

Citizenship in Msunduzi

Laurence Piper

Research on citizenship, development and democracy at ACCEDE

The process of democratic transition, while it results in political liberties, has not necessarily created an inclusive citizenship for many previously disenfranchised and economically marginalised communities. While government has ensured, through the enactment of statutes and policies, the participation of local communities in decision-making affecting their day-to-day lives, participation through these state structures remains marginal. Previous research revealed the disconnect between the institutional arrangements of the state, on one hand, and the ability of the poor and marginalised to get their voices heard, on the other hand. It is therefore apparent that an enabling legislative and policy framework in and of itself is insufficient in ensuring inclusive participation.

In this context the challenge, for many, is how to find voice in meaningful and effective ways, so as to be able to access resources and opportunities which will enhance their livelihoods and thereby enable them to escape chronic poverty. At the level of policy analysis, there is a need to move beyond formalistic understandings of citizenship to examine the ways in which rights are interpreted and used. Of particular concern in this respect is the challenge to move beyond the notion of representative democracy (which typically invokes the widest national and international scrutiny and which is assessed according to the freeness and fairness of elections), to forms of participatory democracy, which have substantive meaning for the majority of citizens. How citizens' rights are understood, by both public officials and ordinary people themselves, profoundly affects understandings of their legitimate entitlements to social services, as well as their obligations as citizens.

Issues relating to constructions and reinterpretations of citizenship in southern contexts form the central focus of research at ACCEDE. The links between citizenship, democracy and development are explored through the VLIR funded project that focuses on Citizenship and Democracy, the Ford funded project on New Forms of Citizenship, and the international Citizenship Development Research Centre (CDRC) hosted by the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex.

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A survey of three wards

Laurence Piper



2010

INTRODUCTION

This study examines popular conceptions of citizenship in the municipality of Msunduzi, which includes the city of Pietermaritzburg, in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The key instrument in the study is a survey, developed collaboratively and deployed in several communities around the country, that explores popular attitudes to politics, government, local government, new participatory institutions (ward committees, school governing bodies etc), civil society, protest and important social identities.

In brief, the picture that emerges is of a population that is generally politically aware, with the significant exception of Indian respondents, and sees institutions as legitimate, but has a low opinion of the performance of both national and local government on key issues. Further, there are very low levels of participation in political life, including elections to an extent as well as both the ‘invited spaces’ of local governance and the ‘invented spaces’ of civil society organisation and protest. On the whole the citizens of Msunduzi appear to be informed and supportive of democratic institutions, but disillusioned with government and parties and demobilised in every way, with the partial exception of national elections.

There are three significant exceptions to this general picture of Msunduzi citizens as informed but disillusioned and demobilised democrats. These exceptions follow racial lines. Among black African respondents there are (i) high levels of trust in the ANC; (ii) and high levels of trust in the holders of public office. Among white respondents there are (iii) significant levels of participation in faith-based organisations. While support for the ANC follows racial lines, as expected, all respondents reported surprisingly low levels of trust in political parties. This includes ANC supporters. Further, while trust in office-bearers was racialised, all respondents shared the same rank order of trust which corresponded directly to the hierarchy of office from local to national. Other than this, however, respondents showed little difference along racial lines.

In painting this picture this paper starts by outlining the context in which the study was conducted, both at municipal and ward levels. This is followed by a brief description of the study methodology and then of the key findings.

MSUNDUZI: THE CONTEXT

The Msunduzi municipality (KZ225) includes the city of Pietermaritzburg and is the capital of the province of KwaZulu-Natal. The second largest municipality in the province after the eThekweni metro, Msunduzi covers an area of approximately 649 km² and has a population in excess of 500 000. See Figure 1 for a physical map of Msunduzi. There are 37 wards of roughly six kinds, as summarised in Figure 2.

Figure 1. The Msunduzi Municipality KZ225

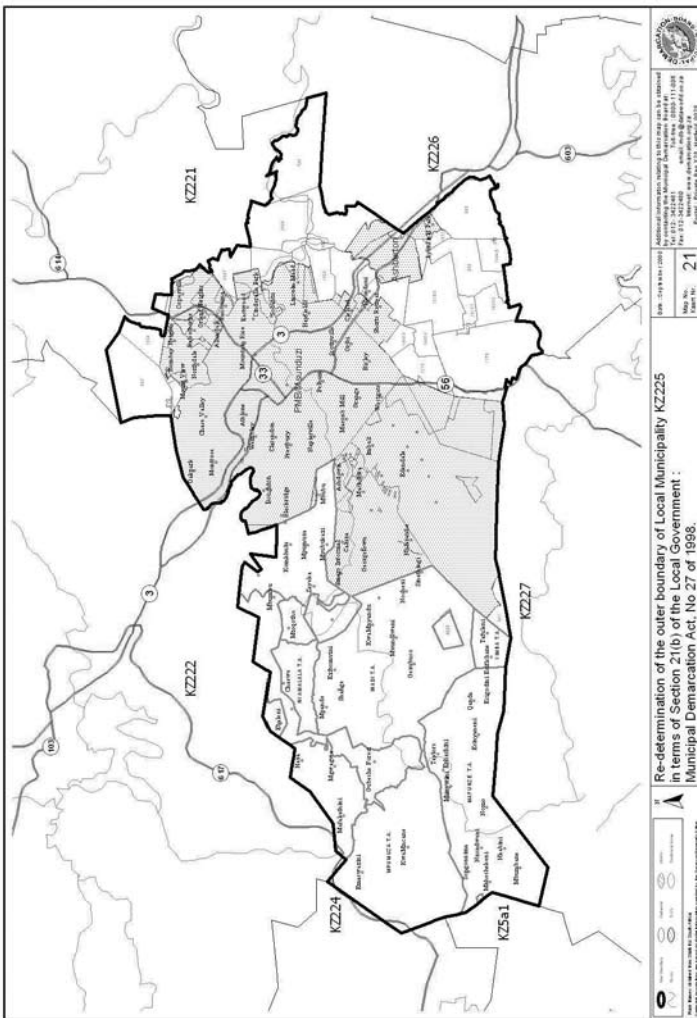


Figure 2: Descriptive overview of Msunduzi by ward

Name	Wards	Political affiliation, March 2006	Socio-economic profile
Vulindlela	1, 2, 7, 8, 9 3,4,5,6	IFP ANC	Historically black African, rural, poorest communities. Very little business or industry
Edendale and Imbali	10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23	ANC	Historically black African, urban townships, working class and unemployed poor communities. Some business and industry
Pietermaritzburg City Centre	27, 33, parts of 23 & 36	ANC/DA	Historically white, traditional city centre of Pietermaritzburg, mixed residential and business
Suburbs	18, 24, 25, 26, 37, parts of 36	ANC/DA	Historically white suburbs (wealthy areas: Montrose Chase Valley, Scottsville, Hayfields, Wembley), and some business and industry
Woodlands and Eastwood	32, 34	ANC/DA	Historically coloured area, mostly residential, some industrial
The northern areas	28, 29, 30, 31, 35	ANC	Historically Indian areas, mostly residential, some business

Demographic context

In terms of demographics Msunduzi is quite closely representative of the province. As shown in Figures 3 and 4, nearly 80% of the population are black African and the vast majority of these (over 90%) are isiZulu-speaking. Indian South Africans constitute the second largest group at around 12%, white South Africans constitute some 8% and coloured South Africans around 3%. Perhaps more important than the overall proportions of the population are the trajectories of demographic change. As shown in Figure 5, the Indian and white populations are declining in absolute as well as relative terms. Indeed, between 1996 and 2001, some 20% of the white population left Msunduzi.

Figure 3: Msunduzi wards by race

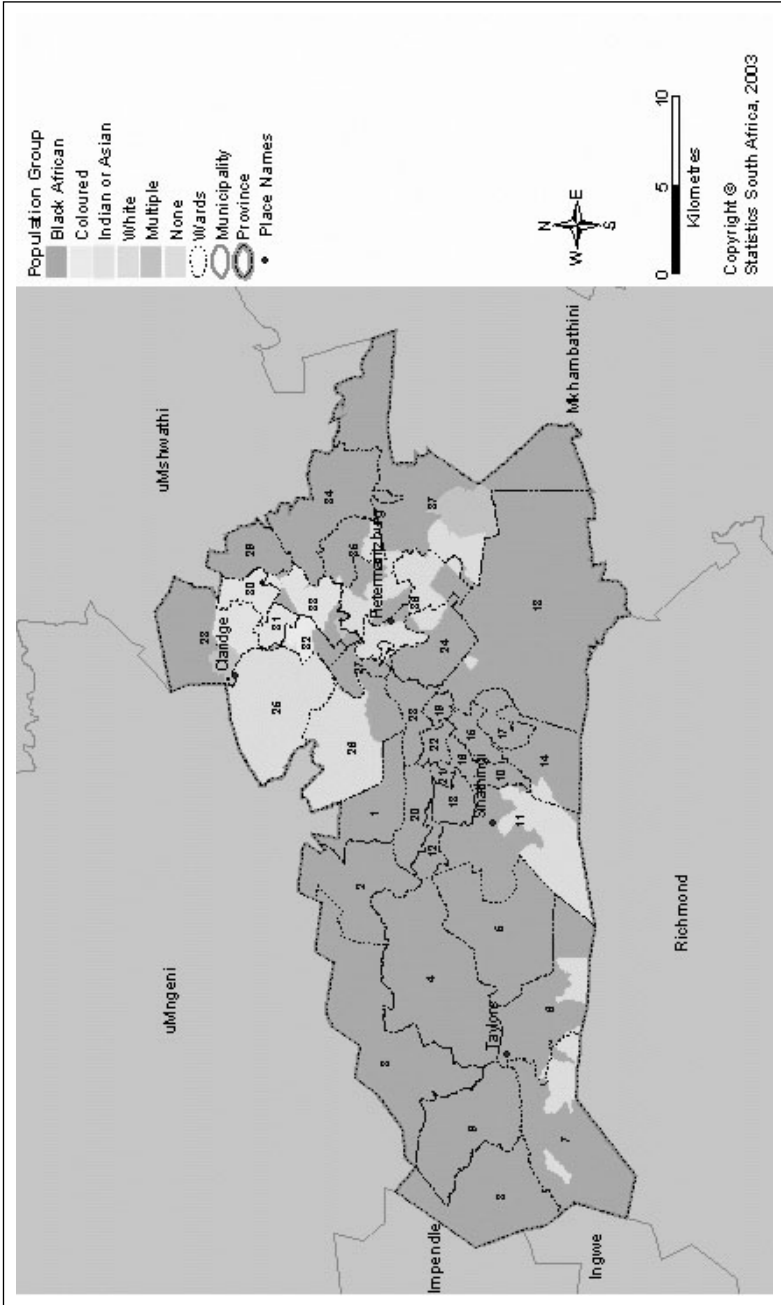


Figure 4: Msunduzi by racial percentage 1996–2001

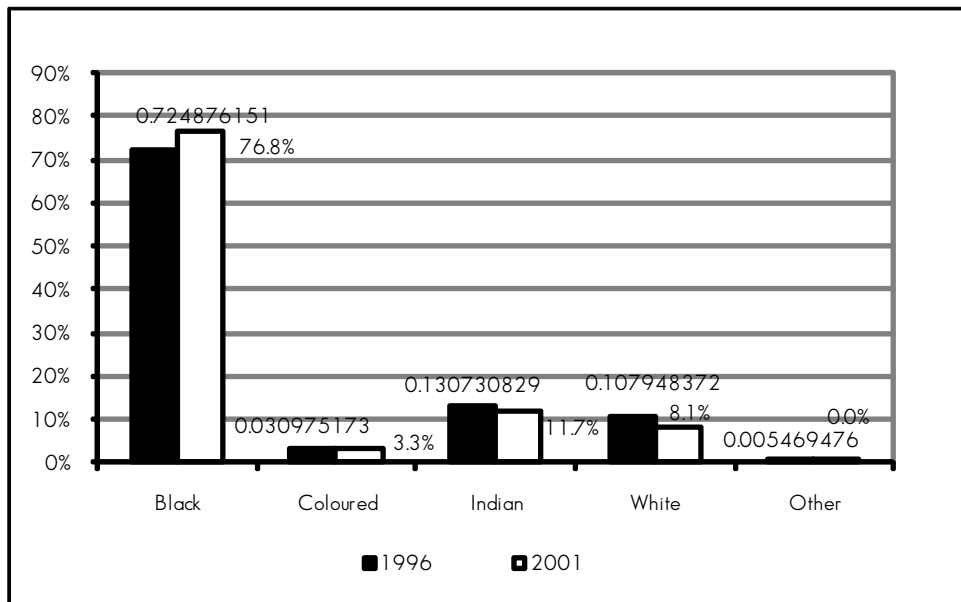
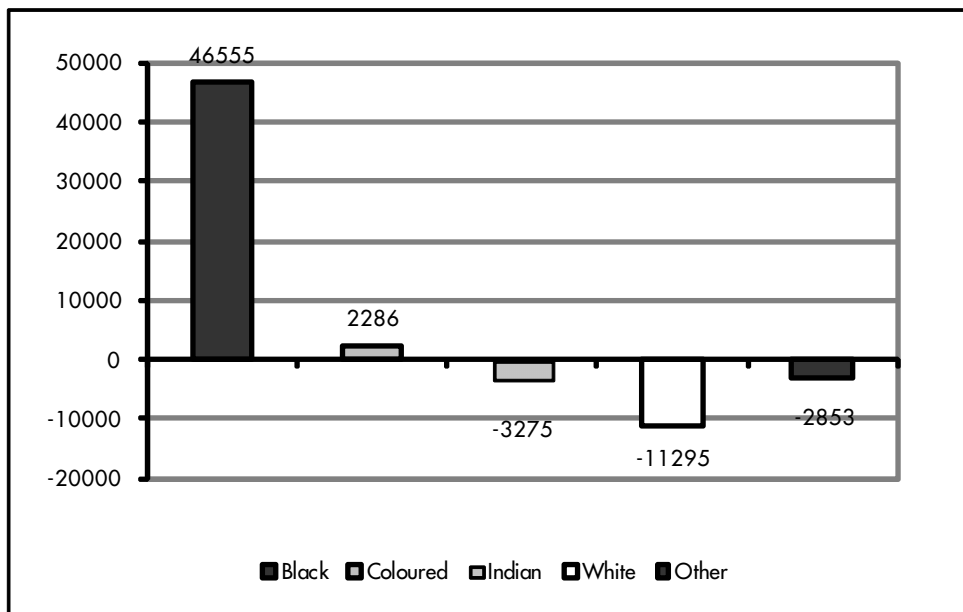


Figure 5: Msunduzi absolute racial change 1996–2001



In the absence of a census in 2007, it is hard to be certain that this trend has continued. Indeed, given the fact that Msunduzi officially became the capital of KwaZulu-Natal in 2003, with clear implications for the middle-classes employed by government, it is possible that this trend might have slowed, if not reversed. Impressionistic evidence suggests not, however. Notably the greatest population movement concerns new black Africans migrants arriving in the city, which is consistent with national migration trends from rural to urban areas.

