FOREWORD

Democracies throughout the world need the support and engaged involvement of the people in shaping the society in which they live. The active participation of, among others, interest groups, civil society organisations, churches, workers' unions, political parties and the business sector at all levels is therefore the fundamental basis of a democratic system.

In modern societies the results of representative surveys are important instruments that guide political actors in their daily and long-term decisions. The more people on the ground feel recognised and the more their identities and interests are taken up by decision-makers and political leaders, the more stabilising support and active participation they will get from the citizenry beyond elections. A further consequence is that the people will identify more with the politicians and with the democratic system.

People need orientation. In the first instance this is a responsibility of the political leadership, but in an open and pluralistic society this does not refer exclusively to the government in power. Of equal importance are opposition parties, civil society, the media and diverse interest groups. However, the public may become overloaded by this flood of fragmented and often contradictory information and may lose orientation. This could lead to a passive attitude and to voter apathy. An additional consequence is that people might begin to isolate themselves from society and to withdraw into the private realm.

A democratic political system therefore requires as a 'natural' complement a democratic environment based on the political culture of the country. A democratic cultural environment gives long-term orientation to

citizens and helps them to handle the complex and multiple messages and information. It allows them to make more mature political decisions based on a longterm orientation.

Long-term orientation for the public should also be provided by the elite of a country. Two elements are significant here. First, the elite need to be 'consensually united' on the norms of political behaviour and values across partisan lines. Second, a two-way process of elite-public interaction must be provided. On the one hand the elite should influence the long-term orientation of the public's value set, while on the other hand the public's values and attitudes must be adequately reflected among the elite.

Since elites play an important role as a determining factor in a democratic society and influence the long-term orientation of citizens, a longitudinal study of the changing trends of elite value patterns is relevant for the stability of the democratic system. This requires serious academic analysis.

The Centre for International and Comparative Politics at the University of Stellenbosch has conducted seven opinion leader surveys over the past two decades. The centre has been assessing the changes in value attitudes of a representative sample of South African citizens since 1981. This research is integrated with the World Values Survey, which covers about 80% of the world population.

The result of this extensive work is a database that shows long-term trends and changes of the value set and orientation of both the public and the elite. It provides insight into mutual relations and indicates where there are significant diversions, offering stakeholders and political leaders valuable teachings based on objective study.

An important issue to mention is that there is consensus across the political spectrum and society as a whole that South Africa lacks social cohesion. It is therefore essential that relevant and powerful organisations focus on building social capital. South Africans have high levels of trust in churches. The churches should therefore take up this good will and emphasise the importance of building social capital as a guarantee for a more stable society.

The researchers, Hennie Kotzé and Cindy Lee Steenekamp, draw other important conclusions and make a valuable comparative analysis. This policy paper presents some results of the 2006 public survey and the 2007 elite survey and aims to stimulate discussion among the political leadership, stakeholders and the public.



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DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: COMPARING ELITE AND PUBLIC VALUES¹

Hennie Kotzé and Cindy Lee Steenekamp

1. INTRODUCTION

After the establishment of a constitutional state in South Africa in 1994, the new regime obtained the right to restructure the relationships between the state, the economy and society. Numerous expectations were raised during this process, with the developmental needs of the population urgently needing to be addressed. These expectations were based on the normative assumption that the government should strive to meet the needs and wants of the population. One of the prerequisites for achieving this expectation was a commitment on the side of the governing elite to work towards good governance and to enhance the quality of democracy in South Africa.

After more than a decade of democracy in South Africa, we need to ask whether the needs and wants of the country's population are in fact being met adequately. A more important question, perhaps, is whether there is consensus among South Africa's leaders as to what exactly the 'needs and wants' of the population are. Similarly, to what extent is there at least some level of congruence between the values and expectations of the mass public and those articulated by South Africa's leaders in the form of policy outcomes? These are the questions that this policy paper aims to address.

The role of elites

Elites can be defined as 'those persons who hold authoritative positions in powerful public and private organisations and influential movements and who are therefore able to affect strategic decisions regularly'.²

There is no doubt that the elite play an important role in public policy-making and in the democratic consolidation process. Not only in South Africa, but also in a number of democratic transitions in the 1980s and 1990s, elites have been pivotal in the process of kick-starting and driving the process of democratisation. The South African transition itself was managed as a top-down operation by both the old and new political elite.

According to Lasswell,³ elites are those individuals who determine 'who gets what, when, (and) how', while in Easton's terms⁴ elites are involved in the 'authoritative allocation' of scarce resources and values for the whole society. This view of elites has an important corollary in terms of the interaction between the masses and the elite during the governance process. A crucial precept of elite theory is that 'public policy is not determined by the demands and actions of the masses but by the ruling elite whose preferences are carried into effect by public officials and agencies'.⁵

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After completing her MPhil (Political Management) cum laude, **Cindy Lee Steenekamp** joined the Centre for International and Comparative Politics at the University of Stellenbosch, where she works primarily on the Elite Survey and the World Values Survey as well as her PhD. Steenekamp's research interests include international comparative politics, value studies, survey research and methodology, social capital and development.

In both the problem definition and the agenda-setting process of public policy-making, elites or opinion leaders from various sectors of society play a major role in bringing the problem to the attention of policy-makers, and later also in choosing a solution for the problem. The bulk of public policy decisions that opinion leaders make are therefore to a large extent 'reflecting their values and serving their ends'.⁶

This aspect of elite theory can in many ways be seen as problematic should there be a distinct incongruence between elite and mass attitudes and values towards the developmental path that South Africa should be following. Indeed, if the attitudes and values of the elite and the masses are highly inconsistent, this may place the entire notion of 'representative' government in question. Therefore, the fundamental question which arises is to what extent the attitudes and values of the South African mass public are in fact being given a voice within elite ranks.

Elite-mass interaction in the democratisation process: The crucial question

Despite the extensive emphasis placed on elites in the democratisation process, ambivalence about the relative importance of liberal democracy's elite versus mass foundations is nevertheless widespread. As noted by Diamond,⁷ elites may be the 'pre-eminent' variable for explaining democratisation, yet historical legacies, mass conditions, electoral systems, structural variables, previous democratic experience, economic development, citizen trust and party systems also play a crucial role.

According to Mosca,⁸ the ruling elite need a 'legitimising myth' or political formula that resonates with the masses and which justifies the elite's rule. Mosca goes on to state that the social composition of ruling elite should embody a balance of important social forces. Should this balance fail to develop, the elite run the risk of being challenged and perhaps overthrown by emerging counter-elites, which organise social forces unrepresented among the ruling elite.

Here the question comes to the fore of whether the values and attitudes of the public are adequately reflected among the elite. As societies have modernised there seems to have been a gradual decrease in social distance between elites and non-elites, presumably making elites more responsive to the discontents of the masses. Whether this holds true

in the South African case remains to be investigated. The notion of citizen dissatisfaction also has particular relevance in relation to Norris's claim of a global rise in 'critical citizens' who value democracy as an ideal yet remain dissatisfied with the performance of their political system.⁹

Ultimately then, to carry out major initiatives and perpetuate their hold on power, elites need a certain degree of mass support and need to frame their appeals in accordance with the interests and political orientations of the public. This naturally limits what they can do or get away with and places the spotlight on how failure to win non-elite support can seriously curtail effective democratic governance. Other alternatives available outside the democratic process include becoming less transparent in the policy process and also moving towards a more authoritarian stance.

(Dis)united elites: Implications for democracy in South Africa

Despite the fact that elites are by no means omnipotent and need to obtain some semblance of mass support for most undertakings in a democratic state, it has been suggested that democracy's elite and mass dimensions are indeed separable and sequential. Higley and Burton argue that

a political elite whose members and factions are disposed toward mutually deferential and restrained political behaviour always forms before liberal democratic precepts and practices are adopted by any large number of citizens. ¹⁰

Liberal democracy is therefore seen as an 'elite creation' to which mass publics gradually and slowly accede.

With South Africa positioned as a liberal democracy, largely due to the advent of the new constitution in 1996, it is therefore not only the level of congruence between elite and public attitudes that has direct implications for democracy in South Africa; the level of unity among the elites themselves also needs to be taken into account.

In their investigation of the elite foundations of liberal democracy, Higley and Burton postulate that an indispensable aspect of liberal democracy is a 'well-articulated, internally accommodative, and relatively secure political elite', referring to this type of elite as

being 'consensually united'. They state that no liberal democracy – or its close cousin, a 'consolidated democracy' – has ever emerged without the formation of such an elite.¹¹

Consensually united elites are defined as follows:

Structural integration is extensive in the sense that overlapping and interlocked communication and influence networks encompass and tie together all influential factions and sector elites, with no single faction or sector elite dominating the networks. Value consensus is extensive in the sense that, while factions and sector elites regularly and publicly oppose each other on ideological and political matters, their actions over time suggest an underlying consensus about most norms of political behaviour and the worth of existing political institutions. Elite persons and factions accord each other significant trust, they cooperate tacitly to contain explosive issues and conflicts, and their competitions for political power have a positivesum or 'politics as bargaining' character. 12

These consensually united elites differ substantially from 'disunited elites' where 'structural integration and value consensus' across partisan lines and elite sector boundaries are minimal. It is particularly the element of value consensus which this study will focus on. In other words, to what extent is there relative agreement among South African elite factions and sectors about the norms of political behaviour and the worth of existing governmental institutions?¹³

This policy paper therefore empirically investigates the extent to which 'unity' exists among South Africa's elites with regard to basic democratic tenets and developmental priorities in the country. Secondly, as noted above, the paper focuses on the level of congruence between elite and mass public values and attitudes, and the implications that any inconsistencies may have on South Africa's future. Lastly, the paper measures the longitudinal nature of elite value patterns in order to identify changing trends over the past decade, especially in terms of levels of confidence in and sympathy for state and non-state institutions.

