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Elections, the Electoral System and a Gender Quota: Views of Namibians

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During recent parliamentary debates representatives from various political parties presented their arguments as to what kind of electoral system would be 'best' for local authority elections. In general, the ruling party called for a proportional representation type whilst opposition parties called for a first-past-the-post type. But what do ordinary Namibians want? Drawing from survey data, this paper presents public opinion on two aspects of the current debate. Firstly, it reflects public preference for the two types of electoral systems under discussion here, and secondly, it presents public opinion on the issue of gender quotas. Testing a number of commonly held views on the workings of electoral systems, this paper finds no statistical evidence for many of the core arguments about what is the 'best' electoral system. It shows that it is generally very difficult to explain preferences for any kind of electoral system and that public support for greater representation of women is not linked in any significant way to preference for a particular electoral system.

1. INTRODUCTION

Elections are all about power. Those who win elections and are allocated seats, whether it be in a National Assembly, Regional Councils or Local Government Councils, have the political power until the next elections are held. The stakes are high.

Two crucial decisions influencing who actually occupy the positions of power are: 1) choosing between different ways of translating votes into seats (or electoral systems); and 2) deciding whether to allocate a certain number of positions, or quotas, to specific groups who may deserve of such treatment. These two issues are currently being debated in Namibia. The questions are:

- Should Local Authority Council elections be conducted according to the Proportional Representation system with a party list as is currently in use, or should a ward system, where individual candidates are elected in single member electoral wards, be introduced?
- Should parties be compelled to alternate men and women on their candidates' lists, to ensure equal representation for men and women?

The purpose of this paper is to look at the results of a survey conducted by Research Facilitation Services for the IPPR. In this survey respondents were asked their opinions on questions relating to these two issues.

The paper is divided into three main sections. The first section describes the current status relating to the two questions at hand. In the second section the views of respondents regarding the type of electoral system are explored, while the third section investigates respondents' opinions regarding the implementation of a 50/50 gender quota for candidates' lists.

2. ELECTORAL SYSTEMS: THE CURRENT QUESTIONS IN NAMIBIA

Elections differ. Surprising variation exists among the increasing number of democracies in the way they conduct their elections. One of the main areas where elections differ is in the way votes are translated into seats, or stated differently, in the type of electoral system they adopt. The electoral system is that part of the electoral process which, after the votes were cast, determines who wins and who loses, who gets representation and who does not.

The decision to adopt one type of electoral system rather than another is thus not an academic exercise. This decision could have potentially serious political consequences, and politicians often try and manipulate the electoral system to their advantage.²

In Namibia three different types of electoral systems are used for different elections:

- In the *Presidential Elections* a so-called majoritarian system is used. Voters vote directly for the different candidates running for President. The candidate who receives the most votes is elected, provided that candidate has a clear majority (50% plus one) of the votes. If no candidate is elected with a more than 50% of the votes in the first round, a subsequent election is held between the two candidates with the highest number of votes, until one candidate wins a clear majority. Since the President received a clear majority in all the previous elections, it has never been necessary for this provision to come into play.
- In the *National Assembly Elections*, a Proportional Representation (PR) system with party lists is used. In this system the different political parties each present a list of candidates to voters, and voters have to choose between the different political parties and their lists of candidates. The seats are divided among the parties proportionally – a formula³ is used to allocate seats to each party in a proportion close to the percentage of votes they received during the election.
- A third system is used for *Regional Council Elections*. Here candidates run in separate single member voting districts, and voters vote directly for the candidate. The candidate who won the highest number of votes wins the seat for the specific voting district, or ward. This kind of system is also called a “First Past The Post” (FPTP) system, since the person winning the seat does not necessarily need a clear majority of the votes. For example, one candidate can win only 40 percent of the votes in the constituency, but may still win the seat if there were four other candidates who each won 15 percent of the vote. In this example the four other candidates together won more votes than the winning candidate, but failed to gain any representation in that constituency. If this is the pattern across a country, or across a region or municipality, it can happen that a party wins a majority of the seats, even though the party did not win a majority of the votes. In extreme cases it has even happened that one party won more votes overall in a country, but another party won a majority of the seats.