Socio-economic context

In economic terms, it is also clear that Msunduzi is, on the whole, not a wealthy municipality. As suggested by Figure 6, the median income level is to be found between the ‘poor’ and the ‘low’ categories, which in the 2001 census data is between R6 000 and R50 000 per annum. Further, it is clear that the population of Msunduzi also got poorer between 1996 and 2001, perhaps not surprisingly given the exodus of significant numbers of white and Indian people and the in-migration of black Africans, most of whom are likely to be poorer people from rural areas.

Figure 6: Msunduzi Income Shifts 1996–2001

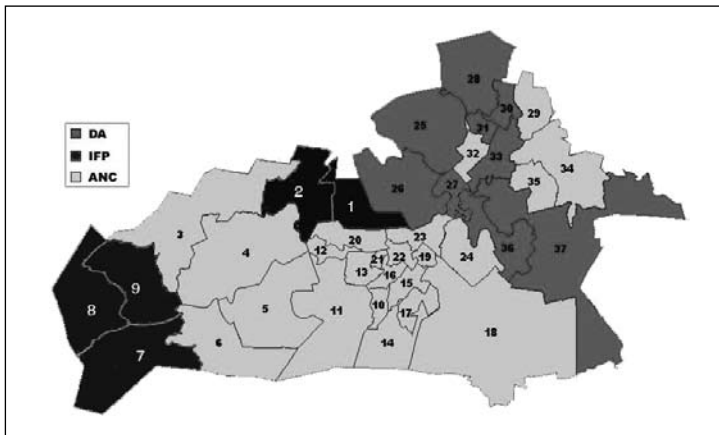


This noted, the city’s economy has grown significantly in the last five years, based on the significantly increased levels of turnover reported by the business sector. This growth is confirmed anecdotally by the construction of new malls and similar complexes, which have attracted much middle-class consumption from the wider region. The impact of this growth on local unemployment and inequality is currently unknown.

Political context

In terms of political life, Msunduzi is a longstanding ANC city, with the party winning some 60% of the vote in the 2006 local government elections compared with the IFP's 17% and the DA's 15%. Moreover, if one looks at the distribution of party support as illustrated in Figure 7, it is clear that ANC support is found in the traditional black townships – urban areas historically located some way out of the city – which are distinct from the more rural wards, where IFP supporters live, and the historically white and Indian areas close to the heart of the city.

Figure 7: Msundui Ward by Party*



Notable in this respect is the fact that the presence of the ANC in the townships of Msunduzi was never guaranteed in the context of the IFP-Charterist conflict in the province from 1983 to about 1996. More specifically, February 1990 saw the IFP launch a military attack from the flanking rural areas on ANC strongholds in the Edendale valley, with the covert support of the apartheid military forces. This conflict became known as the 'seven-day war'. In the event, the IFP was repulsed, and the militant ANC leadership of the region by Harry Gwala was consolidated until Zuma's deployment to the province a few years later.

Msunduzi remained embroiled in ANC-IFP conflict until 2003 when the ANC finally managed to win provincial power through floor-crossing. The change of power was confirmed by the 2004 provincial elections. Until this time the IFP-led provincial government had advanced Ulundi as its preferred capital, against the ANC's choice of Msunduzi – which had been the capital of Natal under colonial and apartheid rule. In 2003 Msunduzi was confirmed as the provincial capital again, and since that date has enjoyed significant economic growth, part of which is clearly linked to its capital status.

Governance context

In respect of governance, Msunduzi is formally recognised as a Category B municipality but with aspirant metropolitan status. The annual budget is in the region of R1.9 billion and the municipality spends just less than R40 million on salaries. In recent years the Msunduzi municipality has worked quite hard to counter the small-town image that the city has enjoyed for some time. The town is regularly bombarded with advertisements pronouncing the transformation of ‘sleepy hollow’ into ‘vibrant valley’, and the official town motto is: ‘the city of choice’.

Unfortunately the quality of governance in the city has suffered in the recent past due to ANC factionalism and rapid changes of officials, some of which was linked to factionalism at national level, but which has continued after the advent of Zuma with local ANC leaders continuing to vie for power behind the scenes. This dynamic has been a major contributing factor to the succession of four municipal managers over the last seven years, although corruption and incompetence also contributed to their instability in office. In many ways the travails that have plagued Msunduzi governance have yet to be solved, not least as the intra-ANC conflict endures and the current municipal manager lacks the standing to enforce the level of quality governance he would like. Most recently the municipality has failed to account for R150 million, a fact officials have done their best to keep out of the public eye.

State–society relations and public participation

This context of inter and intra-party conflict and poor levels of governance have not been good for the formal institutions of public participation in the city. As outlined by **Piper and Nadvi (2007) and Piper and Deacon (2008)**, the ward committee system is barely functional and even when it is functional, these wards are usually captured by local political elites for their own ends. Following the 2006 local government elections it took over a year for the ward committee system to be implemented, and this was done at the insistence of province as rival ANC leaders were squabbling over who should ‘oversee’ (read: control) the implementation of the ward committee system.

Similarly, the forms of public consultation around the budget, IDP and the like take the form of large-scale public meetings once, maybe twice, a year; this is a format that makes meaningful feedback on complex documents all but impossible. These mayoral *izimbizo* are thus mostly exercises in public relations and amount to forms of tokenism in public participation terms. Simply put, the invited spaces for public participation implemented by the Msunduzi local government are ‘toy telephones’ like the Bantu Authorities institutions of the apartheid system. Despite this, civil society organisations’ levels of mobilisation, and especially that of social movements, are low in Msunduzi. While there is some evidence of popular protest, it does not seem to reach the levels manifest elsewhere in the country.

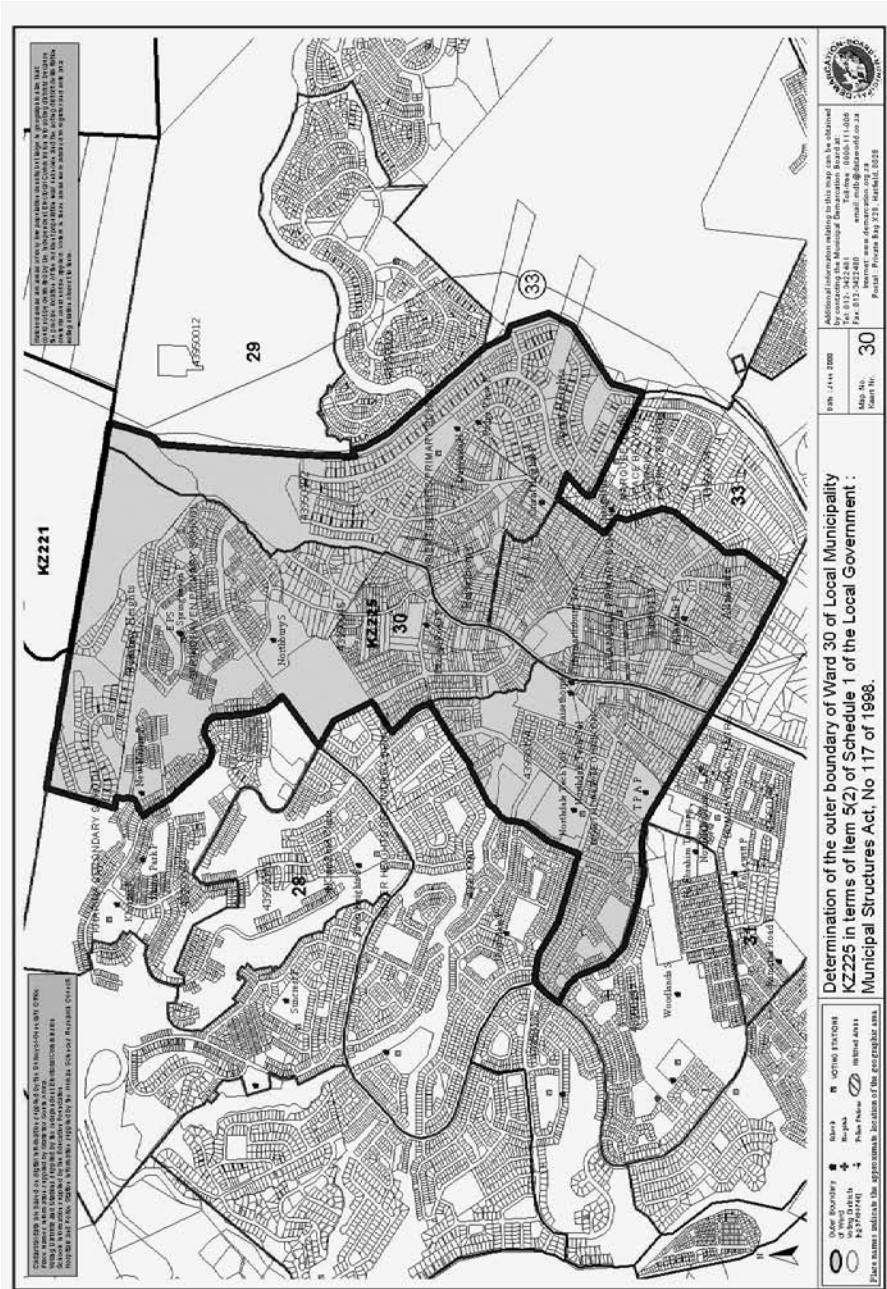
WARD CONTEXT: A RACIAL HIERARCHY

From the general context of the Msunduzi municipality we now focus more closely on the three wards in which the survey was conducted. These wards were selected purposively to represent the major types of ward found in Msunduzi (see Figure 2). In what follows it will become clear that the legacy of apartheid remains in the correlation between the racial and socio-economic/service levels of the wards. This is not to say that things have not improved for black people living in Msunduzi, but rather that they have not improved to the extent needed to compensate for past exclusions. Further, there is some evidence of the desegregation of historically white and wealthier areas as upwardly mobile black people move into these parts of the city.

There are two kinds of ward not covered by this sample: the historically coloured areas, which we did not sample as the population is a small part of the total population in the city and the province; and the so-called ‘traditional’ areas governed by the IFP, which we did not attempt to survey due to past experience of the difficulty of doing research in these areas. The latter constitute a more numerous and significant constituency for political and governance in the city, and thus pose the real constraint on insights that can be generalised to the population of the city.

As illustrated in Figure 8, Ward 26 covers historically-white areas stretching from the city centre to the wealthy suburb of Boughton, but includes the informal settlement of Peace Valley 3, and many historically white working-class areas such as Prestbury, which are increasingly populated by upwardly mobile black African families. On the whole, then, the ward is not the wealthiest area and probably represents the median white resident. Ward 30, illustrated in Figure 9, covers historically Indian areas of a similar, if possibly slightly poorer, economic range. It also includes some very well-to-do suburbs, as well as two or three informal settlements. It, too, probably represents the median Indian resident. Lastly, Ward 19, Imbali, is a long-established black African township famous for being the home of struggle hero Harry Gwala and the centre of the ANC in Pietermaritzburg in the 1980s and 1990s. Illustrated in Figure 10, it is the smallest spatially (but barely numerically) of the three wards selected for the survey. There are both some better off, and many worse-off black African areas, and Imbali probably closely resembles the profile of the longer-standing townships residents of Msunduzi.

Figure 9: Ward 30 Mountain Rise



Ward comparison: Demographic

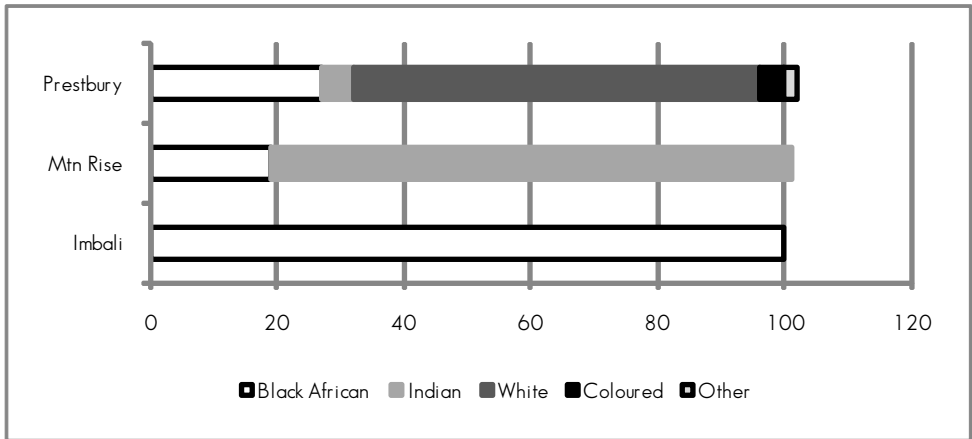
As illustrated by Figure 11, the populations of the three wards are of the same order, with Ward 30 being the largest (18 343), followed by Ward 26 (14 831) and Imbali being marginally the smallest (14 723). The more significant difference lies in the numbers of houses, with Wards 30 and 26 having nearly twice the number of houses for roughly the same population. The starkest difference in the ratio of houses to population is between Wards 26 and 19, where the ratio is 3.7:6.2.