The role of values on the mass level

The World Values Survey (WVS) provides us with a valuable tool to analyse changing value patterns at the

mass level. The increasingly prominent worldwide values research, and in particular the pioneering work carried out by Ronald Inglehart, convincingly shows that changing value patterns (defined later) have a strong impact on political and social developments within a country.¹⁴

In South Africa, the extent of value change is even more pronounced because this society has a large component of traditional values, in addition to growing materialist and post-materialist value patterns. Research carried out in South Africa as part of the global WVS has noted a considerable shift from traditional to material values in the period 1995 to 2001.

The full implication of this phenomenon is not yet known and requires on-going investigation.¹⁵ What remains certain, however, is that, as in the industrialised societies, changes in the values of South Africans affect almost every aspect of public life in the country.

In line with the aims of the paper, insights into values and the patterns of change they undergo have critical implications for elite–mass interactions in South Africa. People's attitudes and lifestyles, their responsiveness to government interventions, their drive and sense of ownership, as well as their reactions to national and local leaders are all intimately linked to their underlying value systems.

This paper is the culmination of an effort to gauge the attitudinal patterns of the South African elite as well as the general public on a selection of issues regarding the process of democratic consolidation in South Africa.

Based on the above discussion, at least four reasons can be advanced for the importance of studying elite and mass attitudes in a relatively new democracy:

■ South African elite policy preferences. An understanding of the attitudes of the elite may provide us with an indication of their policy preferences and performance judgments regarding policies. Feldman¹⁶ argues, for example, that political evaluations may be based in part 'on the extent to which policies and actions are consistent or inconsistent with certain important beliefs and values. Policies and actions are simply judged right or wrong because of their implications for deeplyheld values'. The converse is also true because knowledge of the positions that the elite take on

policy issues makes it possible to get an understanding of the attitude patterns on which important policy decisions are based.

- Extent of elite congruence. It is only when there is a relative measure of attitudinal unity among the elite that a regime has an opportunity to establish a sustainable democracy. The data provided by the current study will therefore provide us with the opportunity to assess the relevant degree of attitudinal unity among the elite.
- Extent of elite acceptance. The success of democratic consolidation depends primarily on the elite's acceptance of political institutions and the rules of the game.
- The nature of public opinion and its degree of congruence with elite preferences. Since elites frame important policy issues and since public opinion follows elite positions on these issues, an analysis of public perceptions provides us with valuable insight into the nature of public opinion regarding these issues and allows us to measure the degree of congruence between elite and public preferences or public opinion.

Through the use of various attitudinal and value scales, we have attempted to provide a picture of current opinion leader and mass thought regarding contemporary political as well as important socioeconomic issues in South Africa.

2. STRATEGY OF INQUIRY

The Centre for International and Comparative Politics (CICP) has over the past two decades conducted indepth analysis of the social, political and economic transformation taking place in South Africa. A longitudinal study on the attitudes and values of the country's opinion leaders (elites) formed one of the core elements of this project.

Since 1990 seven opinion leader surveys (1990, 1992, 1993, 1995 and 1998, 2000, 2002) have allowed the CICP to build up an extensive database on South Africa's elite perspectives. The eighth of these surveys, the 2007 opinion leader survey, was completed in the second half of 2007. In this round of the survey, particular emphasis was placed on the quality of democracy in South Africa and the values which underlie this process.

The 2007 opinion leader survey to a large extent drew on the 2006 WVS questionnaire. The global WVS initiative currently covers over 80% of the world's population and has proved to be an invaluable resource to assess social and cultural change across the globe since 1981. Several WVSs have been conducted in the past, including the 1981, 1990, 1995, 2001 and 2006 surveys. South Africa has participated in all these surveys.

By basing many of the items in the elite questionnaire on those in the WVS, we are provided with the unique opportunity to compare public and elite opinions and values on key issues relating both to values and democratisation. An empirical investigation based on some of the theoretical claims made above will therefore be undertaken.

Composition of elite and public samples

Operationally the elite are defined as comprising those people who fill the top positions in the 'largest and most resource-rich' political, governmental, economic, professional, communications and cultural institutions in society.¹⁸

With the exception of parliamentarians (who were randomly sampled), ¹⁹ a positional sample was employed to select respondents for the elite survey. The remarkable overlap in the distribution of power vested in organisations and individuals served as motivation for this approach. ²⁰

Such a procedure implies that individuals holding the most influential positions in important institutions were approached to participate as respondents in the survey. This project identified respondents in five key sectors (see Table 1), covering the public and private spheres of South African society.

Market research company Markinor was contracted by the CICP to conduct face-to-face interviews based on a structured questionnaire. This methodology was a departure from previous elite surveys whereby Markinor distributed and collected questionnaires for each sector,²¹ while the parliamentary and agricultural sectors received their questionnaires by mail.²²

For this study, the response rate (N=303) achieved ensures that relatively reliable deductions from the data are possible, as long as these are used in weighted or sector format.

Table 1: Elite respondents in different sectors of society

Sector	Composition of sample	No. of respondents	% of respondents
Parliament*	Respondents randomly sampled within National Assembly	100	33.0
Churches	Senior church leaders from, among others, the South African		
	Council of Churches and the National Religious Leaders Forum	50	16.5
Media	Managers, editors, senior journalists and parliamentary		
	correspondents from the print and electronic media	51	16.8
Civil servants	Senior officials in government departments	51	16.8
Business	CEOs and directors of top South African companies	51	16.8
Total survey		303	100

^{*} For the purpose of this report we have not weighted the parliamentary sector and have used only the sector and, in some cases, members of the largest parties. Note that the CICP can, on request, run an analysis using a weight for parliamentarians.

Unlike public surveys, opinion leader surveys should not be used to draw conclusions about the attitudes of a whole population. Their value lies in the ability to discern particular trends among the most influential decision-makers in both the public and private spheres.

The fact that some political parties and segments of the population may be over- or under-represented in this sample should therefore not detract from the usefulness of this study.

The 2006 wave of the WVS was undertaken among 3,000 respondents, with face-to-face interviews conducted by Markinor in English, Afrikaans, Zulu, Sotho, Tswana and Xhosa. Probability samples were drawn, with all South Africans 16 years and older having an equal chance of being selected.

The sample was also stratified into homogenous subgroups defined by province, gender, population group and community size. Within a statistical margin of error of less than 2% at 95% confidence level and weighted to the full population, the sample is therefore representative of the adult population of South Africa.

The elite respondents included in the opinion leader survey are indeed part of the higher strata of South Africa and may as a result reflect different opinions when compared to the broader population. It is regarded as self-evident in politics that elites will give preference to the social groups from which they come. Therefore, if any distortion in the demographic elite exists, one could argue that scarce resources will also

be distorted to the benefit of the particular group which dominates the decision-making process within a country.

Since the iron law of andrarchy predominates throughout the elite sample, a stronger gender bias, for example, may be evident between the values and expectations of the mass public and those articulated by South Africa's leaders. However, the divergent levels of education between the elite and the public seem to cancel this law of andrarchy and an educational bias becomes more responsive than a gender bias.

The apartheid dispensation had a profound impact on the composition of the post-1994 South African elite. Recruitment for top positions in the previous political dispensation was limited to well-educated white South Africans. However, this situation has changed dramatically since the advent of democratic government in South Africa. This change is reflected particularly in the socialisation agents to whom the elite were exposed, and value patterns will most likely reflect that.

3. GENERAL VALUES OF THE ELITE AND PUBLIC IN SOUTH AFRICA

Understanding the value patterns of opinion leaders may provide an indication of their policy preferences and performance judgments on issues such as legalising prostitution and euthanasia, which are being debated in South Africa. Understanding the value patterns of the mass public, on the other hand, may

reiterate the belief that government policy on 'moral' issues is more 'progressive' than the attitudes of the electorate.

Life domains

In order to gauge the importance of various life domains, respondents from both the elite and public surveys were asked to indicate how important family, friends, leisure time, politics, work and religion are in their lives. Figure 1 – measured on a five-point scale ('very important', 'rather important', 'not very important', 'not at all important' and 'don't know') – illustrates the differences in the prioritisation of values between elites and the South African population based on the scores for those who answered 'very important'. The categories are ranked in descending order based on opinion leader output.

Family is overwhelmingly important for both opinion leaders (96.7%) and the South African public (95.6%). The second most important facet of life for both samples is work, with 82.8% of elites and 77.4% of the public respondents expressing that it is 'very important'. Although religion is ranked the third most important life domain for both samples, the gap between the public (69.9%) and the elite (55.4%) starts to become evident.

The attitudinal divide between the South African elite

and the general public is best illustrated in terms of the importance that each set of respondents places on politics, friends and leisure time. While the public measure leisure time (37.1%), friends (33.9%) and politics (21.7%) with gradually less importance, the inverse is true from an elite perspective. After family, work and religion, the elite rank politics (54.8%) as being more important to them than friends (53.8%) and leisure time (42.4%).

General values of the elite and the public

The definition of values utilised in this section was selected to fit the purpose of the analysis.