Currently, for Local Authority Council elections, a Proportional Representation system similar to that used at national level is used. The only difference is that parties present a different candidates' list for each local authority, with voters from that municipality being able to choose between the different parties and their lists of candidates for that municipality.



However, in accordance with the Local Authority Act of 1992, only two elections could be held using this type of electoral system. This law stipulated that the 2003 local government elections should be conducted using a ward system, where candidates run in separate wards, and voters from those wards could vote for the individual candidates from those wards. For each ward, only one representative would be elected to the Local Authority Council. In other words, the act stipulates that a system similar to that of Regional Council Elections rather than one similar to National Assembly Elections should be used.

Recently, however, the Ministry of Regional, Local Government and Housing tabled an amendment to the Local Authority Act of 1992 in Parliament. According to this amendment a Proportional Representation system with party lists will continue to be used in future Local Authority Council elections in Namibia.

At the introduction of this amendment, the deputy Minister of Regional, Local Government and Housing, Gerhard Tötemeyer, presented the following arguments in favour of the PR system with party lists:

- PR systems favour the inclusion of smaller minority parties;
- Voters are already familiar with the PR with party list system;
- The PR system would be cheaper to run;
- Since the residential pattern in Namibia has not changed substantially since before independence. Therefore it could not be guaranteed that the candidates would not represent particular racial or ethnic groups, which would be against the letter and spirit of the constitution.
- A PR system could be used to legally guarantee fair gender representation through legislation that makes it compulsory to have a specific number of women on the candidates' lists.

This proposal provoked strong reaction from opposition parties. Chief Justus Garoeb, leader of the UDF, was reported to have said this change in legislation was done to promote SWAPO interests, and also alleged that this decision works against the spirit of decentralisation government was promoting. (Namibian, 18 September 2002).

According to Congress of Democrats (CoD) Secretary General Ignatius Shixwameni, the ward system would be more representative, since the electorate could hold the individual office bearers accountable in subsequent elections. He also argued that by keeping the PR system, the SWAPO Party is shying away from being directly accountable to government.

The only opposition party supporting the amendment was MAG, whose leader Kosie Pretorius indicated that, being a small party, MAG does not have enough support to be elected in wards, but will gain representation if a PR system is used.

An issue closely related to this debate, and strongly supported by women's groups, is to make a 50/50 gender split on party lists mandatory. According to such proposals political parties should be compelled to alternate men and women on their lists. Effectively such a practice of "zebra-crossing" lists would amount to implementing a gender quota for elections.



Different approaches to study the issues

The purpose of this paper is not to review the arguments in these debates. In two separate IPPR papers (IPPR Opinion No. 3, October 2001 and IPPR Briefing Paper 14, November 2002) Keulder investigated the mechanics of the different types of electoral systems used in Namibia, and the implications thereof for the political and electoral processes in Namibia. Keulder concluded that PR would be the more appropriate system in the Namibian context because this system contributes more substantially to the widening and deepening of democracy and because it has less mechanical effects than FPTP systems.

In this paper I approach the two issues from a different angle – the views of the Namibian people are considered. What do the people really want when it comes to an electoral system, and what do they think of the idea of implementing a gender quota for elections in Namibia?

3. THE WOMEN AND POLITICS SURVEY

During the second half of 2002, the IPPR in collaboration with RFS conducted a national Women and Politics survey with a grant from the Royal Netherlands Government. This survey consisted of 2,000 face-to-face interviews with Namibians of voting age (18 years and older). The survey is based on a nationally representative, multi-stage, probability proportional to size (PPS) sample. The sample was stratified for urban-rural location and for gender. Although equal numbers of male and female respondents were targeted, slightly more female than male respondents granted interviews. The data presented here are drawn from a number of questions that were asked to gauge public opinion preferences for electoral systems (PR vs. FPTP), as well as public opinion on the gender aspects of representation.