Figure 11. Ward demographics

Total	Ward 26		Ward 30		Ward 19	
Population	14831		18343		14723	
No. of households	3987		4433		2363	
Population per household	3.71		4.1		6.28	
Race						
African	3918	26.42%	1137	6.20%	14646	99.48%
Coloured	314	2.12%	312	1.70%	6	0.04%
Indian	285	1.92%	16797	91.57%	0	0.00%
White	10210	68.84%	32	0.17%	0	0.00%
Other	104	0.70%	65	0.35%	71	0.48%
TOTAL	14831	100.00%	18343	100.00%	14723	100.00%
Gender						
Male	8150	54.98%	8839	48.22%	6382	43.37%
Female	6674	45.02%	9491	51.78%	8333	56.63%
TOTAL	14824	100.00	18330	100.00	14715	100.00
Age breakdown						
0-4	715	4.82%	1424	7.76%	1228	8.33%
05-19	3362	22.66%	5039	27.48%	4535	30.77%
20-29	2996	20.19%	3715	20.26%	4128	28.01%
30-49	4586	30.91%	5346	29.15%	3135	21.27%
50-64	1822	12.28%	2013	10.98%	1151	7.81%
65+	1302	8.77%	671	3.66%	504	3.42%
Unknown	55	0.37%	132	0.72%	57	0.39%
TOTAL	14838	100.00%	18340	100.00%	14738	100.00%

As expected, the three wards are dominated by three different races, although to differing extents. Figure 12 illustrates that Imbali is practically 100% black African, whereas Ward 26 is the most diverse with 69% White and 26% African. In terms of gender, Ward 30 has an almost perfect 50:50 split with Ward 26 having a disproportionate percentage of males (55%) and Ward 19 a disproportionate percentage of females (57%). This reflects the national pattern of male migration to areas nearer the city with more work.

Figure 12. Wards by Race



Ward comparison: socio-economic

That the racial pattern between the three wards reflects a socio-economic hierarchy, too, is reflected in the differing age and income profiles of the three wards. Ward 26, the historically and still mostly white area, has both the oldest population profile (Figure 13), the highest household incomes (Figure 14) and the lowest unemployment (Figure 15). Conversely, Ward 19 has the youngest population profile, the lowest household income levels, and the highest unemployment. Ward 30 falls between these two wards on all these measures, although is much closer to Ward 26 as a rule, and has the highest rate of reported employment.

Figure 13: Wards by age

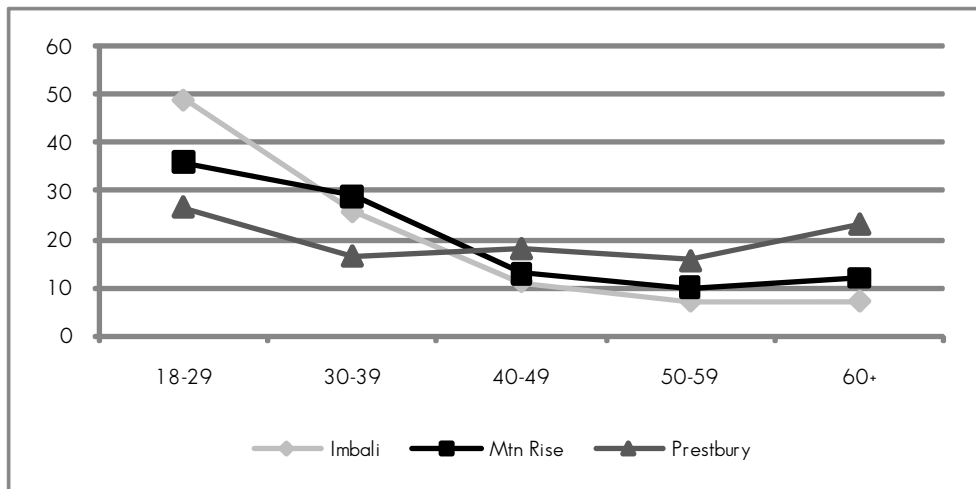


Figure 14: Ward by household income

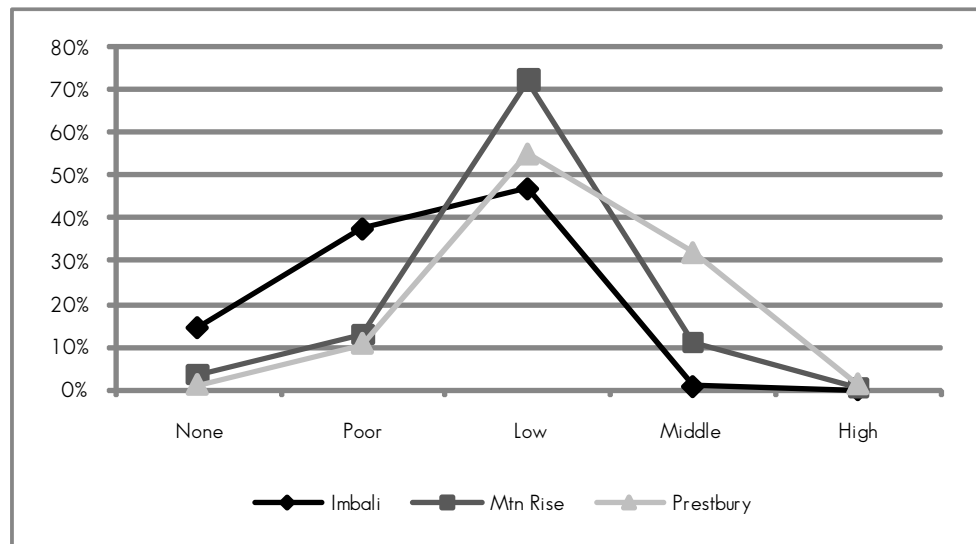


Figure 15: Wards by unemployment



Ward comparison: service provision

This basic pattern is confirmed by the respective levels of service provision in the three wards, as revealed by the statistics for telephones, sanitation and water (Figures 16, 17, 18). Wards 26 and 30 barely differ in terms of these three indicators, and both meet what most would regard as the optimal forms of relevant service provision. The real difference is in Ward 19 which, while still reporting decent levels of service provision, has forms of lesser quality. Thus most households do not have a phone, some 10% of houses use a pit latrine and less than half of all households have piped water in the house, although the vast majority have water on the property in some form.

Figure 16: Ward by telephone

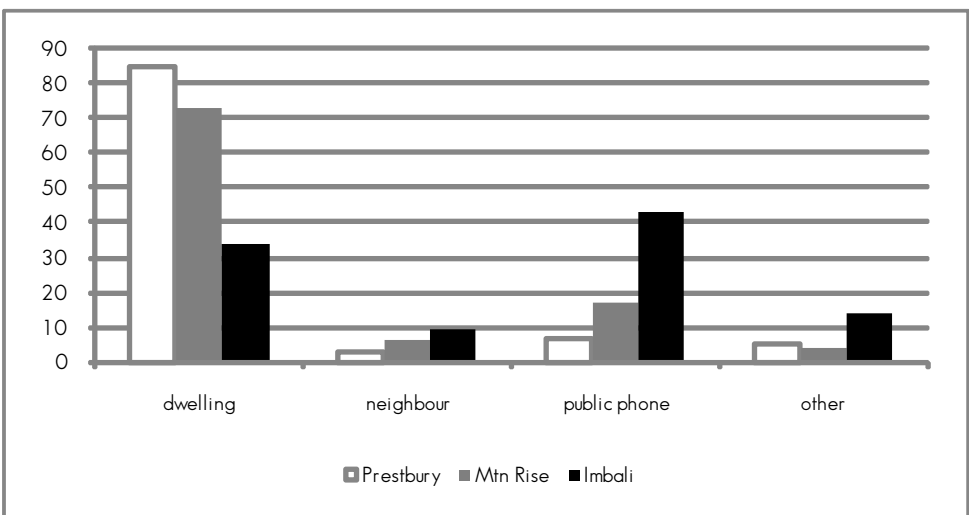


Figure 17: Wards by sanitation

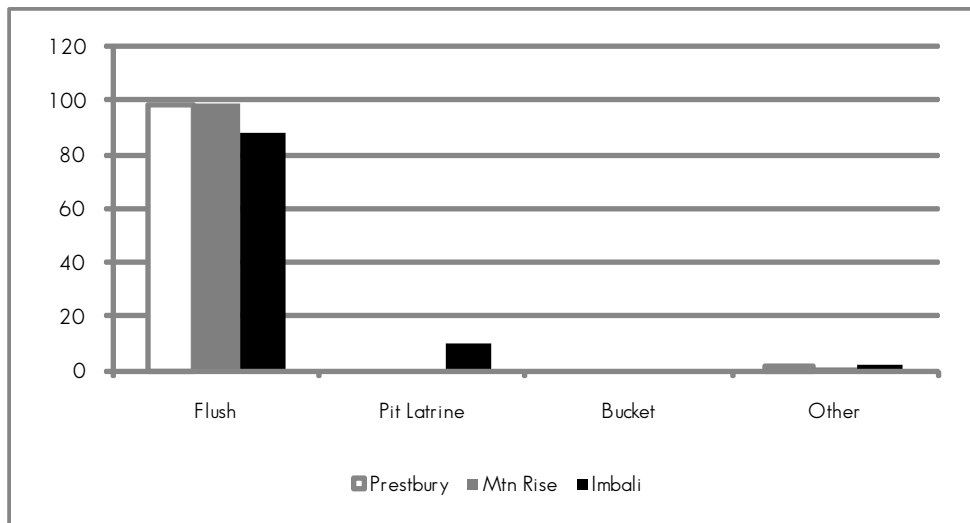
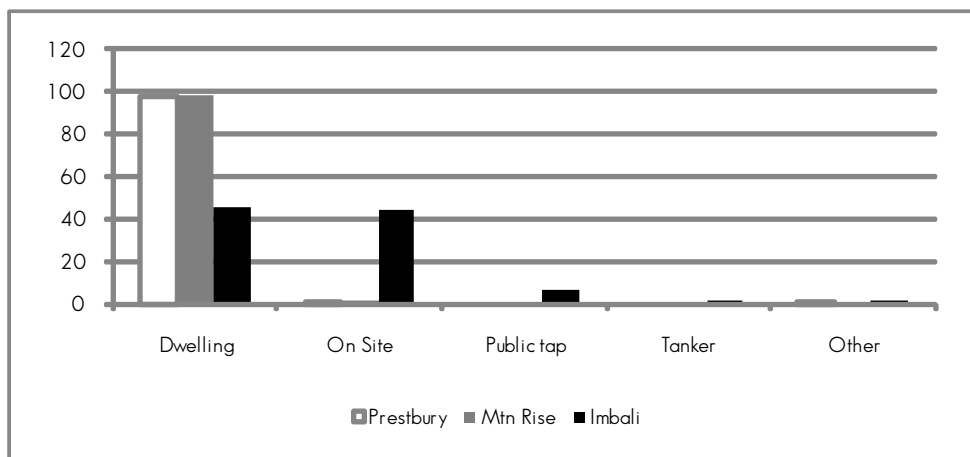


Figure 18: Wards by water supply



Ward comparison: political

As illustrated by Figure 19, the political profiles of the three wards are not typical of the city more broadly, although they do represent accurately the past behaviour of the populations selected. Hence Wards 26 and 30 are DA wards and Ward 19 is an ANC ward. Moreover, the levels of support for the party councillors and the party on the proportional representation ballot are almost identical. This suggests very little strategic voting in these wards and that voters are reasonably happy with the choice of candidate by their parties.

Figure 19: Wards by local party politics

	Ward 26		Ward 30		Ward 19	
Candidate	Willem Jurrie Coetzee		Ranjit Singh		Tu Teresa Zondi	
Party	DA		DA		ANC	
Votes	4204		1153		2020	
Total	5551		2333		2818	
%	75.73%		49.42%		71.68%	
PR ballott	Ward 26 Prestbury		Ward 30 Mountain Rise		Ward 19 Imbali	
ACDP	93	0.84%	41	0.88%	11	0.20%
ANC	2322	20.86%	1916	41.18%	4070	72.16%
DA	8377	75.26%	2380	51.15%	203	3.60%
IFP	303	2.72%	87	1.87%	1330	23.58%
MF	36	0.32%	229	4.92%	26	0.46%
Total	11131		4653		5640	

THE SURVEY: METHODOLOGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

The surveys were conducted in late 2007 using the same instrument and methodology as in all the studies conducted under the New Forms of Citizenship project and based on the Afrobarometer instrument, which has been extensively tested across a number of countries. The instrument was amended slightly to include questions of the ‘invited spaces’ of participatory local governance, specifically ward committees, school governing bodies and community policing forums, as well as incorporating questions on the ‘invented spaces’ created by civil society and communities, and some social capital measures.

In terms of methodology, the aim was to randomly sample 200 households in each of the three selected wards. As noted above, the selection of wards was intended to represent not Msunduzi, (although they go a significant way towards doing this), but rather the major communities or populations (emic and etic categories) that comprise the city. The main idea behind this sampling was to test for key differences in the understanding and practice of citizenship across the major social divides. In the event we managed to secure the following numbers in each ward: Ward 26: 199 responses; Ward 30: 181 responses, and Ward 19: 170 responses, totalling 550. Notably, though, two of the questions concerning the issues that most concern people were misinterpreted by some of the fieldworkers and hence were wrongly answered and thus not usable.

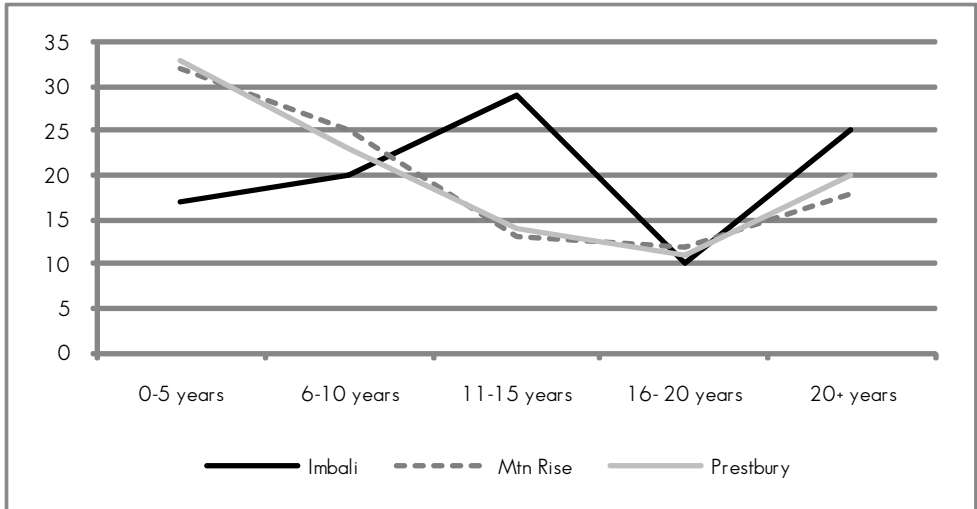
As illustrated by Figure 20, the profile of respondents from the survey largely matches the 2001 census data on most counts, most obviously on race and language. Assuming no changes from 2001, there is a slight under-sampling of women in Ward 30 and Ward 19, and possibly an under-sampling for informal settlements, although 5% in Ward 30 is about right.