Since attitudinal measures form a key element in the empirical analysis of the absence of societal conflict or the potential for violence, Van Deth and Scarborough's conceptualisation was selected:

Values are seen as conceptions of the desirable, which are not directly observable but are evident in moral discourse and relevant to the formulation of attitudes. For heuristic purposes, we understand these conceptions as hypothetical constructs, which constrain attitudes. The claim for the empirical relevance of values, we argue, is demonstrated by evidence of patterning among attitudes. We call these meaningful patterns value orientations.²³

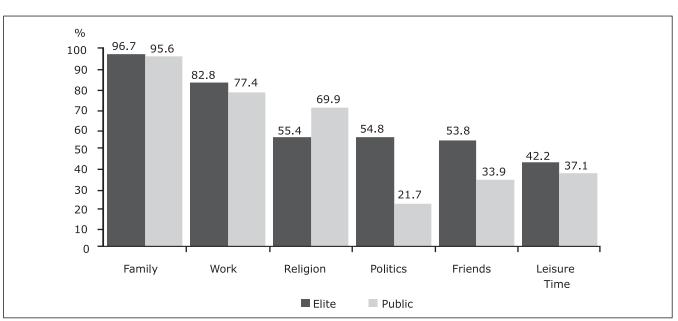


Figure 1: Percentage that consider various life domains 'very important'

The value scale used in this study comprised 11 items for the elite and 12 items for the public based partly on the items from the Wilson and Patterson conservatism scale²⁴ and partly on items from the WVS designed by Inglehart.²⁵ The introduction to the items reads as follows: 'Please indicate which of the following statements are always justifiable, never justifiable, or something in between.'²⁶

A factor analysis²⁷ – principal component extraction with varimax rotation – was done on the 11 items used in this scale. The following three multi-item indices were compiled for the elite respondents, using a fairly high cut-off of 0.6:

- Moral²⁸ Index: The items included were abortion, divorce, prostitution, homosexuality, suicide and euthanasia.
- Corruption Index: The items included were accepting a bribe in the course of duties, claiming government benefits to which you are not entitled, and cheating on your taxes if you have a chance.
- *Discipline Index:* The items included were death penalty and man beating his wife.

The Moral Index contains an interesting mix of items from which the value positions of the elite within each sector can be deduced (see Figure 2). ²⁹ Overall, the elite are relatively 'conservative' with regard to moral issues in that 67.0% believe that the items included in the Moral Index are either 'sometimes unjustifiable' (28.8%) or 'never justifiable' (38.2%). However, due to high levels of standard deviation, one can expect the value pattern for each sector within the elite to be significantly varied.

Not surprisingly, the church is the most 'conservative' sector with 84.7% indicating that the Moral Index is either 'sometimes unjustifiable' or 'never justifiable'. Parliamentarians, the business sector and civil servants follow suit with 69.8%, 67.9% and 66.3% respectively. The media, however, can be seen as the most 'liberal' sector among the elite, where less than half (46.1%) of its representatives claim the items included in the Moral Index to be 'sometimes unjustifiable' or 'never justifiable'.

In terms of each moral indicator – the categories 'sometimes unjustifiable' and 'never justifiable' were collapsed to form an 'unjustifiable' category – the elite rank suicide as unjustifiable at 84.7% (of which 65.3%

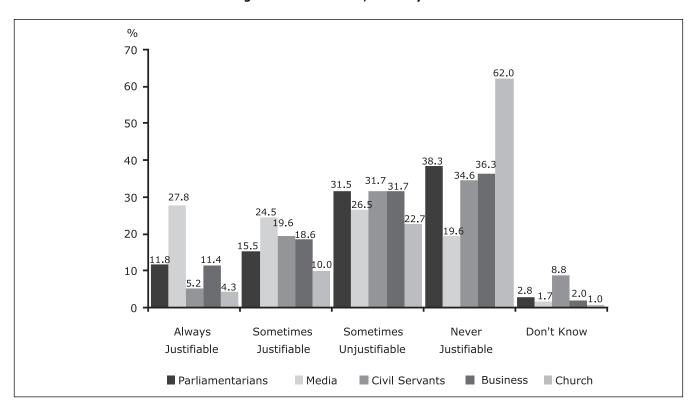


Figure 2: Moral Index, elites by sector

Table 2: Corruption Index, elites by sector

Corruption indicators		5	Sector			
	Parliamentarians	Media	Civil servants	Business	Church	
Claiming government benefits						
to which you are not entitled	94.0	96.1	92.2	98.1	98.0	
Cheating on your taxes if						
you have a chance	95.0	90.1	88.2	92.1	92.0	
Someone accepting a bribe						
in the course of duty	99.0	98.1	92.2	100.0	96.0	

 never justifiable). Prostitution was identified as the second 'worst' moral issue, with 76.3% of the elite (of which 44.6% – never justifiable) claiming that it is unjustifiable.

A total of 67.7% of the elite feel that abortion is unjustifiable (of which 34.9% – never justifiable), while 62.7% indicated that euthanasia is unjustifiable (of which 39.4% – never justifiable). Homosexuality and same sex marriages, which are now legislated by the Civil Union Bill of 2006, and divorce are the two moral indicators were the elite seem most lenient. A total of 57.6% believe homosexuality to be unjustifiable (of which 31.3% – never justifiable) while 55.8% believe divorce to be unjustifiable (of which only 18.3% thought it was never justifiable).

A comparison of the indicator means within the Corruption Index shows that the standard deviations recorded were far lower than the Moral Index: cheating on taxes if you have a chance (1.286) represented the greatest disagreement, while claiming government benefits to which you are not entitled (0.965) and accepting a bribe in the course of duty (0.959) indicated the lowest differences.

The Corruption Index, unlike the Moral Index, displays no significant differences between the different sectors within the elite sample; in fact, there is a remarkable degree of similarity between the sectors (see Table 2).

The Discipline Index, comprising the death penalty and a man beating his wife, illustrates mixed value positions among the elite. A total of 95.7% of the elite believe that it is never justifiable for a man to beat his wife: 97.0% of parliamentarians; 96.1% of media;

86.3% of civil servants; 100.0% of business sector; and 98.0% of church elites agree.

However, only 54.8% of the elite believe that the death penalty is never justifiable. The attitudinal gap between each sector best illustrates this difference in elite opinion: 64.0% of parliamentarians: 68.6% of media: 51.0% of civil servants; 25.5% of the business sector; and 54.0% of the church. It was expected that a far higher percentage of opinion leaders from the church sector elites would have indicated that the death penalty is 'never justifiable'. In terms of party support, 62.5% of Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) supporters believe that the death penalty is justified, while 48.5% of Democratic Alliance (DA) supporters agree. In comparison, only 14.9% of African National Congress (ANC) supporters and none of the Independent Democrats (ID) supporters believe that the death penalty is justified.

The following two multi-item indices were compiled for the public respondents, using as cut-off a fairly high loading of 0.6:

- Corruption Index: The items included were claiming government benefits to which you are not entitled, avoiding a fare on public transport, cheating on your taxes if you have a chance, and someone accepting a bribe in the course of duties. Although the item, a man beating his wife, does factor in the Corruption Index, the item has been excluded based on the criteria of construct validity.
- Moral Index: The items included were divorce, abortion, prostitution, homosexuality, euthanasia and suicide.

Table 3: Corruption Index for the public

Corruption indicators	% Never justifiable	Std. deviation
Someone accepting a bribe in the course of duty	72.5	2.243
Claiming government benefits to which you are not entitled	69.1	2.514
Cheating on your taxes if you have a chance	68.4	2.281
Avoiding a fare on public transport	64.8	2.406

The Corruption Index for the public includes the same indicators identified as the elite, with the addition of avoiding fares on public transport. Table 3 illustrates that a total of 72.5% of the public claim that someone accepting a bribe in the course of duties is never justifiable. Claiming government benefits to which you are not entitled, cheating on your taxes if you have a chance and avoiding a fare on public transport were thought to be never justifiable by 69.1%, 68.4% and 64.8% of public respondents respectively.

The Moral Index for the public value scale comprises the same six indicators identified by the elites; thus, a direct comparison of the value positions held by each sample is possible. Overall, the public can be

characterised as 'conservative' with regard to moral issues in that 80.6% believe the items included in the Moral Index (see Figure 3) are either 'sometimes unjustifiable' (20.5%) or 'never justifiable' (60.2%).

In terms of each moral indicator the two categories 'sometimes unjustifiable' and 'never justifiable' (the two separate percentages are tabulated in Figure 3) were collapsed to form an 'unjustifiable' category. The public, like their elite counterparts, rank suicide as most unjustifiable at 86.8%. Prostitution was identified as the second 'worst' moral issue with 85.7% of the public claiming that it is unjustifiable. A total of 83.3% of the public feel that abortion is unjustifiable, while 81.0% indicated that homosexuality is unjustifiable.

% 80 68.6 69.5 70 58.8 60 54.3 50 43.1 40 27.8 30 17.7 20 16.5 11.3 10 Always Sometimes Sometimes Never Justifiable Don't Know Justifiable Justifiable Unjustifiable ■ Homosexuality

Abortion

Divorce

Prostitution

Figure 3: Moral Index for the public

Euthanasia

Suicide

Euthanasia and divorce are the last two moral indicators which were judged to be unjustifiable by 76.1% and 70.9% of the public respectively.

The elite sample also clustered the death penalty and a man beating his wife into a third factor on the value scale, the Discipline Index, which saw a high percentage reject the justification of a man beating his wife and a more lenient stance against the death penalty. In view of the high-profile debate around the death penalty in South Africa it is interesting to note that a total of 27.8% of the elite indicated that the death penalty is justifiable.³⁰

A slightly higher percentage (37.7%) of the South African public agree that the death penalty is justifiable. Of those, 58.6% are white, 54.8% coloured, 42.9% Indian and 29.8% black, while 75% are ID supporters, 59.2% DA supporters, 31.7% ANC supporters and 28% IFP supporters.

4. EVALUATION OF DEMOCRATIC PERSPECTIVES AND GOVERNMENT

Democracy as a form of government has been on the advance throughout the world over the past two decades. This can be attributed to various reasons, most important of which is the

internal loss of legitimacy of military regimes, single-party systems and other forms of authoritarian rule, as their human rights abuses and lack of popular authorization and accountability became increasingly unacceptable to their populations, and economic crisis removed whatever limited justification the regimes might have enjoyed.³¹

This combination of pressures has resulted in democracy now being widely accepted as the norm for government arrangements.

Support for democracy

In order to gauge the levels of support for democracy among South Africa's opinion leaders and the general public, both samples were presented with a list of various types of political systems and asked to assess what they thought about each as a way of governing the country.