4. VIEWS ON ELECTIONS AND ELECTORAL SYSTEM PREFERENCES.

When determining how democratic a country is, observers usually ask whether multi-party elections take place regularly, and whether the opposition has a meaningful role in the political process. Also important is the extent to which people participate in the political process. It is also important that the citizens of a country support the principle of regular multi-party elections. Respondents to this survey measured well against these criteria.

The overwhelming majority of respondents (90 percent) believe it is important to vote during elections. When asked about their view of regular elections with more than one party, 83 percent of respondents demonstrated a belief that multi-party elections are important to Namibia, while a further 64 percent indicated it is important to have opposition parties participating in the political process.

It is somewhat disconcerting, however, that 17 percent of respondents believed multi-party elections are not important. Even more respondents (20 percent) indicated opposition parties are “not important at all”, while a further 15 percent indicated opposition parties are only “somewhat important” for a country like Namibia. People who are concerned about the future of democracy in Namibia should take note of this.

Given that the majority of respondents thought regular multi-party elections are important, *which type of electoral system do Namibians prefer?* To test this in the local context, respondents were presented with two statements and asked whether they agree with statement A or statement B. The two statements are:

- *Statement A*: “When deciding who to vote for, I would prefer to vote for a candidate of my party that lives among us in my area”.
- *Statement B*: “When deciding who to vote for, I would rather vote for my party and not worry about who the individual candidate is and where he or she lives”.

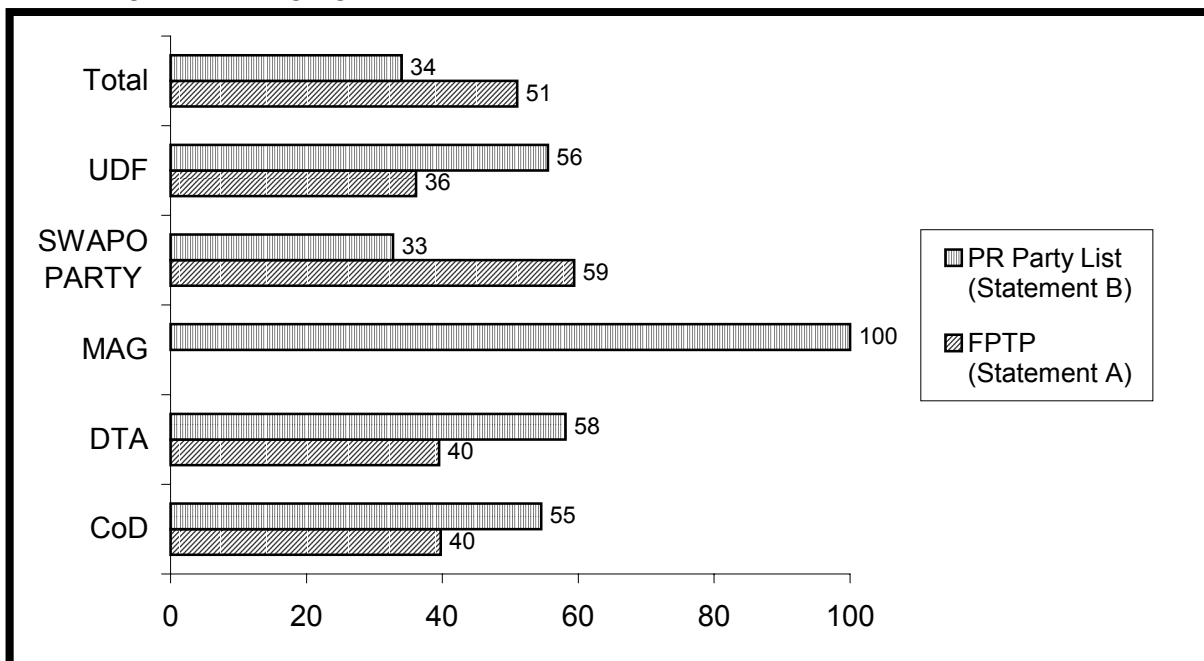
If respondents chose Statement A, one can infer a preference for a First-Past-the-Post (FPTP), or ward-type system. The expectation is that respondents who chose Statement A would prefer the introduction of a ward-type system at local authority level. If they chose Statement B, one can assume respondents prefer a PR Party List system, with seats allocated proportionally.