What is perhaps most notable from the data on the profile of respondents is the relative stability of the Ward 19 Imbali population, even when compared with Wards 26 and 30 (See Figure 21). The latter two wards have had much more demographic change, which is probably due to in-migration by black people.

Figure 20: Demography of survey respondents

	Imbali	Mtn Rise	Prestbury
Race			
Black African	100	19	27
Indian	0	82	5
White	0	0	64
Coloured	0	0	4
Other	0	0	2
Home language			
English	0	69	57.7
Sotho	0	1	1
Swati	0	1	0.5
Venda	2	2	1
Xhosa	1	1	1.5
Zulu	98	29	22.7
Afrikaans	0	0	16.6
Gender			
Male	52	53	54
Female	48	47	46
Dwelling type			
House (brick structure)	95	91	92
Flat in block of flats	0	2	4
Town house/semidetached	0	2	2
House/flat back yard	0	3	3
Informal dwelling in backyard	0	1	0
Informal dwelling in informal settlement	5	2	0
Duration in house			
0–5 years	17	32	33
6–10 years	20	25	23
11–15 years	29	13	14
16–20 years	10	12	11
20+ years	25	18	20

Figure 21: Time in dwelling



THE SURVEY: FINDINGS

The findings are analysed in terms of the major themes identified collectively for the New Forms of Citizenship Project. These are:

- constructions of political identity, citizenship and community;
- perceptions of government;
- modes of participations, non-participation and protest; and
- an analysis of the constructions of active citizenship.

Constructions of political identity, citizenship and community

Key to understanding these issues of identity are both the subjective views of respondents and the emergent patterns from the responses. Hence what people reveal about what they do is important for understanding how they see themselves, their communities and their citizenship. In South Africa's case we ought to be sensitive to the issue of race and how it impacts on political life and citizenship, and in KwaZulu-Natal we ought also to consider the history of political conflict between the ANC and IFP and the implications of this for political life and citizenship.

The first point to make is that there are no explicit questions on social identities like race in the survey, and limited questions on party support. Nevertheless, here are questions around attitudes towards democracy and rights, and the practice of these, which reflect

notions of citizenship. There are also questions about the political agency practised by respondents which outlines what people do as citizens. Hence it is possible to build up a picture of political attitudes and practices which will tell us quite a lot about citizenship. There are also questions around trust of others, which also inform a sense of community. Notably, the significance of race or other identities emerges indirectly in the patterns around attitudes towards government and political parties.

Citizenship

In terms of citizenship, we can identify three sets of questions that shed light on this identity for respondents. The first concerns levels of political awareness or interest. The second concerns attitudes towards political right and democracy. The third reflects what respondents say they do to advance their rights.

Regarding levels of political awareness, it is clear from Figures 22–24 that there are high levels of interest in political life generally, although there is also a marked difference between Ward 30 and the other two wards. The clear implication of this is that Indian respondents are much less interested in politics than white and black African respondents, who display almost identical interest levels.

Figure 22: Frequency in following the news

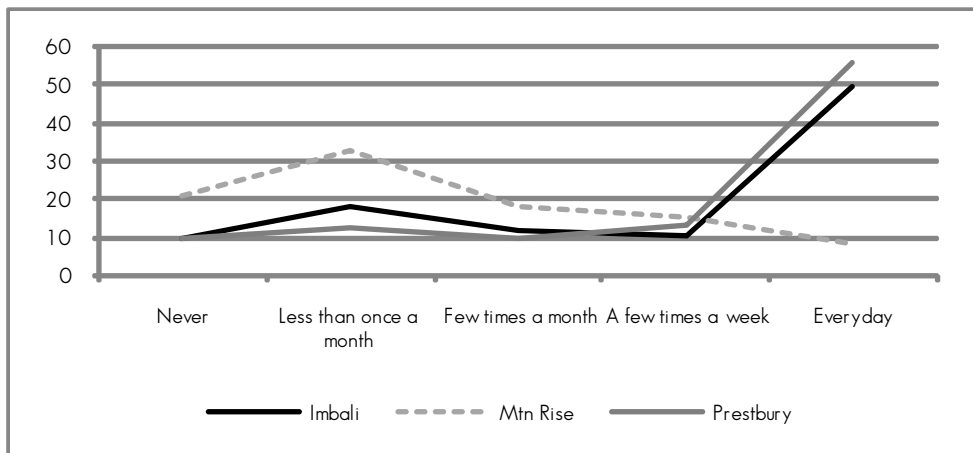


Figure 23: News every day

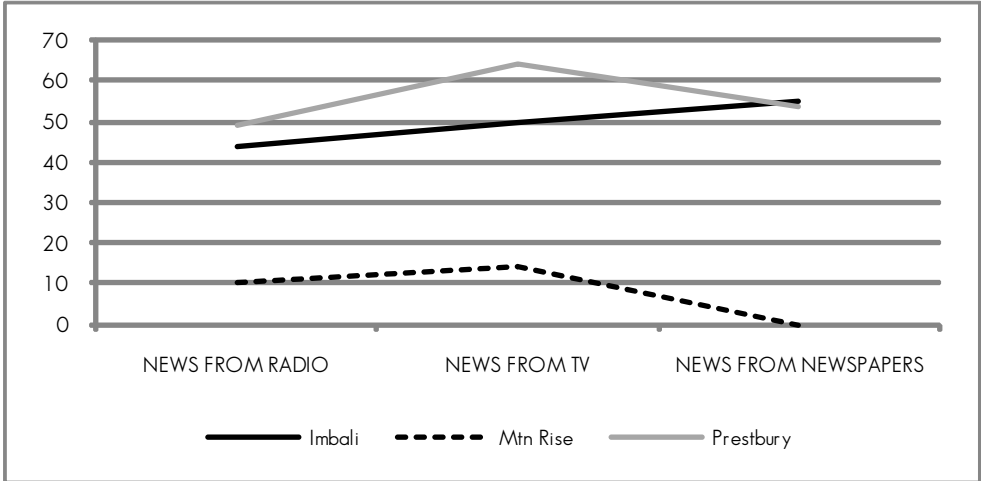
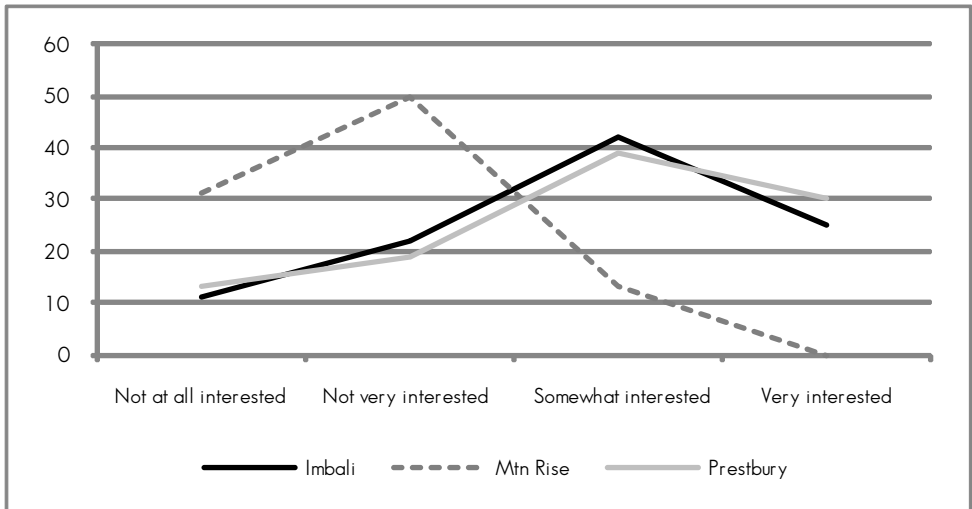


Figure 24: Interest in public affairs



Concerning attitudes towards political rights and agency, as illustrated in Figures 25–27, the vast majority of respondents believe that they have these rights in South Africa, and ought to have them. Indeed, in terms of assessing the supply of rights, that is, whether they exist in the society, the respondents make very similar assessments. However, differences begin to emerge with regard to the demand for rights – whether South Africans ought to have these rights and to what extent. Here, white respondents tend to be more conservative than their counterparts (Figure 26), and Indian respondents express the greatest desire for rights.

Notably, a significant proportion of both black African and white respondents, in the region of 25% (Figure 27), feel that the rights we have outstrips their desire for these rights.

Figure 25: Are we free?

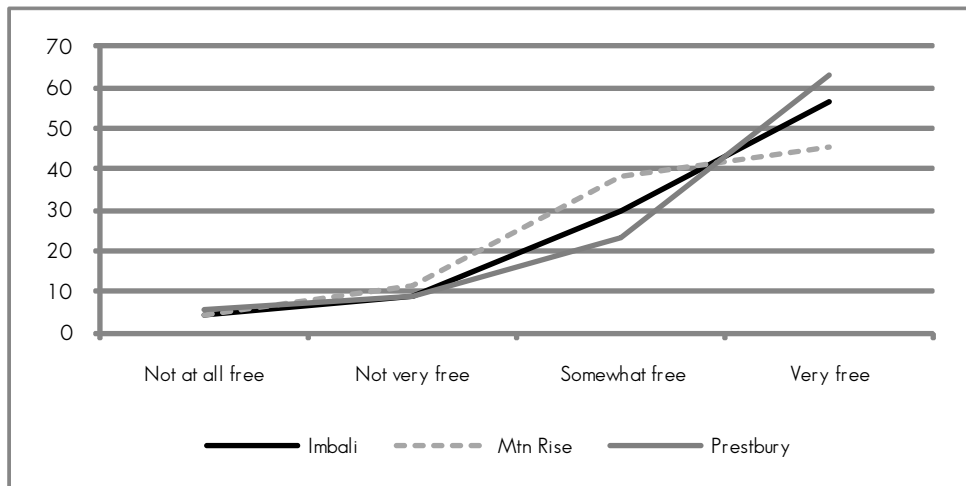


Figure 26: Should we be free?

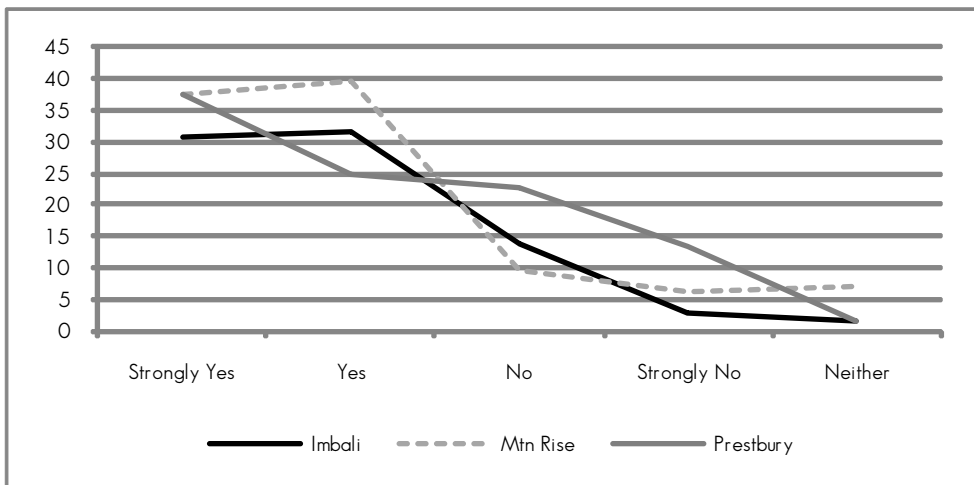
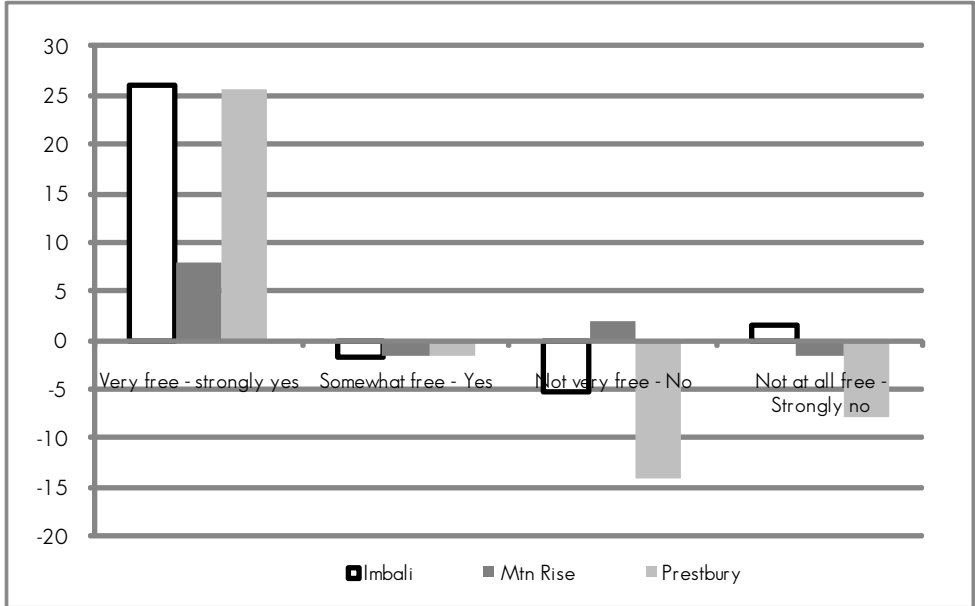


Figure 27: Supply (are we free?) versus demand (should we be free?)



In terms of respondent’s perceptions of agency, the levels of participation in both the formal, invited spaces of local governance such as ward committees, school governing bodies, community policing forums, and in civil society associations more broadly, was dramatically low (see Figure 28). The one exception to this is participation in faith-based organisations (see Figure 29), where levels are not high but are at least 10% higher than they are for other organisations, and even more so for (white) respondents from Ward 26. As regards the ‘invented spaces’ of community meetings and protests, reported participation rates in community meetings were on the low side (Figure 30), and highest in Prestbury, while reported rates of participation in protest (Figure 31) were extremely and consistently low across the three wards. Even in respect of elections, only a small majority of all respondents participated in the 2004 national elections, with little difference between the wards.