A five-point scale (very good, fairly good, fairly bad,

very bad and don't know) was utilised (see Table 4). The 'very good' and 'fairly good' response categories were combined to create a 'good' category. The same was done for the 'fairly bad' and 'very bad' response categories to form a 'bad' category. The percentage in brackets in Table 4 represents the proportion that is either 'very good' or 'very bad'.

The levels of support for democracy in South Africa are extremely high among the elite and this is seen not only in their support for democratic principles but also in their strong refutation of any other type of political system. An overwhelming 98.4% think it is good to have a democratic political system, while fractionally more (98.7%) feel that having strong opposition parties – a critical component of a democratic system – is a good way of governing the country.

The levels of support for democracy among the various sectors within the elite sample show very little variance in opinion. The exception is the indicator of having experts – and not government – making decisions according to what they think is best for the country. Almost half (49.0%) of the business sector indicated that it is either very good (13.7%) or fairly good (35.3%) for experts to make the country's decisions, while 38.0% of the church agree (of which 6.0% thought it is very good). A far smaller percentage of parliamentarians (26.0%), the media (21.6%) and civil servants (17.0%) feel it is either very or fairly good for experts to make the country's decisions, as opposed to the government.

The levels of support for democracy among ANC and DA supporters within the elite are interesting (the 'very good' and 'fairly good' categories were combined to create a 'good' category):

- Of those elite who indicated that it is good to have a leader who does not bother with parliament or elections, 13.9% support the ANC and 17.9% support the DA.
- More DA supporters among the elite (46.3%) believe that experts and not government should make the country's important decisions, compared to 18.6% of ANC supporters who agree.
- Half the elite who thought it would be good to have the army rule (1%) are ANC supporters.
- All (100%) DA supporters and 98% of ANC

Table 4: Elite and public levels of support for democracy

Type of political system	% Good		% Ва	% Don't know		
	Elite	Public	Elite	Public	Elite	Public
Having a strong leader who doesn't have to bother with parliament and elections	14.2 (4.0)	39.0 (16.9)	85.4 (71.3)	50.4 (33.5)	0.7	10.5
Having experts, not government, make decisions according to what they think is best for the country	29.4 (7.6)	52.9 (18.4)	69.3 (41.6)	35.5 (16.9)	1.3	11.6
Having the army rule	2.0 (0.7)	28.9 (8.7)	96.1 (92.1)	60.4 (36.3)	2.0	10.6
Having a democratic political system	98.4 (83.5)	85.7 (49.0)	1.0 (0.0)	9.3 (2.4)	0.7	4.9
Having strong opposition parties	98.7 (79.9)	74.7 (30.3)	0.6 (0.3)	15.7 (4.9)	0.7	9.5

supporters among the elite agree that democracy is a good form of government. Furthermore, all the ANC supporters (of which 73.5% indicated very good) and all the DA supporters (of which 97% indicated very good) believe that it is good to have strong opposition parties.

Although support for democracy among the general South African population is also high, there is a considerable difference between the attitudes of the public and elite in this regard (see Table 4). A total of 85.7% of the population (49.0% – very good; 36.7% – fairly good) indicated that having a democratic political system is the best way of governing the country. This represents a 12.7% decrease from the elite standpoint. However, public opinion regarding having a democratic political system has increased slightly since 2001, when 83.8% of respondents indicated it was very (44.5%) or fairly (39.3%) good.

Furthermore, little less than three-quarters (74.7%) of the public sample indicated that having strong opposition parties is very good (30.3%) or fairly good (44.4%). By contrast, 98.7% of the elite (of which 79.9% indicated very good) believe that strong opposition parties is good, marking a substantial 24.0% decrease in support when comparing the public to the elite. This view is held by the vast majority of supporters of the three biggest political parties in South Africa, namely the ANC, DA and IFP.

Interestingly, more than half the public sample (52.9%) thought that having experts and not

government make decisions that are best for the country is a very (18.4%) or fairly (34.5%) good way to govern South Africa. This is surprising as it advocates a political system with no or little public representation in the decision-making process.

Respondents from both surveys³² were also asked to indicate to what extent they agree or disagree with the statement that although democracy has many shortcomings, it is still better than any other political system. Once again the elite support for democracy over any other form of governance was overwhelming: 67% of elites strongly agree while 29.4% agree, representing a combined total of 96.4%. By contrast, 34.2% of the population strongly agree and 40.1% agree with the statement, giving a combined 74.3% public support for democracy over any other political system.

Essential characteristics of democracy

In order to determine the meaning and/or understanding of democracy, both the opinion leader and public questionnaires provided respondents with a list of characteristics of democracy and asked how essential each is as a characteristic of democracy. The responses were coded on a ten-point scale where $\mathbf{1} = \mathbf{1}$ and all an essential characteristic of democracy and $\mathbf{10} = \mathbf{10} = \mathbf{10}$ an essential characteristic of democracy.

The percentages below are of those that indicated the items were 'an essential characteristic of democracy' (10).

Table 5: Percentage of essential democratic characteristics by elite sector

Characteristics of democracy	Parliament	Media	Civil service	Business	Church
Equality and Freedom Index					
Equality of vote in elections	87.0	88.2	52.9	64.7	66.0
People choose their leaders in free elections	83.0	86.3	56.9	60.8	62.0
Women have the same rights as men	82.0	94.1	52.9	64.7	56.0
The individual right to human dignity	73.0	76.5	47.1	47.1	52.0
Materialist Index					
Jobs for everyone	55.0	41.2	29.4	25.5	52.0
Basic necessities like shelter, food and water					
for everyone	67.0	52.9	41.2	43.1	60.0
Equal opportunity in education	77.0	74.5	43.1	62.7	70.0
Legal and Critical Index					
Elected officials try to do what people want	59.0	54.9	45.1	35.3	40.0
People can change the laws in referendums	23.0	23.5	25.5	17.6	16.0
Complete freedom for anyone to criticize govt	73.0	76.5	51.0	41.2	44.0
State Aid Index					
People receive state aid/help for unemployment	22.0	15.7	19.6	13.7	16.0
Governments tax the rich and subsidise the poo	r 23.0	11.8	5.9	15.7	18.0

The following four multi-item indices were compiled for the elite respondents from items in factors 1–4:

- The Equality and Freedom Index consists of four variables: equality of vote in elections; people choose their leaders in free elections; women have the same rights as men; and the individual right to human dignity. Overall, voting equality (74.3%), people choosing their leaders (71.9%) and gender equality (71.9%) are the most essential characteristics in a democracy within the first index. The individual right to human dignity follows, with 61.4% of elite respondents indicating it is essential to democracy. It is interesting to note that the civil service sector differs significantly from the other elite sectors.
- The Materialist Index consists of three items: jobs for everyone; basic necessities such as shelter, food and water for everyone; and equal opportunity in education. Overall, 67.3% of elite believe that equal opportunity in education is essential, 55.1% believe that the provision of basic necessities is essential and 42.9% believe that the provision of jobs for everyone is essential.
- The Legal and Critical Index comprises three indicators: elected officials trying to do what people want; people can change the laws in referendums; and complete freedom to criticise government. Overall, 59.7% of the elite believe that having complete freedom to criticise government is essential, while 48.8% believe that having elected officials trying to do what the people want is essential. Only 21.5% of elite indicated that it is essential for democracy that people can change laws in referendums - a sentiment fairly low among all the elite sectors, especially the business sector and the church. There is no significant difference in opinion between each elite sector (see Table 5); however, there are stronger fluctuations with regard to the freedom to criticise government.
- The State Aid Index consists of two indicators: people receive state aid/help for unemployment; and government should tax the rich and subsidise the poor. Overall, 18.2% of the elite argue that people receiving state aid/help for unemployment is essential to democracy, while 16.2% indicate that the government should tax the rich and subsidise the poor. Once again there is little variation between the various elite sectors (see Table 5).

Elite and general public perspectives on the essential characteristics for a democracy differ. Two multi-item indices were compiled for the public respondents:

- The *Materialist and Equality Index* comprises six indicators: equal opportunity in education; jobs for everyone; basic necessities like shelter, food and water for everyone; equality of vote in elections; elected officials try to do what people want; and women have the same rights as men. Overall, the public gave high scores to equal opportunity in education (61.8%), the provision of jobs for everyone (56.3%), the provision of basic necessities such as shelter, food and water (56.0%), and equality of vote in free elections (51.9%). These are followed, to a lesser extent, by elected officials trying to do what people want (42.9%) and gender equality (41.0%).
- The State Aid and Dignity Index comprises four primary variables: government taxing the rich and subsidising the poor; individual human right to dignity; government providing state aid/help for unemployment; and choosing leaders in free elections. Overall, the public believe that choosing one's leaders in free elections (46.0%) is the most essential characteristic in the second index, followed by the provision of state aid/help for unemployment

(37.4%) and the individual human right to dignity (34.2%). Lastly, only 28.1% of the public believe that it is an essential characteristic of a democracy for the government to tax the rich and subsidise the poor.

Assessment of democracy

In order to measure the elite and public assessment of democracy in South Africa both sets of respondents were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with a specific set of statements.

Table 6 illustrates the elite and public percentages of those who 'agree' (collapsed 'strongly agree' and 'agree') with the set of statements.