Political Party Support and Electoral System Preference

Taking the statements of the leaders of the different political parties into account, one would expect supporters of the SWAPO Party to be in favour of a Proportional Representation system using party lists, and opposition party supporters to be in favour of a ward, or constituency based, system. The results displayed in Figure 1 are therefore instructive.

There is a small but significant relationship between whether people support the SWAPO Party or not, and which type of electoral system people support⁴. This correlation indicates that people who support the SWAPO Party are slightly more likely to favour a ward-type system, while people supporting opposition parties are slightly more likely to favour a PR system using party lists. This is confirmed when one inspects Figure 1.

Figure 1: Electoral System Preference by Political Party Support
 Percentage indicating agreement with either Statement A or Statement B⁵



Below are a number of statements. Please pick one and tell us how strongly you agree with it:
Statement A: When deciding who to vote for, I would prefer to vote for a candidate of my party that lives among us in my area.
Statement B: When deciding who to vote for, I would rather vote for my party and not worry about who the individual candidate is and where he or she lives.

Of the total sample, 51 percent indicated a preference for a ward-type system, while 34 percent indicated that they would rather vote for a party list. Contrary to our initial expectation, based on the statements by the leaders of the different parties, the majority of SWAPO Party supporters (59



percent) indicated they would rather vote for a candidate who lives among them, compared with only 33 percent who would rather vote for a party list.

A majority of supporters of all the opposition parties (UDF 56 percent, DTA 58 percent, CoD 55 percent and MAG 100 percent) favour a system where the parties decide on the candidates and voters only indicate their party preference when they vote.

Overall, many respondents take the opposite view to their leaders. One should, however, interpret these findings cautiously, since the margin of difference between those supporting the one option rather than the other is not that great.

The pattern is similar if one looks at the regional distribution of electoral system preferences. One way to look at the importance of region as a variable is to look at the patterns of politics in the different regions. To do this, a value on an index of party fragmentation was substituted for the region where respondents live.⁶ This index gives an average score of the number of effective political parties in the region; in other words, it is an indication of the degree of multipartism in a specific region. There is a small correlation between the index score for the region where the respondent lives, and the electoral system preferences of respondents.⁷ This correlation indicates that respondents who live in regions with a higher number of effective political parties are slightly more likely to support a PR Party List system than people who live in areas where with fewer effective political parties. However, a small correlation like this again calls for caution – the evidence supporting this proposition is very slight indeed.

The Rural-Urban Divide and Electoral System Preference

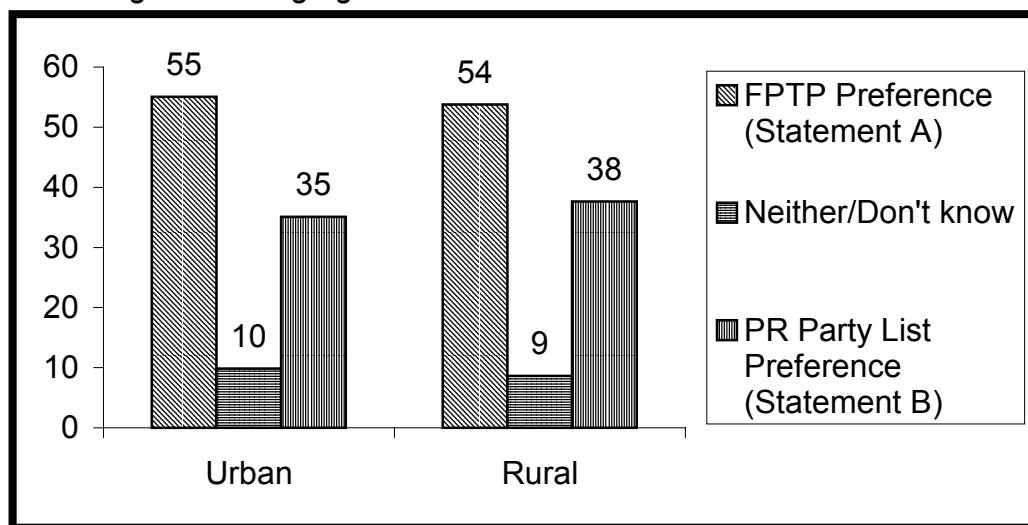
In a key debate on the type of electoral systems appropriate for African societies, Joel Barkan (1998) argues that in societies that are largely rural or agrarian, people have much very close ties to their neighbours and define themselves by where they live rather than on the basis of the type of work they do, or other such criteria. Barkan also refers to interviews done with regional councillors, who indicated that their rural constituents are much more likely to bring problems to regional councillors, who were elected in constituencies, than National Assembly members, who were elected on party lists.