Figure 28: General participation rates

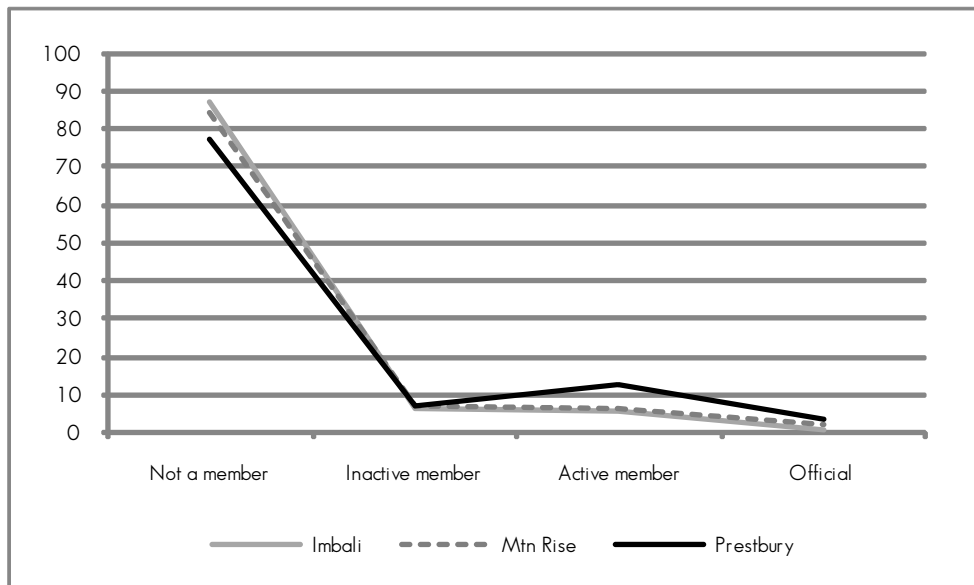


Figure 29: Participation in faith-based organisations

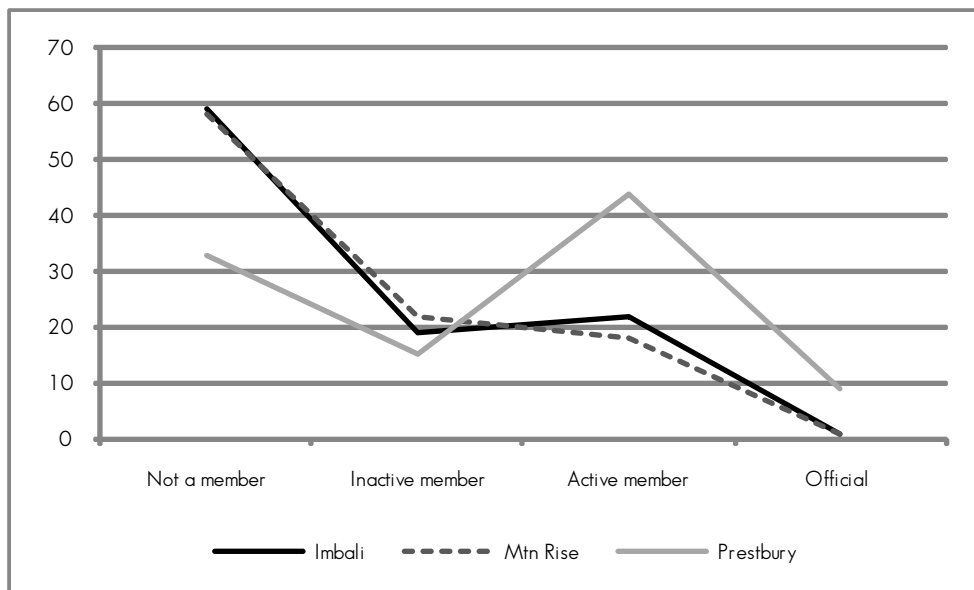


Figure 30: Attendance at community meetings

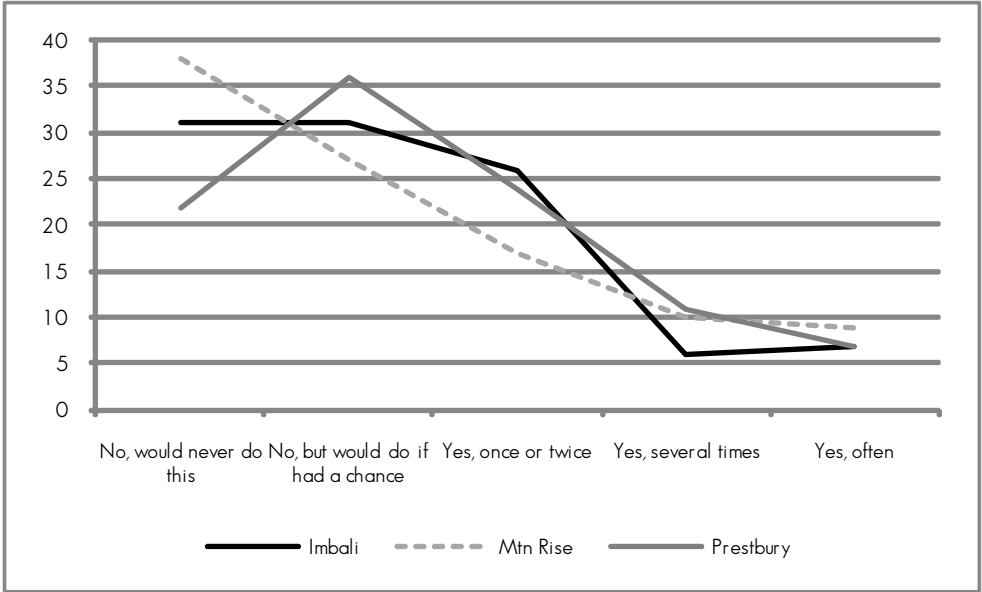
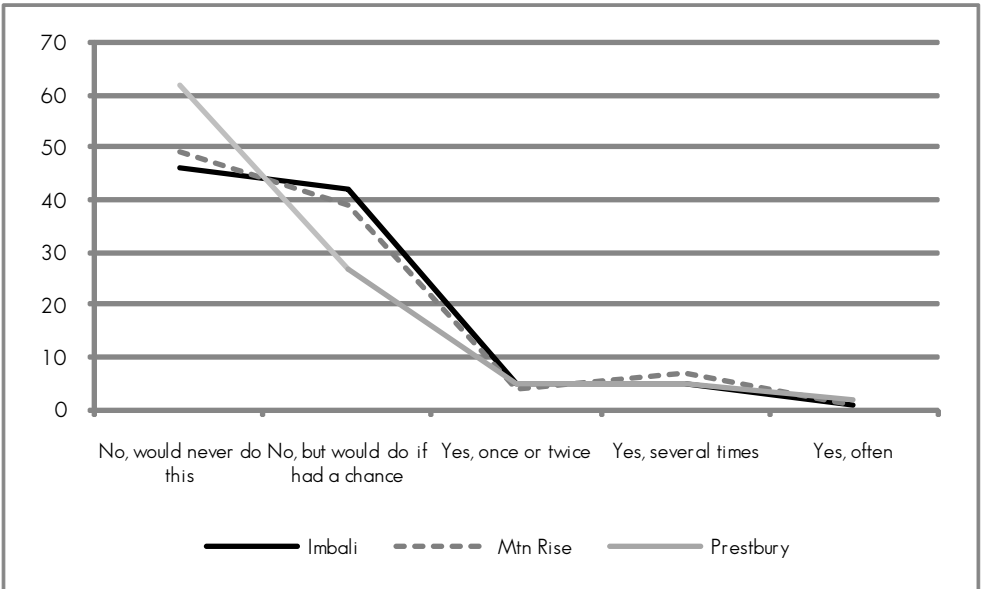
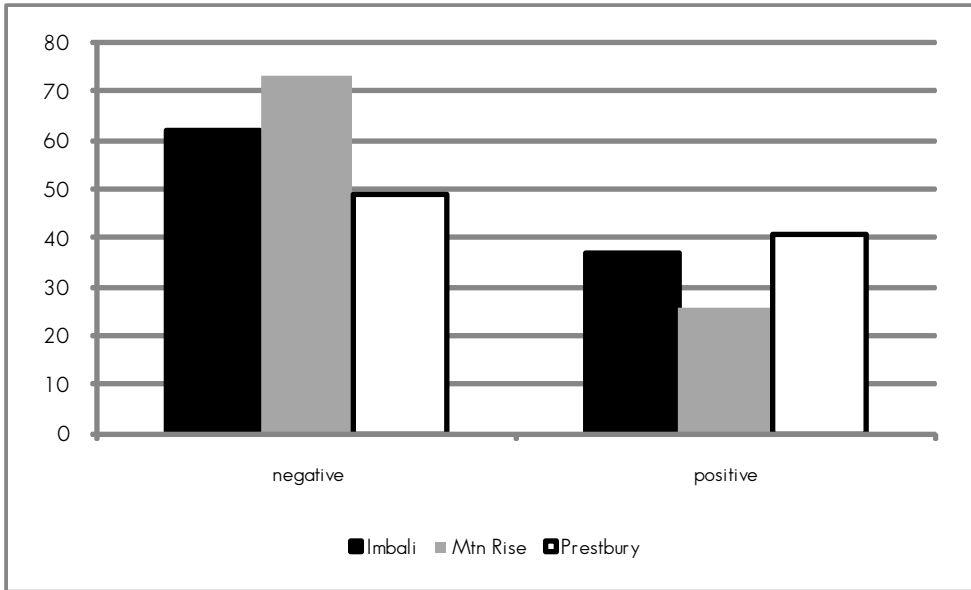


Figure 31: Participation in protest



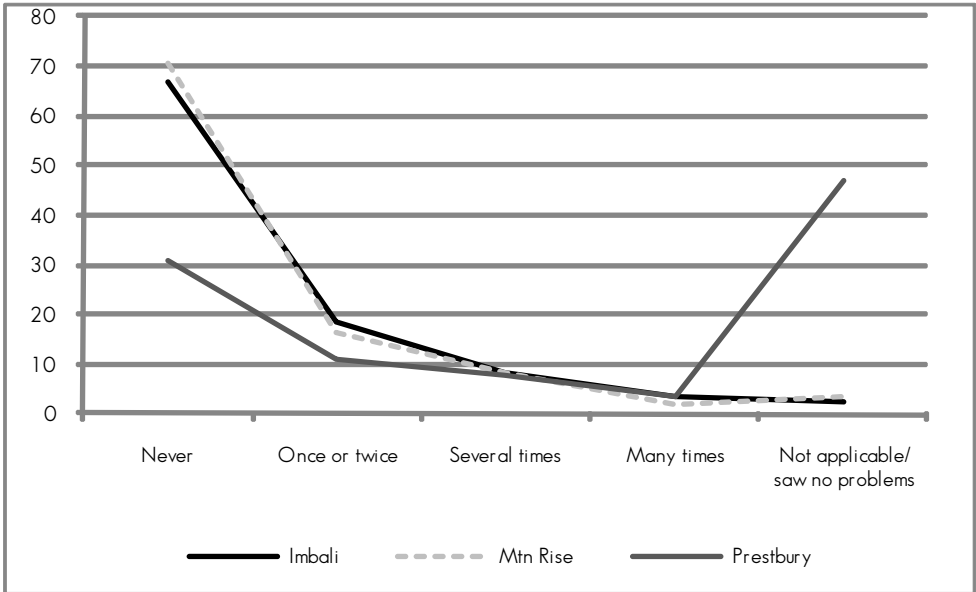
Concerning participation in local government, the responses indicate that most residents have not contacted their ward councillor, have not contacted the media, the local government directly, nor reported problems to any higher level of government. Indeed, as summarised in Figure 32, the action taken to change local governance is very low. On the whole this is a population that does not participate in public life.

Figure 32: Perceptions of citizen power



Indeed, the interesting exception to this issue was the response of many from Ward 26 who saw no reason to act or complain, presumably as they were basically satisfied with what local government was doing. This lack of action correlates to the perception, reflected in Figure 33, which saw a majority in each ward holding negative views on their capacity to bring about change. Again, Ward 26 had the most positive attitude of the three wards in this respect.

Figure 33: Action to change local governance



Political identity

In terms of political identity, it is clear from the attitudes toward government (outlined in the next section), that race matters in relation to the extent to which this population trusts and approves of the performance of individuals in public office. Nevertheless, it is also clear that race matters somewhat less than might be expected in the views of political parties, corruption and government performance. In short, all respondents had negative views on these issues regardless of race. Further, it seems the case that the greater the status of the office, the more positive the assessment, regardless of race.

As regards political parties, on one level the pattern of support confirms expectations with black African people tending to support the ANC, and white people tending to support opposition parties, but notably, the levels of support are not as high as commonly assumed. Indeed, on the straightforward question of whether they trust political parties the majority of respondents from both Ward 26 and Ward 19 answered in the negative. Bearing in mind that all residents of Ward 19 are black African, and most have lived for a long time in ANC stalwart Harry Gwala’s area, these results are startling.