Overall, the elite measure people's right of association (94.4%) and freedom of speech (92.4%) in South Africa very highly, followed by the freedom to choose who to vote for without being pressured (77.2%) and not having to be afraid of arbitrary arrest (62.7%). The public share fairly similar views. Most importantly, the general public view individual freedoms best in the democratic assessment, namely freedom of association (91.0%), freedom of choice in religious matters (89.7%), individual decision to participate in politics or not (86.4%), freedom of speech (85.6%) and the

Table 6: Elite and public assessment of democracy in South Africa

Assessment of Democracy	% Agree (Strongly Agre	ee + Agree)
	Elite	Public
People have freedom of association**	94.4	91.0
People have freedom of speech*	92.4	85.6
People have the freedom to choose who to vote for without being pressured	77.2	84.1
Nobody needs to be afraid of arbitrary arrest	62.7	49.3
Ordinary people have an influence on government***	42.0	53.7
Competition between political parties never leads to violent conflict	26.1	43.4
People are safe from crime	9.6	29.8
Everyone can decide individually whether or not to take an interest in politics	Not asked in Elite	86.4
Everyone has freedom of choice in religious matters	Not asked in Elite	89.7
Government treats everyone equally and fairly	Not asked in Elite	51.5
People have an adequate standard of living	Not asked in Elite	38.7
Different wording was utilised in the WVS in order to make it more understandable to the	public:	
* Everyone has the right to say what they think		
** One can join any organisation one likes		
*** People like me can have an influence on government		

freedom to choose who to vote for without being pressured (84.1%).

Both sets of respondents measured crime and violent conflict between political parties very poorly: only 9.6% of the elite 'strongly agree or agree' that people are safe from crime, compared to 29.8% of the public. Furthermore, 26.1% of elite feel that competition between political parties never leads to violent conflict, compared to 43.4% of the public sample who 'strongly agree or agree'. The public respondents also measured adequate standards of living (38.7%) and not needing to be afraid of arbitrary arrest (49.3%) fairly poorly.

Assessment of government delivery

In order to determine how each elite sector assesses government delivery and whether any significant differences exist among the elite with regard to government delivery, respondents were asked to indicate how well or how badly the current government is handling a set of delivery issues. Table 7 indicates the percentage of each sector that indicated government was handling the set of government delivery variables 'very well'.

Overall, the elite rank the top five government deliverables, based on those who responded 'very well',

as: people choosing their leaders in free elections (55.8%); equality of the vote in elections (55.1%); a prospering economy (41.9%); gender equality (38.9%); and civil rights that protect people's liberty against oppression (33.7%).

The elite rank as the three worst government deliverables: elected officials trying to do what people want (11.9%); people receiving state aid for unemployment (10.6%); and employment (8.9%). In fact, all the elite sectors rank jobs for all as the worst government deliverable.

The public was asked the same question: 'How well would you say the current government is handling the following matters?' The public respondents were given 15 statements and Table 8 reflects the assessment of government delivery by public partisan support.

Overall, based on those who responded 'very well', the public believe the government's top five deliverables are: the addressing of educational needs (23.2%); the improvement of basic health services (22.0%); the delivery of household water (20.3%); managing the economy (18.3%); and combating HIV/Aids (16.6%).

The public rank reducing crime (6.8%), creating jobs/reducing unemployment (6.3%) and keeping

Table 7: Assessment of government delivery (very well) by elite sector

Government delivery assessment	Parliament- arian	Media	Civil service	Business	Church
The economy is prospering	47.0	43.1	35.3	45.1	34.0
Equality of vote in elections	63.0	64.7	49.0	45.1	46.0
People choose their leaders in free elections	70.0	62.7	45.1	45.1	42.0
Civil rights protect people's liberty from oppression	41.0	29.4	35.3	29.4	26.0
Women have the same rights as men	48.0	31.4	39.2	41.2	26.0
Government taxes the rich and subsidises the poor	28.0	13.7	17.6	29.4	16.0
Individual human right to dignity	36.0	23.5	33.3	19.6	26.0
Complete freedom for anyone to criticise government	34.0	29.4	33.3	23.5	14.0
Minority rights	20.0	13.7	37.3	13.7	6.0
People receive state aid/help for unemployment	14.0	5.9	11.8	5.9	12.0
Political parties in government engage in compromise	12.0	7.8	25.5	17.6	4.0
Elected officials try do what people want	17.0	3.9	17.6	7.8	8.0
Equal opportunity in education	23.0	5.9	17.6	15.7	12.0
Basic necessities like shelter, food and water for all	16.0	7.8	17.6	7.8	14.0
People can change the laws in referendums	10.0	11.8	21.6	9.8	12.0
Jobs for all	13.0	5.9	9.8	5.9	6.0

Table 8: Assessment of government delivery (very well and well) by public partisan support

Government deliverables	Al	NC		DA	I	FP	1	D
	vw	Well	vw	Well	vw	Well	vw	Well
Addressing advertises as a	20.0	F0.7		27.2	14.2	40.1	2.4	40.1
Addressing educational needs	28.0	50.7	5.5	37.3	14.2	48.1	3.4	40.1
Managing the economy	21.5	53.2	10.6	42.4	16.0	40.5	17.0	52.6
Improving basic health services	27.4	46.8	4.4	32.0	8.3	58.9	0.3	19.9
Combating HIV/Aids	19.7	48.5	7.3	28.3	13.3	40.0	3.1	50.1
Delivering household water	23.4	40.1	9.2	42.4	8.6	38.8	8.7	37.8
Promoting access to land	14.1	48.6	6.9	35.2	7.3	33.7	7.8	44.2
Resolving conflict between communities	15.4	46.4	4.0	25.9	6.3	33.9	2.3	30.9
Controlling inflation	13.1	46.2	4.2	34.8	0.0	31.5	8.0	39.8
Fighting corruption in government	15.2	39.1	2.1	14.5	5.8	26.7	3.6	14.9
Ensuring everyone has enough to eat	8.9	38.1	2.5	19.8	0.7	26.9	3.1	18.3
Keeping prices stable	7.7	34.8	1.8	28.0	3.9	12.8	0.8	39.5
Narrowing the gap between rich and poor	10.4	32.9	3.7	16.2	0.0	31.3	1.6	15.8
Creating jobs/ reducing unemployment	7.3	34.7	2.5	20.6	3.6	24.7	9.0	12.1
Keeping skilled people in South Africa								
- stopping the 'brain drain'	10.0	33.4	4.0	16.1	0.8	14.7	4.1	37.6
Reducing crime	8.8	29.9	1.9	10.1	0.2	20.1	0.8	10.6

prices stable (6.1%) as the government's three worst deliverables. These three variables reflect a sharp division in the assessment of government delivery among supporters of the four major political parties, with ANC supporters rating government delivery far better than DA, IFP and ID supporters.

5. CONFIDENCE IN AND SYMPATHY FOR INSTITUTIONS

Democratic consolidation to a large extent involves the institutionalisation or legitimisation of the sophisticated institutions at the state's disposal.³³ Institutions such as the legal system, police and civil service are not insulated from political and social life, and confidence in institutions depends heavily on their ability to solve the problems they are designed to address – that is, confidence is affected by their level of performance and effectiveness.³⁴ These elements are intimately linked with the public's perceptions of the institutions.

A major challenge facing these institutions is corruption, which is an ethical issue based in the value system of a nation.

The eradication of corruption requires total commitment and concerted effort by government and civil society to change a polluted moral culture.

Confidence in institutions

In order to provide a broad overview of public and elite confidence in state and non-state institutions, respondents from the elite (2002 and 2007) and public (2001 and 2006) surveys had to answer the following question: 'I am going to name a number of organisations/institutions (20 in total). For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?' The 'great deal' and 'quite a lot' of confidence categories are collapsed in Table 9 (over page).

The elite have high levels of confidence in the Constitutional Court (88.4%) and charitable or humanitarian organisations (80.2%). The president, environmental agencies and women's organisations also faired very well with 77.9%, 75.5% and 73.9% confidence among the elite respectively. State and non-state institutions that the elite have the least amount of confidence in are television (39.0%), the African Union (38.0%), political parties (34.6%) and the civil service (32.3%).

The public, however, place their highest levels of confidence in the church (84.2%), the president (72.8%) and television (71.2%) – the latter is in stark contrast to the attitude held by elites. The South

Table 9: Changing levels of confidence in various institutions

State and non-state institutions			Elite			Pu	ıblic	
	20	07	200)2	200	06	20	01
	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
The Constitutional Court	88.4	1	-		66.0	5	-	
Charitable or humanitarian organisations	80.2	2	-		62.5		-	
The president	77.9	3	74.6	2	72.8	2	58.4	5
Environmental organisations	75.5	4	52.5		57.4		50.9	
Women's organisations	73.9	5	55.5		62.8		57.7	
Churches	67.0		63.2	5	84.2	1	83.8	1
South African government	66.3		76.1	1	69.4	4	57.0	
Parliament	64.4		67.0	4	63.7		58.6	
The courts	60.0		67.1	3	64.7		58.4	
Major companies	54.2		56.9		63.3		74.8	3
The press	52.8		45.1		57.4		66.5	4
International Monetary Fund/World Bank	48.2		43.3		-		-	
United Nations	44.2		59.4		47.3		58.3	
The armed forces	43.6		39.8		61.2		53.7	
Police	42.9		44.2		61.0		52.7	
Labour unions	40.3		50.7		42.2		49.5	
Television	39.0		40.3		71.2	3	74.9	2
African Union	38.0		54.2		46.5		-	
Political parties	34.6		36.2		42.2		40.7	
Civil service	32.3		41.3		52.5		55.3	

African government (69.4%) and the Constitutional Court (66.0%) are the remaining two institutions which make up the public's top five ranked institutions in terms of confidence levels. The public have the least confidence in labour unions and political parties, each at 42.2%.

Sympathy towards institutions

Elite respondents were asked: 'Please indicate how sympathetic or unsympathetic you feel towards the following institutions and groups'. The response categories were presented as a Likert-type scale measuring 'very sympathetic, sympathetic, neutral, unsympathetic and very unsympathetic'.

Table 10 illustrates the degrees of sympathy held by the elite towards various institutions in the 2000, 2002 and 2007 surveys. The response categories 'very sympathetic' and 'sympathetic' were collapsed to form a 'sympathetic' measure.