In a direct response to Barkan's arguments, Andrew Reynolds (1998) argues in favour of a Proportional Representation system, saying that First-Past-the-Post systems with single member electoral districts, or wards, cannot be relied upon to produce results that will reflect the proportional support in societies. Other methods should be found to make representative in Proportional Representation systems with party lists more responsive to voters.

If one were to accept Barkan's argument, you would expect rural voters to be more inclined to favour an electoral system where they directly vote for representatives who live in their areas, i.e. FPTP. From Figure 2 it is clear that this expectation does not hold up at all.

Figure 2: Rural/Urban divide and Electoral System Preference

Percentage indicating agreement with either Statement A or Statement B



Below are a number of statements. Please pick one and tell us how strongly you agree with it:

Statement A: When deciding who to vote for, I would prefer to vote for a candidate of my party that lives among us in my area.

Statement B: When deciding who to vote for, I would rather vote for my party and not worry about who the individual candidate is and where he or she lives.

There is almost no difference between rural respondents (55 percent) and urban respondents (54 percent) in their support for a ward-type electoral system. Similarly there the difference is very small when it comes to support for a PR Party List system, with 35 percent of urban and 38 percent of rural respondents supporting this option. There is thus no support in this survey for expectations based on Barkan's argument.

To further explore why respondents support either a ward-type system or a party list system, we could look at the types of arguments often appearing in the debate about which electoral system is more suitable for a specific society.

Three of the main arguments usually presented are:

- PR systems using party lists tend to favour minority groups and smaller opposition parties;
- PR systems usually are favourable for the inclusion of women; and
- First Past the Post systems give voters more direct influence over politicians, since they vote directly for the candidate and not for the party.

In the survey, certain questions were asked which could be used to find out whether voters had any of these arguments in mind when they expressed their preference for an electoral system. Let us look at each of these in turn:

PR systems favour the inclusion of minority groups and smaller opposition parties.

In the survey respondents were asked about the importance of certain aspects of the electoral process. One of these questions referred to the importance of opposition parties for a country like Namibia. If respondents used the kind of reasoning referred to above, one would expect those respondents who emphasise the importance of opposition parties to be more in favour of a PR Party list type system than a ward-type system.

Statistically, there is a slight correlation in the expected direction⁸, indicating that people who emphasise the role of opposition parties are slightly more likely to favour a PR Party list system than those who do not think opposition parties are that important in Namibia. However, this correlation is too low to come to any definitive conclusion.

In another set of questions, respondents were asked about the reasons why they support their political parties. One would expect those who indicated that the party they would vote for “must have leaders from my language group” and “must promote the interests of my language group” would be more inclined to support PR Party list systems. In this case the findings are again inconclusive, indicating that one cannot come to the conclusion that respondents who emphasise the importance of their language group would be more likely to support a PR Party list system rather than a ward-type system.

PR systems usually are favourable for the inclusion of women

Given this argument, one would expect women to be more favourably inclined to a PR Party List system than men. One would also expect those who emphasise the importance of the inclusion of more women in the political process to support the adoption of a PR Party List system. In our statistical analysis, however, we could find no support for these propositions. Put in straight forward terms, there is no difference between men and women in their preference for an electoral system; and similarly there is no difference between those who emphasise the importance of including more women into the political process and those who do not and their preference for an electoral system.