Figure 34: Trust in ANC

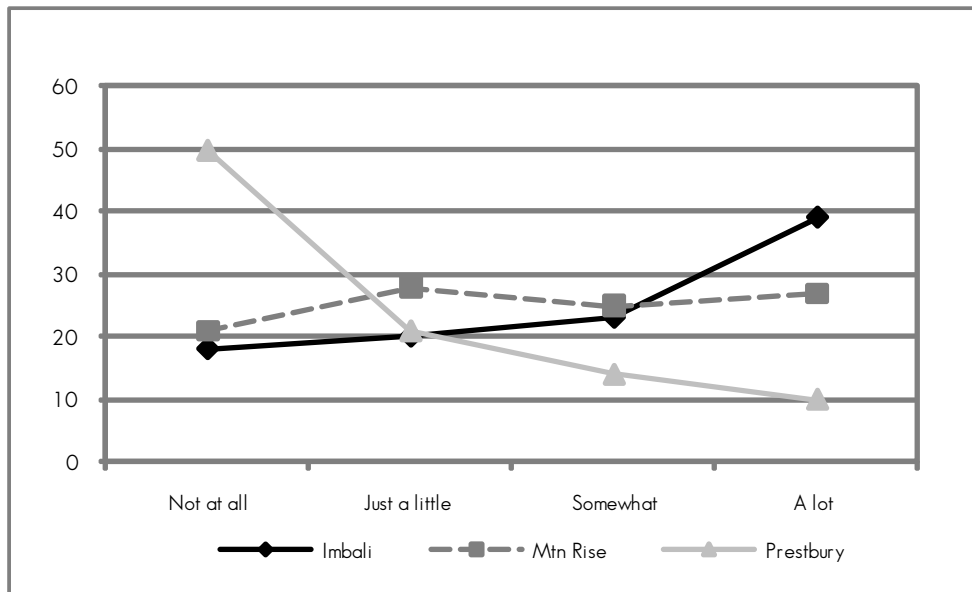


Figure 35: Trust in opposition parties

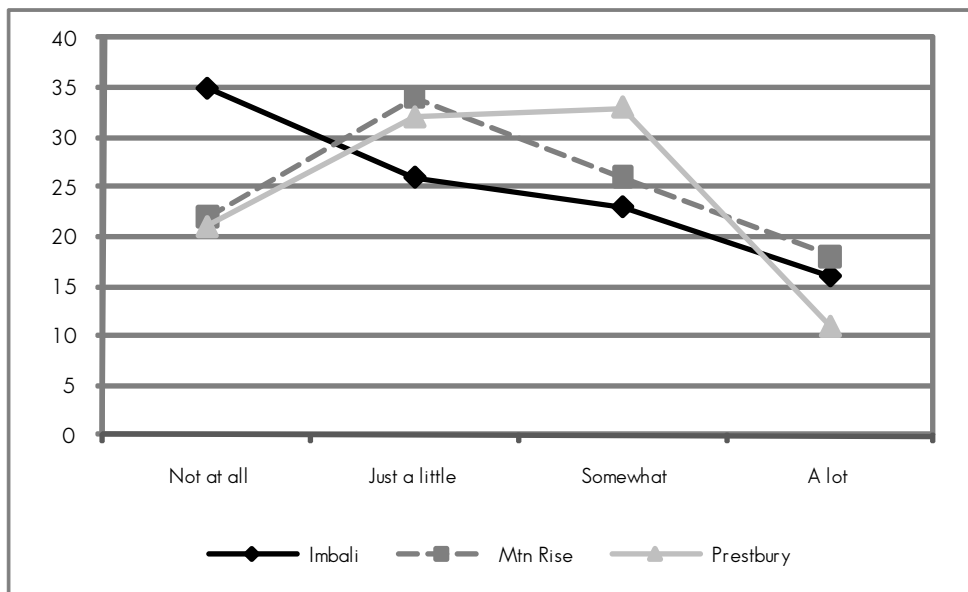
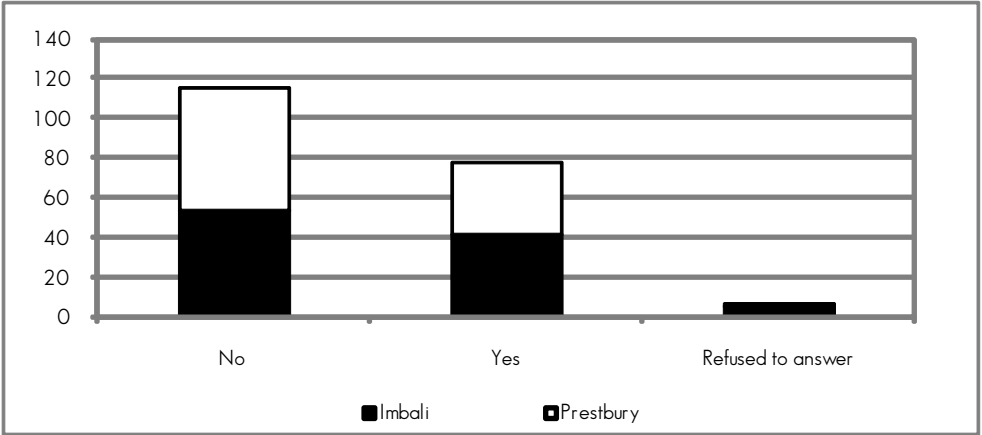


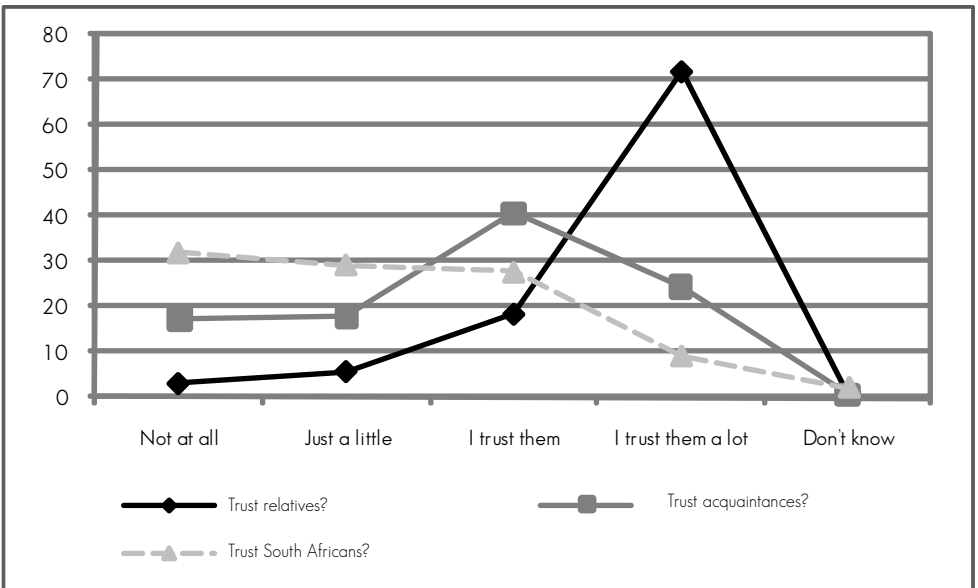
Figure 36: Trust in political parties



Community

Indeed, this negative perception towards politics continues in the attitudes of most respondents towards their fellow South Africans, with a clear majority reporting little or no trust in their fellow citizens. While respondents do trust their friends, they don't trust them a lot, and indeed, only relatives enjoy this highest of honours from all respondents. Notably, there are only small differences on these 'trust' responses by race.

Figure 37: Trust in others



Perceptions of government

In exploring the perceptions of government, the survey distinguished between national and local government, and assessed both in terms of:

- (i) legitimacy and trust;
- (ii) corruption;
- (iii) performance.

In addition, there were a number of questions which focused on:

- (iv) the qualification for office of local government councillors.

Generally speaking, the picture that emerges is one that sees national institutions as legitimate and local institutions as less so. Notably, the degree of trust that respondents have in individual office bearers varies significantly with race, although the rank order of trust for office bearers was the same for all respondents. Further, there are remarkably similar and somewhat negative perceptions about levels of corruption across state and both spheres of government, and also very similar and quite negative perceptions of government performance across both spheres, but especially for local government.

Legitimacy and trust

As illustrated by Figures 38 and 39, there are somewhat higher levels of trust in national state institutions (police, courts, revenue service) than in local government institutions. Whereas a clear majority affirmed the former institutions, opinion was roughly divided on the latter, with school governing bodies enjoying the highest levels of trust (52% positive to 32% negative), and council enjoying the lowest (43% positive to 53% negative). Notably, there were only small differences along racial lines in respondents' views on these questions.

Figure 38: Trust in courts, police, SARS

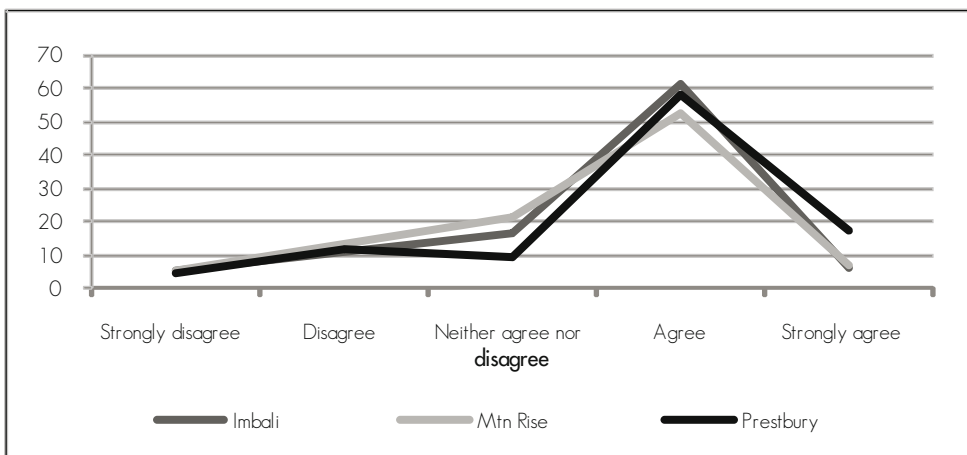
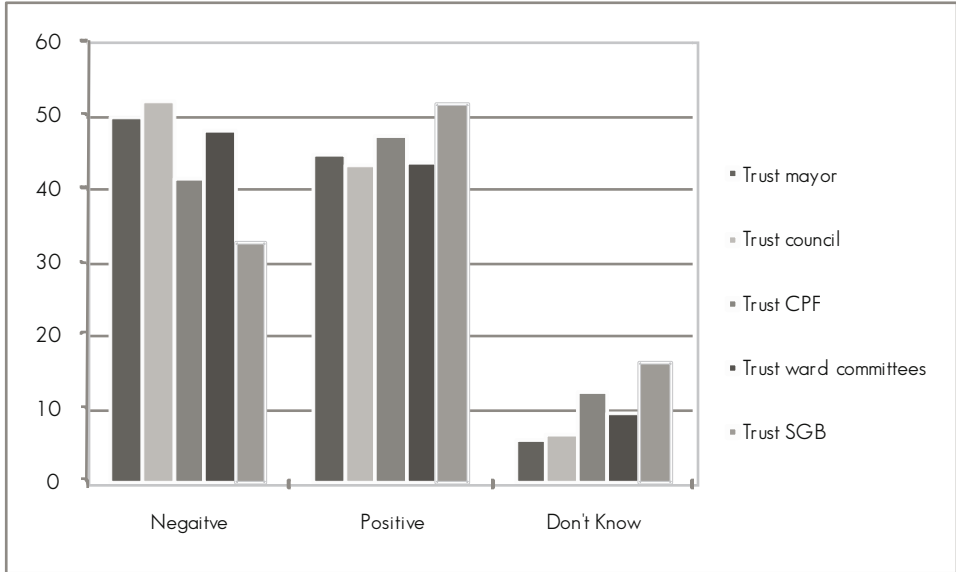


Figure 39: Trust in local government institutions



However, as shown by Figures 40–42, there are significant differences along racial lines in levels of trust towards office holders. Hence the views of Imbali respondents on the President, national assembly, mayor and council are of a similar kind and generally positive weighting, with the President faring the best and council the worst. Indeed, positive evaluation seems directly proportional to the power of the office in question. Conversely, the views of Prestbury residents in Figure 42 follows a very similar pattern and generally negative weighting, although once again the President fares best and the mayor worst. In between these two lies Mountain Rise (Figure 41) in terms of assessment, but with a very similar rank order, the President does the best, and the council does the worst. Hence, while the degree of trust is racialised, the rank ordering of trust in office-bearers is the same across all racial groups.

Figure 40: Imbali trust in public figures

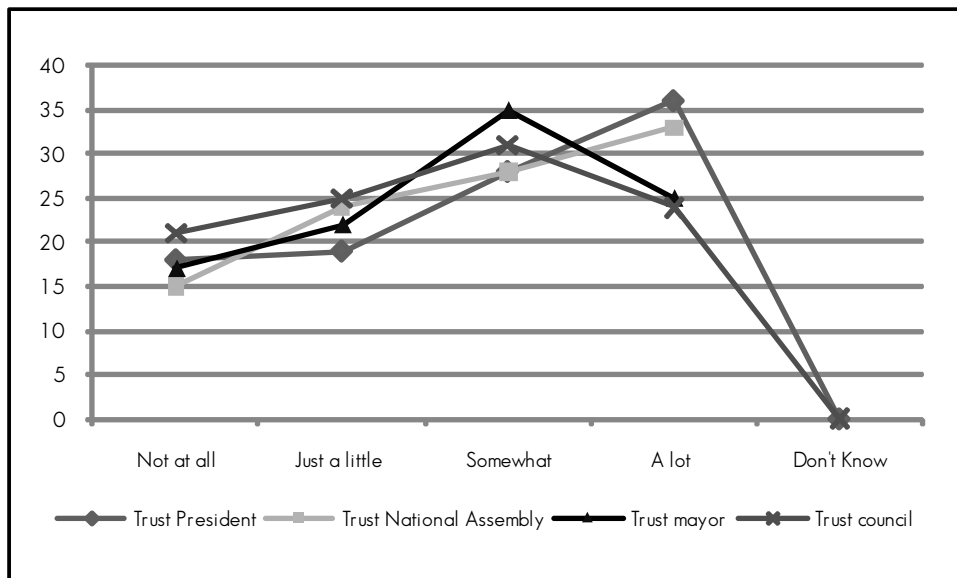


Figure 41: Mountain Rise trust in public figures

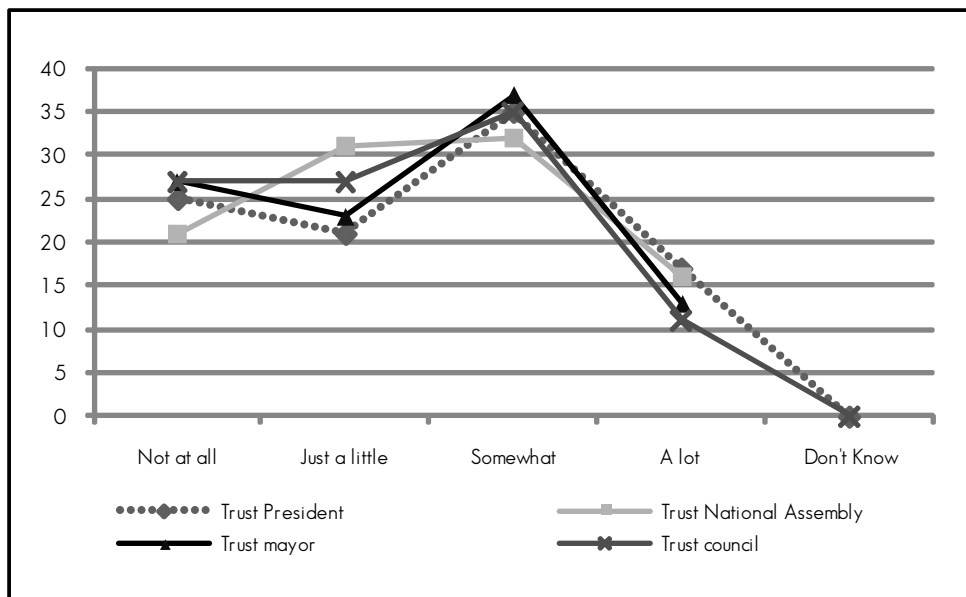
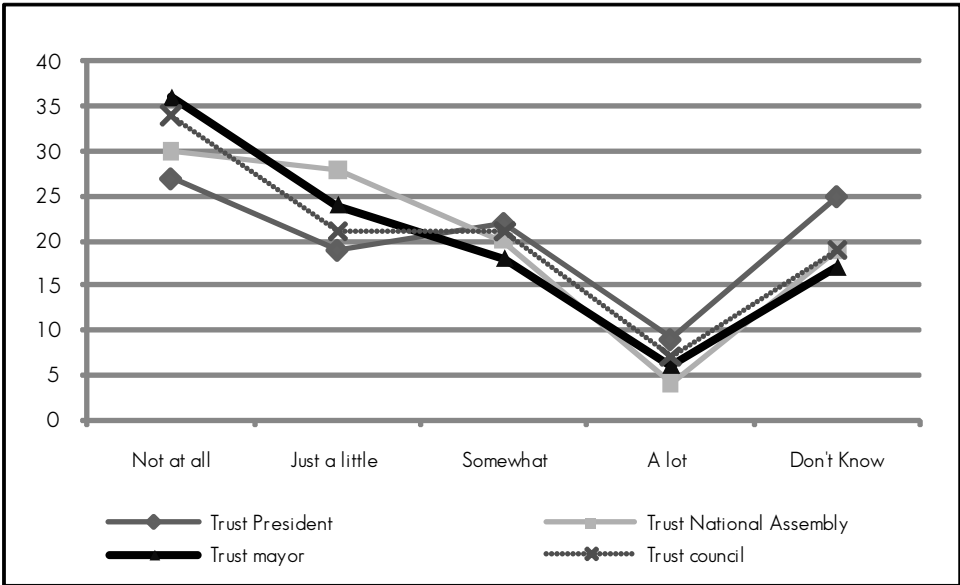