The expectation is that the levels of sympathy held by opinion leaders for various institutions would mimic

their levels of confidence in these institutions. Once again, the elite feel the most sympathy towards the judiciary, and the Constitutional Court in particular (86.2%). Other institutions that enjoy high levels of sympathy among the elite are the courts (78.2%), the Human Rights Commission (76.6%), the Electoral Commission (75.9%) and the president (74.9%). These attitudes closely reflect the confidence that elites have in these institutions. Interestingly, the elite have a high level of sympathy for the South African Police Service (SAPS) (73.6%), but low levels of confidence in the SAPS (42.9%).

The elite feel the least sympathy towards the DA (32.7%), the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) (30.4%), the South African Communist Party (SACP) (27.1%) and the IFP (22.1%). Thus, political parties and television receive the least amount of sympathy from elites; this is also reflected in their confidence in these institutions.

Corruption

In order to gauge widespread corruption in South

Table 10: Levels of elite sympathy towards various institutions (%)

State and non-state institutions	2007	2002	2000
Constitutional Court	86.2	86.0	76.6
Courts	78.2	80.0	66.4
Human Rights Commission	76.6	73.9	60.5
Electoral Commission	75.9	74.0	Not Asked
The president	74.9	70.3	72.1
South African Police Service	73.6	82.7	68.7
Commission on Gender Equality	69.9	Not Asked	Not Asked
Parliament	67.0	70.1	65.9
Treatment Action Campaign	63.7	66.8	Not Asked
Public Protector	62.8	76.1	Not Asked
South African Council of Churches	60.1	54.4	45.2
South African Institute of Race Relations	59.4	53.2	32.8
Landless People's Movement	55.8	Not Asked	Not Asked
African National Congress	54.4	52.3	56.4
National Business Initiative	52.2	Not Asked	44.8
South African National Defence Force	50.8	51.1	48.6
Agri SA	50.5	48.1	33.3
Major South African business corporations	49.8	48.2	39.5
Civil Service	46.2	56.7	Not Asked
Congress of South African Trade Unions	39.6	44.9	43.3
Solidarity	34.0	Not Asked	Not Asked
Democratic Alliance	32.7	16.8	30.8
South African Broadcasting Corporation	30.4	28.4	20.8
South African Communist Party	27.1	33.9	34.9
Inkatha Freedom Party	22.1	13.1	14.6

Africa, respondents were asked to what extent they thought various categories of individuals were engaged in corruption. The elite's perception (2007) of widespread corruption seems to be lower than the general public's (2006) (see Table 11).

For elected public office holders, 27% of elites compared to slightly more than half (50.2%) of the

public respondents believe that 'most or almost all are engaged in corruption'. For civil servants, 69.7% of elites and 40.3% of the public believe that 'very few or less than half are corrupt'. Lastly, 17.9% of the elite believe that 'most or almost all' private business managers are corrupt. This perception almost doubles (36.5%) where the public is concerned. A substantial percentage of the public sample (ranging from 13.1%

Table 11: Elite (2007) and public (2006) perceptions of corruption (%)

		Elected public office holders		rvants	Managers of private businesses		
	Elite	Public	Elite	Public	Elite	Public	
Very few are corrupt	26.7	19.5	18.2	17.8	30.7	24.0	
Less than half are corrupt	45.2	16.4	51.5	22.5	47.9	19.3	
Most are engaged in it	23.4	33.4	25.1	32.3	14.9	24.1	
Almost all are engaged in it	3.6	16.8	3.3	14.2	3.0	12.4	
No answer	1.0	13.9	2.0	13.1	3.6	20.1	

to 20.1%) refused to answer, didn't know or gave no answer to these indicators.

There are significant differences in the perception of widespread corruption in South Africa among the various elite sectors. The business and church sectors believe that corruption among elected public office holders and civil servants is far more widespread than the media, parliamentarian and civil servant sectors, while the church and civil servants believe that corruption among private business managers is more widespread than the parliamentarians, business and media sectors.

Respondents of both elite and public surveys were then asked how likely they thought the authorities could enforce the law if a person like themselves 'committed a serious crime' and 'didn't pay tax on some of the income they earned'. The responses were measured on the same scale tabulated in Table 11.

With regard to the authorities enforcing the law if someone committed a serious crime, more than 80% of both the elite (85.5%) and public (80.4%) respondents believe it likely. This sentiment is shared

across the various elite sectors: church – 90.0%; parliamentarians – 86.0%; business – 84.4%; civil servants – 84.3%; and the media – 82.4%. The elite expressed even more 'confidence' (91.8%) in the authorities' ability to enforce the law when someone failed to pay taxes on money that they earned – of which 96.0% church, 95.0% parliamentarians, 92.2% business, 90.2% media and slightly fewer (82.5%) civil servants agree.

Likewise, a majority of the public respondents (71.4%) feel that authorities are likely to enforce the law when someone fails to pay tax on money earned. These findings translate into a 'positive' perception at both public and elite levels of the ability of authorities to enforce the law – another primary function within a stable democracy.

6. SOCIAL COHESION AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

In his 2007 State of the Nation address, President Thabo Mbeki emphasised that our 'variety of identities and the overarching sense of belonging to South Africa need to be better canvassed across society, in a

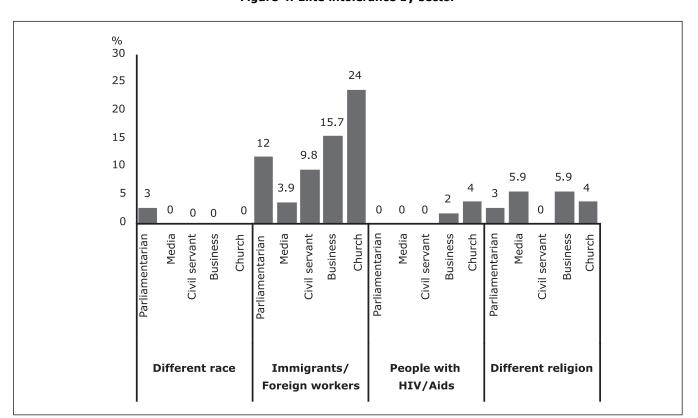


Figure 4: Elite intolerance by sector

manner that strengthens our unity as a nation'.³⁵ He asked whether we have all 'fully internalised our responsibility in building social cohesion and promoting a common sense of belonging, reinforcing the glue that holds our nation together'.

A term closely related to social cohesion is 'social capital', the central premise of which is that social ties have value. More specifically, social capital refers to the collective value of all social networks (who people know) and the inclinations that arise from these networks to do things for each other (norms of reciprocity).

The term therefore emphasises a variety of specific benefits that flow from the trust, reciprocity, information and cooperation associated with social networks.³⁶

Tolerance

In order to measure tolerance in South Africa, respondents from both the WVS and opinion leader survey were given a list of various groups and asked to indicate which they would *not* like to have as neighbours. Overall, the public (24.9%) and elite (12.9%) showed higher levels of intolerance towards

'outsider groups', in particular immigrants or foreign workers. In general, the elite seem far more tolerant than the public: 1.0% of the elite would not live next door to either a person of a different race or someone who has HIV/Aids, compared to 8.1% and 7.3% of the general public respectively; and 3.6% of the elite will not live next door to someone of a different religion, compared to 4.5% of the public.

A cross-tabulation of elite intolerance and elite sectors reveals that:

- all those elite (1.0%) who indicated they would not like to live next door to someone of another race are parliamentarians;
- elite from the church sector (24.0%) are most opposed to living next door to immigrants or foreign workers, followed by the business sector (15.7%), parliamentarians (12.0%), civil servants (9.8%) and the media (3.9%); and
- the media and business sectors (5.9% each) are most opposed to living next door to someone of another religion, followed by the church (4.0%) and parliamentarians (3.0%) (see Figure 4).

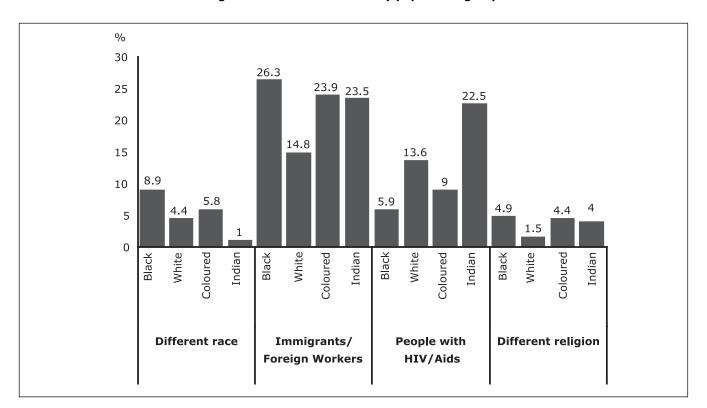


Figure 5: Public intolerance by population group

Within the public sample, of the 24.9% who indicated they would not want immigrants or foreign workers as neighbours, 26.3% are black, 23.9% coloured, 23.5% Indian and 14.8% white. Of the 8.1% who would not like to live next door to someone of a different race, 8.9% are black, 5.8% coloured, 4.4% white and 1.0% Indian.

A smaller percentage (4.5%) did not want people of a different religion as neighbours, of whom 4.9% are black, 4.4% coloured, 4.0% Indian and 1.5% white. The issue of HIV/Aids is far more varied among the different population groups, where 22.5% of Indians, 13.6% of whites, 9.0% of coloureds and 5.9% of blacks would not like people living with HIV/Aids as neighbours (see Figure 5, *previous page*).

In general, the South Africa elite are today far more tolerant than the general population. However, the rapidly decreasing levels of intolerance among the general public since 2001 can be seen as a step in the right direction towards building social cohesion and social capital.

Trust

We attempted to survey South Africans' (elite and

public) feelings of interpersonal trust in order to assess whether there is any impact on perceptions towards democratic political institutions, socio-economic institutions and the evolution of trust in government.