First Past the Post systems give voters more direct influence over politicians, since they vote directly for the candidate and not for the party.

If one would accept this argument, you would expect people who are more sceptical about the honesty of politicians to be more inclined to support a ward-type system in order to have more direct control over them. Similarly, one could expect those who believe politicians are honest to support a PR Party List type system. These respondents would be more trusting of their representatives and hence would have less need to have direct control over them.

In the survey, respondents were asked: “Which word describes the politicians in your area best: ‘honest’ or ‘corrupt’?” Of all respondents, 60 percent indicated politicians in their area are best described as honest, while 17 percent described politicians in their area as corrupt. But again there is nothing in the data that supports a proposition indicating that people who believe politicians are corrupt would be more inclined to support a ward-type system rather than a PR Party List system.

Another proposition one could make would be to say that people who are more active in political and community life would be more inclined to support a ward-type system as this would allow them more direct access to their representatives. They are the ones who go to meetings organised by political parties, ministries, community organisations churches and schools. To test this, an index measuring the level of political and community participation was constructed.⁹ Statistically there is a small correlation between the two variables¹⁰, but again the correlation is not large enough to come to any definitive conclusions. If anything, the relationship is in the opposite direction, indicating that people who are more active in political and community life are slightly more inclined to support a PR Party List system rather than a ward-type system.

From the discussion above it is clear that many of the expectations regarding reasons for electoral system preference do not hold up to statistical investigation. But that does not let analysts off the hook. People still express a preference either way. It may be, however, that these preferences are not very informed and that popular preferences for electoral systems are formed independent from the debates about the mechanical effects of electoral systems. It could be that the debate on electoral systems is so esoteric that people don't really relate it to their everyday experiences. If this is true, and it is something that should be tested with further surveys and analysis, policy-makers and election practitioners have a responsibility to do even more civic education. Citizens have the right to understand the implications of choices regarding the institutions governing them.

5. A 50/50 GENDER QUOTA FOR CANDIDATES' LISTS?

An issue closely related to the choice of an electoral system is whether political parties should be compelled to compile their candidates' lists such that a specific percentage of the list should be women. Gender activists campaign for changes to the electoral legislation that would compel political parties to "zebra-cross" their lists, meaning that male and female candidates should alternate on candidates' lists resulting in a 50/50 gender split on each list.

Although it is not theoretically impossible to implement a gender quota with other types of electoral systems, it is by far the easiest to do with PR Party List systems. In Namibia there is already a gender quota in place in Local Authority elections. Parties are obliged by the electoral act to nominate two female candidates in council areas with ten or fewer councillors, and at least three in municipal or town council areas with eleven or more members (Töttemeyer et al, 1996).

In determining whether respondents believed political parties should be subject to a gender quota when compiling their candidates' lists, they were again presented with a choice between two statements. The two statements were:

- *Statement A:* Some people want at least half (50 percent) of all candidates put forward for elections by parties to be women to ensure that men and women are elected in equal proportions.
- *Statement B:* Other people say that it should be left to the parties to decide who they want to nominate and it does not matter whether men and women are elected in equal proportions.

Overall, almost half (48 percent) of respondents agreed with statement A, indicating that they may want to implement a gender quota. Only slightly less than a third of respondents (32 percent) thought that it should be left to the parties, and that a gender quota is not the way to go.