Figure 42: Prestbury trust in public figures



Corruption

As illustrated in Figure 43, perceptions of levels of corruption across all spheres and office-bearers are very similar, and around 35% of respondents believe that most or all are corrupt. This level is quite high and similar across racial groups. The only partial exception to the general trend concerns traditional leaders, who are regarded as more widely corrupt by a significant margin. Outside of traditional leaders, the police fare the worst and the Presidency the best. Notably, this perception of police complicity is confirmed by Figure 44, where a significant proportion of respondents (over 20%) report having bribed a police officer at some point.

Figure 43: Corruption

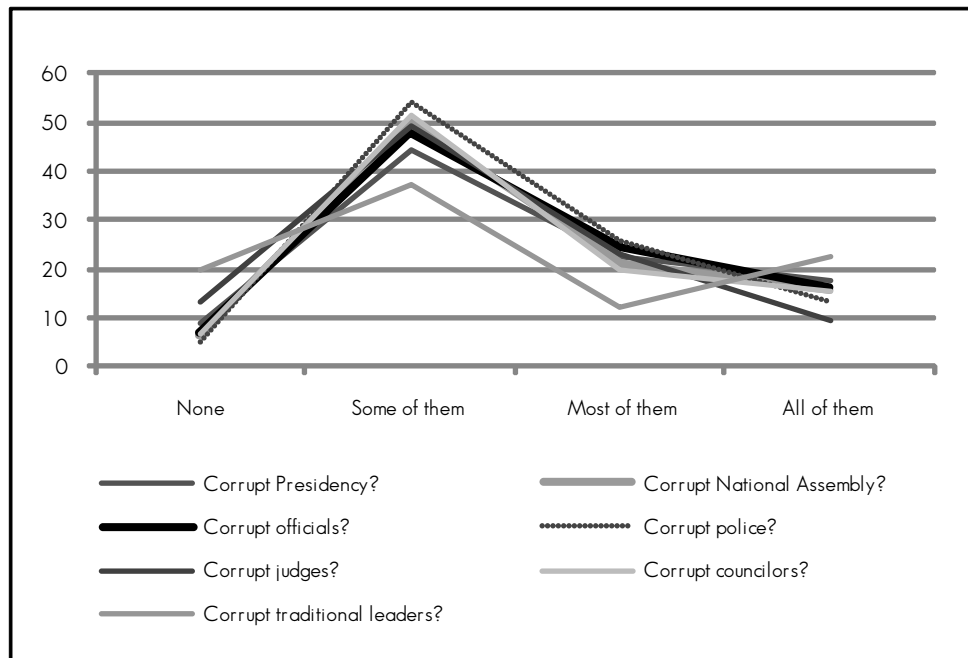
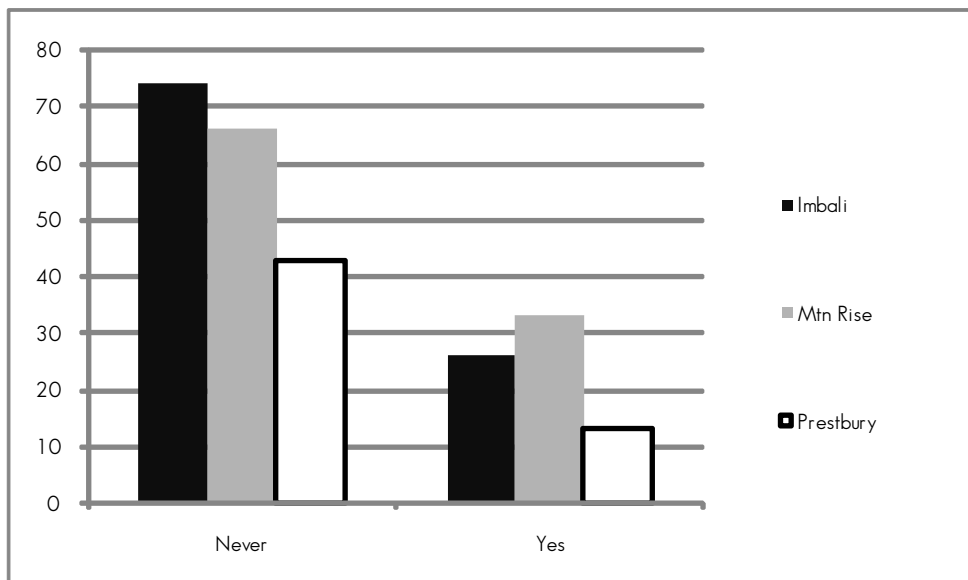


Figure 44: Bribed police



Performance

When it comes to assessments of performance there are important differences between office-bearers and practice in the assessment of respondents. Essentially, the most positive opinion concerns the President and Parliament, which are seen by a small majority as performing well or fairly well, as reflected in Figure 45. Approval levels for the mayor (Figure 48) and the councillor (figures 46 and 47) are lower, and to some extent racialised. Hence most respondents from Imbali endorse the mayor, whereas most respondents from Mountain Rise do not, and Prestbury respondents are divided. More notable is the high disapproval ratings for the ward councillors in Imbali (42%) and especially Mountain Rise (77%), with the approval rating of the Prestbury councillor lower than those who reported 'don't know'. Once again, approval tracks status directly.

Figure 45: Performance of national leaders

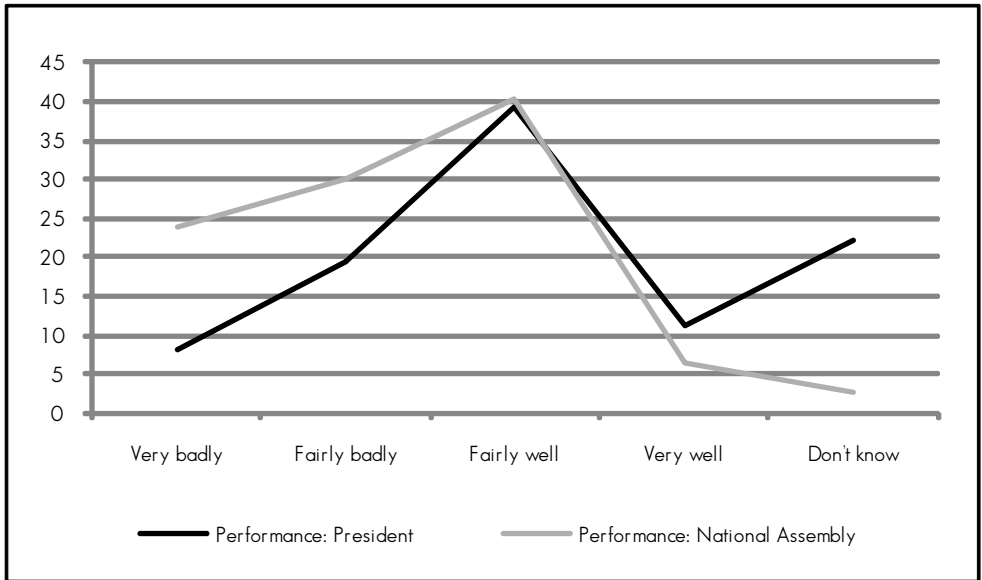


Figure 46: Ward councillor meets community

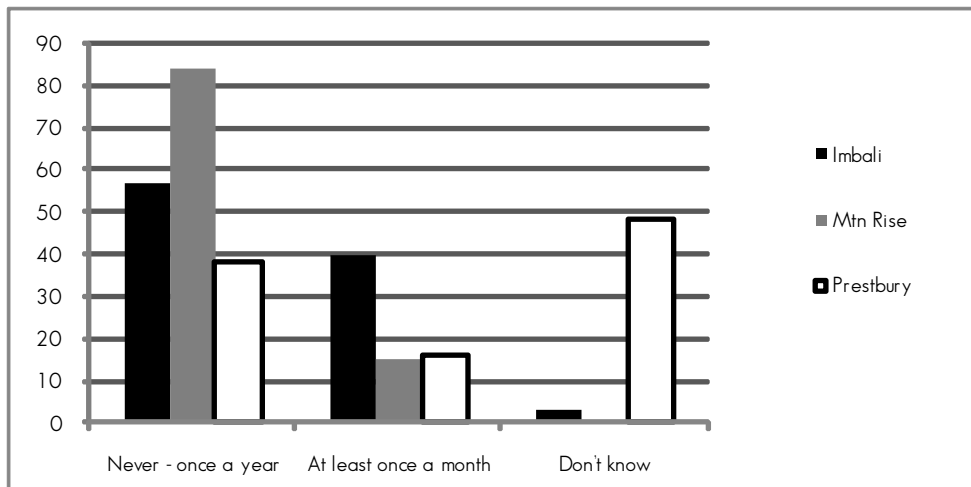


Figure 47: Ward councillor approval

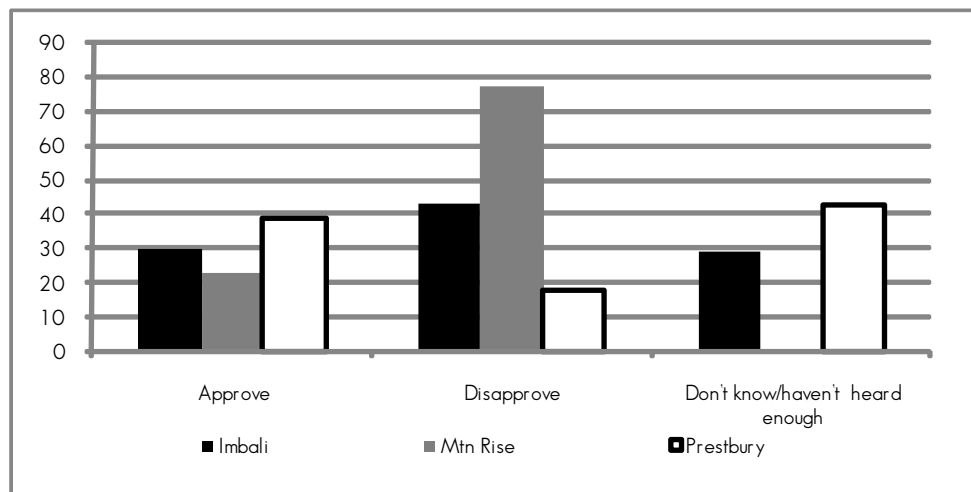
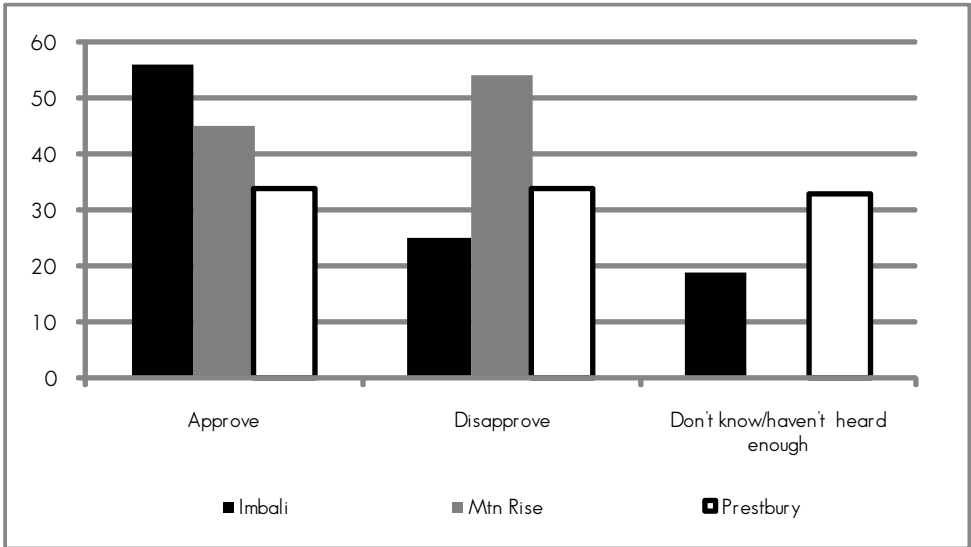


Figure 48: Mayoral approval



In terms of practice, popular assessment of government performance on key issues is remarkably consistent across races and is generally negative. As illustrated in Figure 49 the issue on which government is perceived to have performed best is women, and the only one where positive responses outweigh the negative ones. It is followed by electricity and water, but even these issues reflect more dissatisfaction than happiness. Views on local government performance are even more dismal, even though these questions focus more on governance procedures rather than issues (Figure 50). Indeed, it is notable that the most common set of responses fall in the ‘very bad’ category on every issue surveyed.