Both sets of respondents were given a list of seven groups and asked: 'Could you tell me for each whether you trust people from this group?' The response categories were: 'trust completely; trust somewhat; do not trust very much; do not trust at all; and don't know'. The findings represent a combined total of the 'trust completely' and 'trust somewhat' categories (see Figure 6).

The elite generally indicate high levels of interpersonal trust. They rank their trust 'completely or somewhat' in: their family (100%); people who they know personally (91.1%); and their neighbourhood (87.1%). Other groups that faired well with the elite are: people of a different race (83.8%); people of another nationality (81.5%); and people of another religion (80.5%). However, only 58.8% of elite trust people they meet for the first time 'very much or at all'.

Like the elite, the public trust their families (97.5%), people they know personally (78.7%) and people from their neighbourhood (72.5%) 'completely or

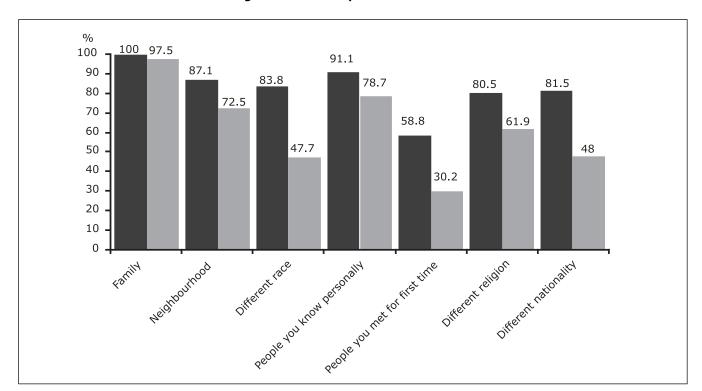


Figure 6: Elite and public levels of trust

somewhat'. This prioritisation of trust mimics that of elites, albeit at lower percentages.

Social networks

A measure of civic engagement – done by examining answers to questions about respondents' participation in several types of organisations – was developed to assess the state and growth of social capital in South Africa. The General Civic Engagement Index comprises a list of nine organisations open to the respondents for membership.

The period 2001–2006 is characterised by a downward trend in people being actively involved in voluntary organisations. More specifically there has been a general decline in active membership in all nine types of organisations listed in Table 12, with the exception of 'other' voluntary organisations which increased membership from 9.3% in 2001 to 22.0% in 2006.

Participation in inward-orientated associations has decreased. There has been a substantial decline in membership of cultural activities (9.4%) and sport (8.7%) and a more gradual decline in the membership of churches (1.3%) over the period. The latter may be a result of the less overt role of churches in politics.

The political transition definitely changed the relationship between the majority of churches and the state. Religious leaders after 1994 shifted their attention away from mobilising around apartheid issues to issues of reconciliation and peace. Another factor

may arguably be that the South African population is shifting from pre-materialist to materialist orientations.

The result is that an increasing, albeit relatively small, segment does not regard religion as the source of everlasting and unchanging truth in a rapidly changing world.

What is worrying is that only face-to-face level social networks seem to have been extended, while networks in the outward-orientated associations – such as labour unions, political parties and professional associations – where a greater amount of generalised trust is necessary and is generated, have remained stagnant or on the decline. In fact membership of labour unions decreased by 4.6%, political parties by 4.3% and professional groups by 1.3% from 2001–2006.

7. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

Some of the more interesting and relevant findings in the study are highlighted below:

■ Understanding the *value patterns* of opinion leaders may give an indication of their policy preferences and performance judgments on a number of social issues that are being debated in South Africa, while understanding the value patterns of the mass public may reiterate the belief that government policy on 'moral' issues is more 'progressive' than the attitudes of the electorate.

Table 12: Percentage of WVS respondents who are 'active' members (1995) and 'belong to' (2001 and 2006) the following organisations*

Organisation	1995	2001	2006
Church or religious	58.4	52.4	51.1
Sport or recreational	19.5	22.9	14.2
Art, musical or educational	15.0	20.2	10.8
Labour union	7.5	9.3	4.7
Political party	11.4	11.5	7.2
Environmental	7.3	3.9	3.9
Professional	7.0	5.3	4.0
Charitable or humanitarian	8.3	11.9	5.0
Other voluntary	6.3	9.3	22.0

^{*}See Kotzé HJ & du Toit P, Data analyses, comparisons and synthesis. In van Beek U (ed), *Democracy under Construction: Patterns from Four Continents*. Pretoria: Van Schiak Publishers, 2006, p 307.

- One of the most remarkable differences in preferences which emerged from the data is that between the public and the elite. Although there are differences in the value patterns of the elite by sector and gender, these differences are not as stark as those between the public and opinion leaders in South Africa.
- In general there were fewer discernable differences among the elite than one would have thought, bearing in mind the huge differences in political socialisation. Public opinion is largely 'traditionalist' in South Africa and the country's new constitution and legal regime are thus at odds with the core beliefs of a large proportion of the electorate.
- It is evident that the South African government is conspicuously attempting to lead rather than follow opinion in relation to moral values. However, it is critical for policy-makers to internalise the extent to which South Africans hold these traditionalist views, because in most instances citizens are confronted with a set of human rights entitling the population to engage in practices that are contrary to their upbringing, socialisation and religious beliefs.
- The level of *support for democracy* in South Africa is extremely high among the elite, with very little variance among the elite sectors. This is seen not only in their support for democratic principles but also in their strong refutation of any other type of political system.
- Although support for democracy among the general South African population is high, there is a considerable difference between the attitudes of the public and elite in this regard – despite public opinion on having a democratic political system having increased slightly since 2001.
- A distinction was drawn between support for and satisfaction with democracy. More than two-thirds of the elite indicated they are satisfied to some degree with the development of democracy in South Africa.
- Overall there are no real significant deviations among the elite sectors, apart from the generalisation that the church, business and civil service sectors have less conviction in what they believe to be essential characteristics of democracy, compared to the media and parliament.

- Moreover the elite score equality indicators and various individual freedoms very highly as essential characteristics of democracy. Like the elite, the public respondents score equality indicators and various individual freedoms relatively highly, with additional emphasis on employment for all. This is hardly surprising given the current debate regarding unemployment in South Africa.
- Many South Africans characterise democracy in terms of universal human rights and civil liberties. There is strong congruence between elite and public perceptions on respect for individual human rights in South Africa.
- With regard to democratic assessment, the elite measure people's right to freedom of association and freedom of speech in South Africa very highly, followed by the freedom to choose who to vote for without being pressured and not having to be afraid of arbitrary arrest.
- The public share fairly similar views. Most importantly, the general public view individual freedoms best in the democratic assessment, namely freedom of association, freedom of choice in religious matters, individual decision to participate in politics or not, freedom of speech and the freedom to choose who to vote for without being pressured.
- Both sets of respondents measured crime and violent conflict between political parties very poorly. In other words, both felt that crime and violent conflict between political parties is not being handled well by the current government.
- There were slight variations and fluctuations among the elite sectors when it came to the assessment of democracy in South Africa, with the civil service and parliamentarians taking a more favourable stance than the media, church and business sectors.
- For the elite, the top five *government deliverables* are: people choosing their leaders in free elections; equality of the vote in elections; a prospering economy; gender equality; and civil rights that protect people's liberty against oppression.
- The top two ranked government deliverables (people choosing their leaders and equality of the vote in elections) display a slight polarisation between elite

sectors, where parliamentarians and civil servants rank these variables at a relatively higher percentage than the media, business and church sectors. However, there is far greater congruence between all elite sectors with regard to a prosperous economy, civil rights protecting people's liberty against oppression, and gender equality. An exception is the church, which scores gender equality slightly lower than the other sectors.

- The top five government deliverables for the public are: addressing educational needs; improvement of basic health services; delivery of household water; managing the economy; and combating HIV/Aids.
- The views of supporters of the four biggest political parties in South Africa namely the ANC, DA, IFP and ID indicate a considerable amount of disagreement among the public. ANC supporters believe government is handling the issue of educational needs very well, while the DA, ID and IFP supporters disagree. Only in terms of managing the economy fairly well is there relative agreement among the four major political party supporters.
- Democratic consolidation to a large extent involves the institutionalisation or legitimisation of the sophisticated institutions at the state's disposal, and confidence in institutions therefore depends on the institutions' performance and effectiveness.
- The elite tend to have more confidence in state institutions (namely the police, courts, armed forces, parliament and civil service) than they do in civil society (namely, churches, the press, labour unions and major companies). More importantly confidence levels in state institutions have increased from 2000–2007 but have decreased in the same period for non-state institutions. Overall, the civil servant elite sector has the most confidence in state and non-state institutions while the business sector has the lowest levels of confidence.
- The elite have the most confidence in the Constitutional Court while the public have the most confidence in the churches.
- In general the public have more confidence in civil society than in state institutions, although from 2000-2006 there has been an increase in confidence in state institutions and a decrease in confidence in civil society. The changing level of confidence in state

- institutions among the South African public has fluctuated dramatically between 1981 and 2006, while the public's level of confidence in civil society has remained consistently high from 1990 to 2006. There is significant disagreement among South Africa's four major population groups regarding levels of confidence in both state and non-state institutions.
- The expectation was that the *levels of sympathy* held by opinion leaders for various institutions would mimic their levels of confidence in those institutions. The trend since 2000 for the degree of sympathy held by elites towards various institutions has been on the increase. The degree of sympathy for the 'core state' that is, the civil service, the defence force, police and courts has remained fairly consistent since 2000, with low levels cited by the business and media sectors, average levels cited by the church and parliamentarians and high levels among the civil service.
- The elite's perception of widespread *corruption* in South Africa seems to be lower than the general public's. There are, however, significant differences in the perception of widespread corruption in South Africa among the various elite sectors. The business and church sectors believe that corruption among elected public office holders and civil servants is far more widespread than the media, parliamentarians and civil servant sectors, while the church and civil servant sectors believe that corruption among managers of private businesses is more widespread than the parliamentarian, business and media sectors.
- Additional findings indicate a 'positive' perception at both mass public and elite levels of the ability of authorities to enforce the law – another primary function within a stable democracy. The congruence in elite and public perception on corruption within the judiciary is quite remarkable, while significant differences among the various elite sectors become evident.
- In general, the South Africa elite are far more tolerant today than the general population; although both sets of respondents are most intolerant towards immigrants or foreign workers. The rapidly decreasing levels of intolerance among the general public since 2001 can be seen as a step in the right direction towards building social cohesion and social capital.

