South Africa. SAAPAM Limpopo Chapter 5th Annual Conference Proceedings 2016.
- Runciman, C., & Bekker, M. (2021). Here are five factors that drove low voter turnout in South Africa's 2021 elections. *The Conversation*, 8. Available at <https://theconversation.com/here-are-five-factors-that-drove-low-voter-turnout-in-south-africas-2021-elections-173338>.
- Seanego, M. J., & Mogoboya, M. J. (2019). Factors contributing to the decline of votes in South Africa: A case study of Mankweng community. In *Conference Proceedings of the 4th Annual International Conference on Public Administration and Development Alternatives (IPADA) on "Democracy, Elections and Administration in Africa "* Edited by Sebola, M.P., & Molokwane, T., 308 – 316. Sovenga: International Conference on Public Administration and Development Alternatives (IPADA).

- Sindane, S. (2010). The rise of political advertising on television in South Africa and its implications for democracy. (Doctoral dissertation). Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand.
- South African Institute of Race Relations. (2023). South Africa's low voter turnout is no laughing matter: 5 crucial takeaways. Johannesburg: South African Institute of Race Relations. Available at <https://irr.org.za/fan/media/south-africas-low-voter-turnout-is-no-laughing-matter-5-crucial-takeaways>.
- Van Vollenhoven, W.J. (2015). The right to freedom of expression: The mother of our democracy. Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal/Potchefstroomse Elektroniese Regsblad, 18(6), 2299-2327.
- Wade, P. (2017). 'Why don't young people vote'. Independent. Available at: <https://independent.ie/world-news/and-finally/why-dont-young-people-vote-35790368.html>.
- Wiese, C.E. (2011). An exploration of the voting behaviour of South African university youth: a study of a select group of university students. Master's Dissertation. Pretoria: University of Pretoria, South Africa.