Figure 49: National policy performance

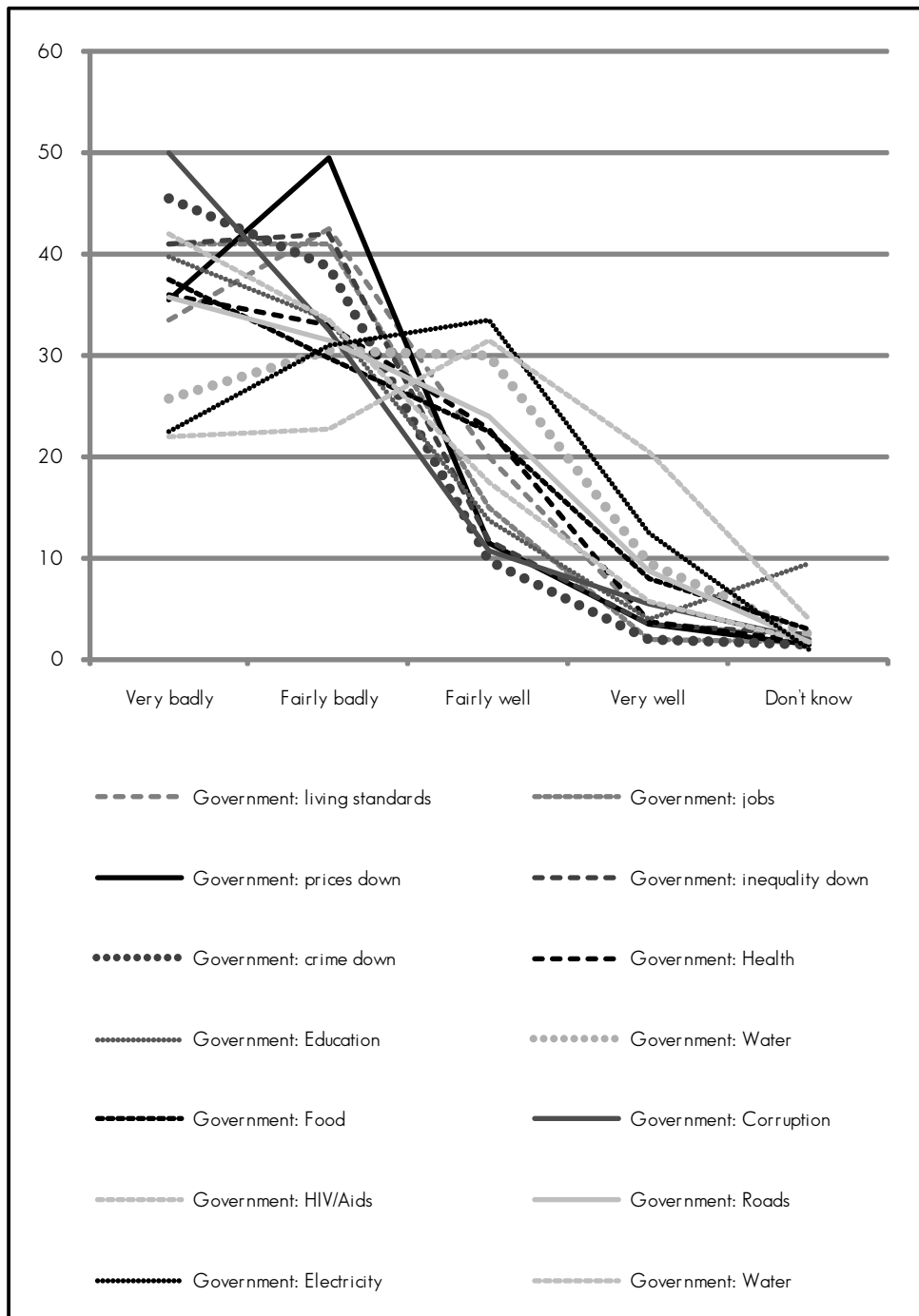
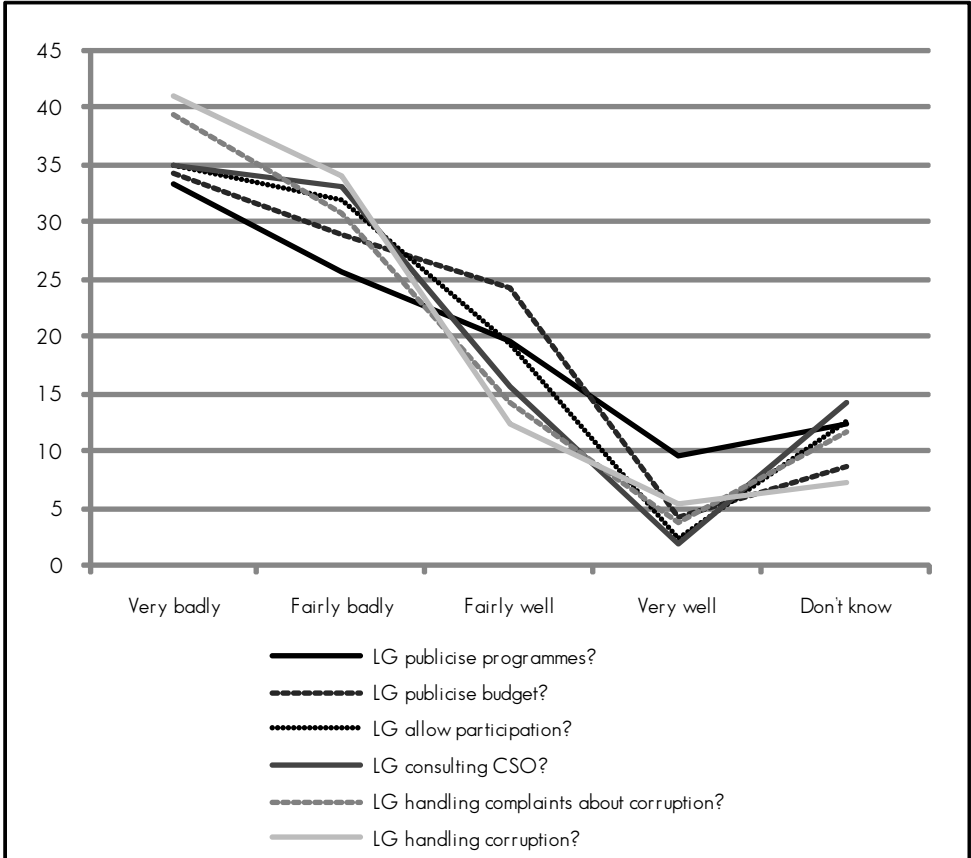
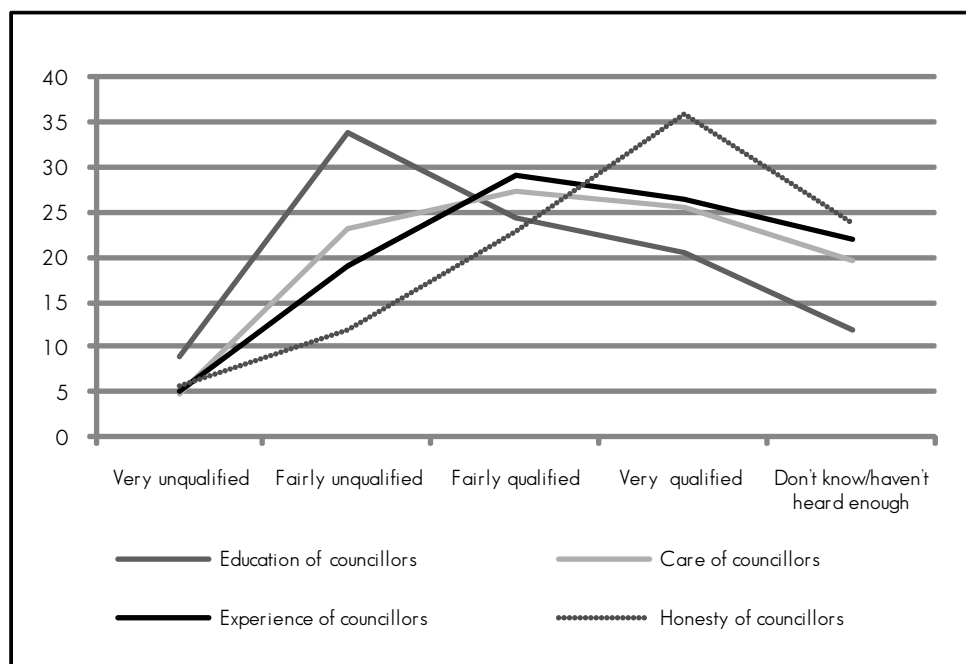


Figure 50: Local government performance



Lastly, in respect of the fitness of local government councillors for office (Figure 51), respondents rate councillors positively and the highest in terms of their good intentions, followed by their experience and honesty, with their education the lowest level and negative in terms of respondents' perceptions. Notably, the assessment of councillors' fitness for office is somewhat higher than the perceptions of the performance of local government.

Figure 51: Fitness for office of councillor



Modes of participations, non-participation and protest

From the above discussion we are able to construct a reasonable picture of who participates and how. In short, despite high levels of political awareness, participation rates are low in both formal and 'invited spaces' of government (with the partial exception of elections), and the informal or 'invented spaces' of civil society. Few (25%–35%) report going to community meetings and even less (<10%) to protests. Further, very few belong to civil society organisations of any sort (<10%), and most share a general pessimism about their capacity to bring about change.

As noted above, there are high levels of political awareness among black and white respondents, but low levels amongst Indians respondents (Figures 22–24). Notably, this pattern is not continued with regard to participation in formal government institutions, such as elections, and in the 'invited spaces' for public engagement with local government, such as ward committees, school governing bodies and community policing forums. In respect of elections, there is some difference between participation levels between the three wards (Figure 51) with the lowest reported turnout from Ward 30, but the difference is a small one.

Further, as illustrated in Figure 28, participation is dramatically low in both the formal invited spaces of local governance and civil society associations more broadly. The one exception is participation in faith-based organisations (see Figure 29), where levels are not high, but at least 10% higher, and even more so for (white) respondents from Ward 26. As

regards the ‘invented spaces’ of community meetings and protests, reported participation rates in community meetings were on the low side (Figure 30), but highest in Prestbury, while reported rates of participation in protest (Figure 31) were extremely and consistently low across the three wards.

As regards participation in respect of local government, the responses indicate that most residents have not contacted their ward councillor, nor the media, the local government, or reported problems to a higher level of government. Indeed, as summarised in Figure 33, the action taken to change local governance is reported to be low (25%). Indeed, the interesting exception to this issue was the response of many from Ward 26, who saw no reason to act or complain, presumably as they were basically satisfied with what local government was doing. This lack of action correlates to the perception, reflected in Figure 32, which saw a majority in each ward holding negative views on their capacity to bring about change. Again, Ward 26 had the most positive attitude of the three wards in this respect.

While the general pattern is one of non-participation, the survey revealed some interesting insights into those who did participate. Firstly, contrary to popular perception (especially in government) that those who participate in meetings do not participate in protests and vice versa, the Msunduzi findings reveal that 73% of those who reported protesting also reported attending meetings. However just some 25% of meeting attendees participated in protest, which suggests that protestors are a sub-set of meeting attendees. Further, contact with a ward councillor almost guaranteed that people had been to a community meeting (85%), presumably as it is at meetings where most meet the ward councillor. Conversely, some two-thirds of those attending meetings had contacted their ward councillor. In sum then, there is a large overlap between those who participate in meetings (the largest group), those who contact the ward councillor (the second largest), and those who protest (the smallest).

Secondly, those who participate are not anti-system or anti-government per se. Thus some 51% of all protestors and 66% of the Imbali sample also trusted the President. Notably, virtually the same percentage of meeting attendees (52%) trust the President, and both figures are practically the same as the average for the whole population. In short, participation (whether in meetings or protest) is not indicator of a lack of trust in the President. More strikingly, of those who attended meetings some 68% voted the 2004 national elections, and of those who attended protests some 67% voted. This is in contrast to the population average of 56%. In short then, the biggest divide seems to be between those who participate and those who do not, with participators being more likely engage in all forms of engagement including voting, meetings and protest.

The constructions of active citizenship.

On the whole then the picture that emerges is of a population that shares a very similar basic pattern of citizenship attitudes and behaviour, with two main variations. In terms of the basic pattern we could say that in Msunduzi, citizenship is bifurcated in two, along lines of participants and non-participants. Non-participants constitute the vast majority (at least

70%, probably closer to 80%), and while politically interested and seeing the institutions of the new democracy as legitimate, they have a low opinion of government performance on key issues at both national and local levels, are sceptical of political parties and tend not to participate in public life of any kind. We can summarise the non-participant majority as 'disappointed and demobilised democrats'.

To this basic pattern we can add three racialised variations:

1. *The optimists*: while black African respondents share this general orientation, they also have higher levels of trust in the ruling party and office bearers at all levels, especially national. Thus while the glass of democratic promise is not as full as hoped, it is nevertheless half-full rather than half-empty. The hope seems to reside in the belief that leaders (the higher the better), will make things better. This confirms rather than challenges the claim that most feel disempowered as citizens, but see positive change as still likely.
2. *The pessimists*: while white respondents share the general orientation, they do not see political leaders as solving the problem. Thus not only is the glass of democratic promise not as full as hoped, it is seen as half-empty rather than half-full. Instead of turning to political leaders for hope, many white people seek it in the religious domain.
3. *The non-politicals*: while white and black respondents are almost mirror-images on the core theme, Indian respondents are less easy to classify as they tend not to answer in a predictable way. While part of the reason might be that Indian people do not behave the same as a group politically – as reflected in historic voting patterns – there is also evidence of a lack of interest in political life, reflected the lowest levels of participation in elections, civil society and the like, and also the lowest express interest in news and political discussion. Of all three groups, this one has the least interest in public life. Unlike among white people, there is no sense of a turn from politics to religion because of the relative lack of interest in politics to begin with. Where black citizens turn to leaders for hope, and white people turn to religion, Indian people turn away from both.

The second main type of citizen is the participator. This group is small, 30% at the upper limit and probably closer to 20%. This group shares the non-participants' political interests and belief in the legitimacy of the institutions of the new democracy. While they often also have a low opinion of government performance on key issues at both national and local levels, they are less sceptical of political parties and have higher levels of faith in office bearers and elections than the non-participants. They also tend to participate in all spaces, both invited and invented, of the political realm. They are the true believers in the political system – the classic 'politico', to use local jargon.

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- Piper, Laurence and Deacon, Roger. 2008. Party politics, elite accountability and public participation: Ward committee politics in the Msunduzi Municipality, *Transformation*, 66/67, 61–82.