- The changing levels of public intolerance by population group perhaps better reflect the levels of tolerance within South African society, where increased levels of tolerance have been most prominent among the black and white populations, as well as the Indian population, albeit to a lesser extent. Although the coloured population does show an overall decrease in intolerance, it is substantially less than its black, white and Indian counterparts.
- With the exception of people met for the first time, the elite generally indicate high levels of interpersonal *trust*. The levels of trust among the elite sectors towards certain groups are, however, relatively varied. The public display far lower levels of trust than the elite. Generalised trust one of the most important ingredients for social capital in civil society has seen a slight increase among the public from 2000–2006; however, this percentage is still less than the levels of trust expressed in 1990.
- The period 2001–2006 is characterised by a downward trend in public activity in *voluntary organisations*. Membership of cultural and sporting associations has declined fairly substantially, while there has been a more gradual decline in the membership of churches. Among the public, only face-to-face level social networks seem to have been extended, while networks in the outward-orientated associations such as labour unions, political parties and professional associations where a greater amount of generalised trust is necessary and is generated have remained stagnant or on the decline.

This policy paper has shown that in the South African

democratic consolidation process, government should not only be analysed in terms of means – such as the institutions and processes – but also in terms of the ends or goals it has set and the value distribution patterns it strives to institute. The implications that these value patterns – expressed as a preference, or otherwise, for action on certain moral issues included in, for example, the moral index – have for public policy is therefore obvious.

This paper also shows that decision-making can be said to be democratic to the extent that it is subject to the controlling influence of all members of the collective, considered as equals. The key democratic principles are those of popular control and political equality and these form the guiding thread of a democracy assessment.

Importantly, sustainable democracy in South Africa depends to a large extent on the capacity of the state to deliver public goods – in this case, stability through the enforcement of law and order. This is because a climate of stability and predictability gives individuals and groups the confidence to make decisions based on long-term expectations of the state's capacity for regulating economic and political relations.

Finally, developing a robust political culture in South Africa is a complex process that is never easy and never guaranteed. In the words of Dees:

[a] minimal form of trust is needed before tolerance is possible, that tolerance makes a deeper form of trust easier, and that deeper trust can lead to a more robust form of tolerance. To become established, trust and tolerance must feed on each other in a virtuous cycle.³⁷

ENDNOTES

- 1 The authors express their gratitude to a number of institutions whose interest and assistance made this study possible. These include the Open Society Foundation, the National Business Initiative, the South African corporate sector and especially Xstrata, Goldfields and South African Breweries Limited. We are much indebted to the National Research Foundation for its financial assistance and support for research initiatives such as this in South Africa. (Reference number: IFR2008052300019). Thanks also go to our colleagues in the international research unit, the Transformation Research Initiative led by Prof. Ursula van Beek, sponsored by the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation in Stockholm. We also wish to acknowledge the financial support for the elite study offered by Daimler-Fonds in Germany. Finally, we need to extend our thanks to the University of Stellenbosch, which not only provides a home for the Centre for International and Comparative Politics but also continues to support our research efforts financially. Please note that any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this study are those of the authors and not of the abovementioned institutions and/or organisations and as such they do not accept any liability in regard thereto.
- 2 This definition is based on that of Higley J, Field G & Grohalt K, Elite Structure and Ideology. Columbia University Press: New York, 1976. Higley J & Burton M, Elite Foundations of Liberal Democracy. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006, state that elites are the principle decision-makers in the largest or otherwise most pivotally situated organisations and movements in a socio-political unit. Elites include not only the familiar 'power elite' of top business, government and military leaders but also top position holders in parties, professional associations, trade unions, the media, interest groups, religious groups and other power and hierarchical structured organisations and socio-political movements. Put simply, 'elites are persons and groups who have the organised capacity to make real and continuing political trouble'.
- 3 Lasswell HD, *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How.* New York: McGraw-Hill, 1936.
- 4 Easton D, *The Political System*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953.
- 5 Anderson JE, *Public Policy Making: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1994, p 29.
- 6 Ibid, p 30.
- 7 Diamond L, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*.
 Balitmore: John Hopkins University Press, 1999, pp 218-219
- 8 See Mosca G, *The Ruling Class*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1939.

- 9 Using World Values Survey data, it was shown that citizens in most countries analysed were particularly critical of the core institutions of representative government. See Norris P, Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Governance. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- 10 Higley & Burton, op cit, pp 1-28.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Ibid, p 14.
- 13 According to Higley and Burton, ibid, p 13, 'assessing the extent of structural integration and value consensus among elites to determine if they are fundamentally united or disunited is, in sum, not a simple matter'.
- 14 See Inglehart R, The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles amongst Western Publics. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977; Inglehart R, The renaissance of political culture, American Political Science Review 82(4), 1988, pp 1203-1230; Inglehart R, Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990; Inglehart R, Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 Societies. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997; Inglehart R, Globalization and postmodern values, The Washington Quarterly. 23(1), 2000, pp 215- 228.
- 15 See Kotze HJ & Lombard K, Revising the value shift hypothesis: A descriptive analysis of South Africa's value priorities between 1990 and 2001, *Comparative Sociology* 1(3/4), 2002, pp 413 438.
- 16 Feldman S, Structure and consistency in public opinion: The role of core beliefs and values, *American Journal of Political Science* 32(1), 1988, p 418.
- 17 See www.worldvaluessurvey.org.
- See Field G, Higley J & Burton M, A new elite framework for political sociology, Revue Europeene de Scineces Sociales 28(1), 1990, pp 152-153. Other authors that use closely related operationalisations of national elites include: Putnam RD, The strange disappearance of civic American, American Prospect 24, 1996, pp 34-48; Higley J & Moore G, Elite integration in stable democracies: A reconsideration, European Sociological Review 7(1), 1981, pp 35-53; McDonough P, Power and Ideology in Brazil. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 981; and Moyser G & Wagstaff M (eds), Research Methods for Elite Studies. London: Allen and Unwin, 1987.
- 19 Random sampling was used as past experience has shown that it is virtually impossible to reach all of those individuals holding top positions within parliament (i.e. cabinet ministers and deputy ministers) for an interview.
- 20 For the debate on the various criteria on which elites can be selected see Moyser & Wagstaff, op cit, p 30.
- 21 The 2001 elite study identified eight key sectors, namely:

- parliament; civil service; business; the media; trade unions; non-governmental organisations; churches; and agriculture.
- 22 The questionnaires were in an attractive A4 format, available in English and Afrikaans. Questionnaires were sent out with a covering letter individually signed by the project leader which emphasised the importance of participation in the project. The letter also explained the method of selection and stressed the confidential nature of the opinions expressed by the respondents. A business reply envelope was included. For the postal questionnaires, two follow-up questionnaires were sent. A summary of the findings was sent to those respondents who had included an address. Markinor also sent a brief summary to the 2007 elite respondents who requested it.
- 23 See Van Deth JW & Scarborough E (eds), *The Impact of Values*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- 24 See Wilson GD & Patterson JR, A new measure of conservatism, *British Journal of Clinical Psychology* 7(2), 1968, pp 264-269.
- 25 See Inglehart, Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society, op cit.
- 26 Responses were coded on a ten-point scale with 1 = never justifiable and 10 = always justifiable.
- 27 A factor analysis is a measure of association that can reveal clusters of attitudes among respondents. Every cluster contains items that can be considered to serve as indicators of a shared, underlying dimension created by a common determinant. These factors indicate response patterns among all respondents, not the attitudes of a particular set of respondents.
- 28 This index has also been referred to as an 'ethical index' or 'permissive index'.
- 29 Response categories were recoded as follows: 'Always justifiable' = 1-2; 'Sometimes justifiable' = 3-5; 'Sometimes unjustifiable' = 6-8; and 'Never justifiable' = 9-10.

- 30 Respondents where asked to indicated on a ten-point scale, where 1 is never justifiable and 10 is always justifiable, the extent to which they thought the death penalty was justifiable. The response categories for both the elite and the public were recoded as follows: unjustifiable (1-5); and justifiable (6-10).
- 31 See Beetham D, Bracking S, Kearton I & Weir S,

 International IDEA Handbook on Democracy Assessment.

 Netherlands: Kluwer Law International, 2002, p 9.
- 32 Unfortunately, different response categories were used in the elite and WVS surveys because the elite response categories were changed after the WVS went into the field. The elite survey had five response categories including 'don't know/didn't answer', whereas the public survey had six response categories including 'neither agree nor disagree' and 'don't know'. It is, however, possible to compare the strongly agree/disagree categories of both samples.
- 33 See Kotzé HJ, Mass and elite attitudes towards the criminal justice system in South Africa: How congruent?, South African Journal of Criminal Justice 16(1), 2003, pp 38-57.
- 34 For the important role that confidence in institutions plays see Listhaug O & Wiberg M, Confidence in political and private institutions. In Klingemann H & Fuchs D (eds), *Citizens and the State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, p 302.
- 35 For the full text, see 'State of the Nation Address of the President of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki: Joint Sitting of Parliament. Available at http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/2007/07020911001001.htm
- 36 See Cohen D & Prusak L, *Good Company: How Social Capital makes Organisations Work*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2001, p 65.
- 37 Dees RH, Trust and Toleration. Oxfordshire: Routledge, 2004, p103.