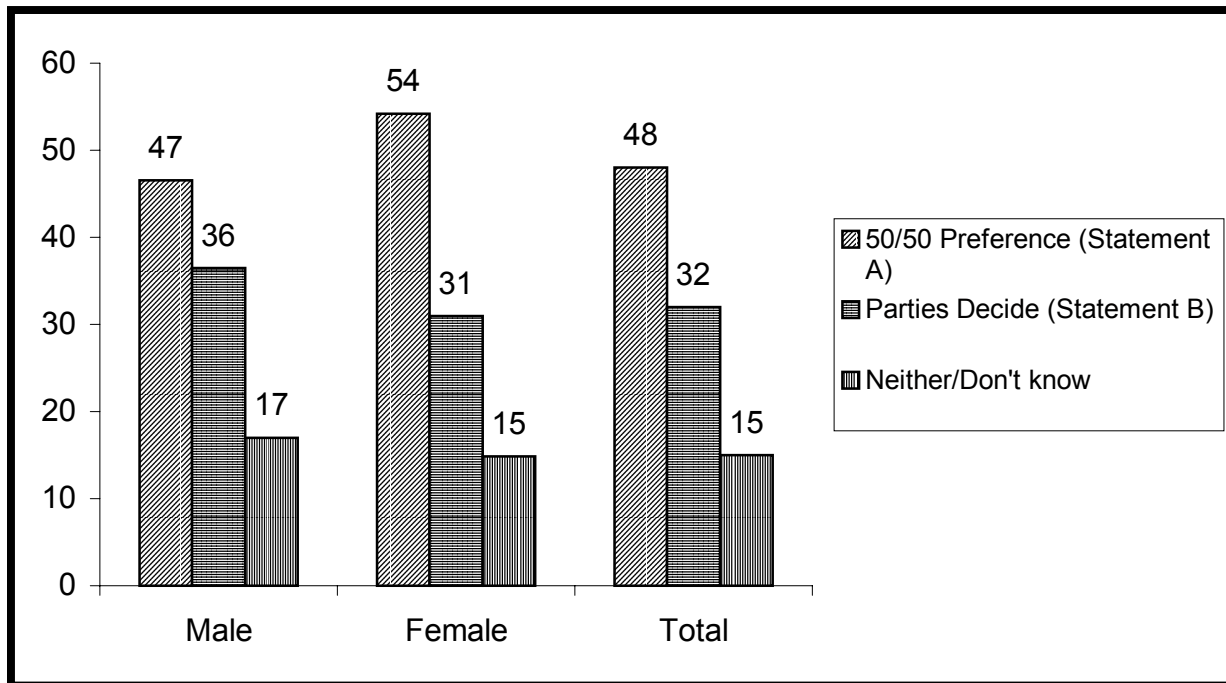
This issue was also measured in a different, but similar question. When asked whether they thought it was important or not for a country like Namibia "to have equal numbers of men and women as candidates", 81 percent indicated it was important. From their answers to this question it is clear that the majority of respondents believed it is important to increase female representation in candidates' lists. However, believing more female participation is important does not translate directly into support for a gender quota – that could account for the difference in level of support between the two questions.

The first, and obvious, question one should ask is whether there is any difference between men and women regarding this issue. One would expect women to be more supportive than men of a

gender quota. In Figure 3 the gender breakdown regarding the question of a 50/50 gender quota is presented.

When inspecting Figure 3, it is clear that although women are slightly more in favour of a gender quota than men, there is actually very little difference. Statistically, this difference is not great enough to say that gender has a definite effect on peoples' decision whether to support a gender quota for candidates' lists or not.¹¹

Figure 3. Gender and Preference for a Gender Quota
 Percentage indicating agreement with either Statement A or Statement B



Statement A: Some people want at least half (50 percent) of all candidates put forward for elections by parties to be women to ensure that men and women are elected in equal proportions.

Statement B: Other people say that it should be left to the parties to decide who they want to nominate and it does not matter whether men and women are elected in equal proportions.

A related expectation is that people who emphasise the role of women in representative politics should support a 50/50 gender quota more than those who do not.

To test this proposition, an index was constructed to measure the extent to which people believed more women should participate in active politics, whether it be as candidates, in parliament or as cabinet ministers.¹² Again, there is only a small correlation between the index and respondents' preference for a gender quota.¹³ People who believe it is important to have more women involved in representative politics are only slightly more inclined to support a gender quota than those who do not believe it is so important to have more women involved in representative politics, but the correlations are too low for any definitive conclusions.

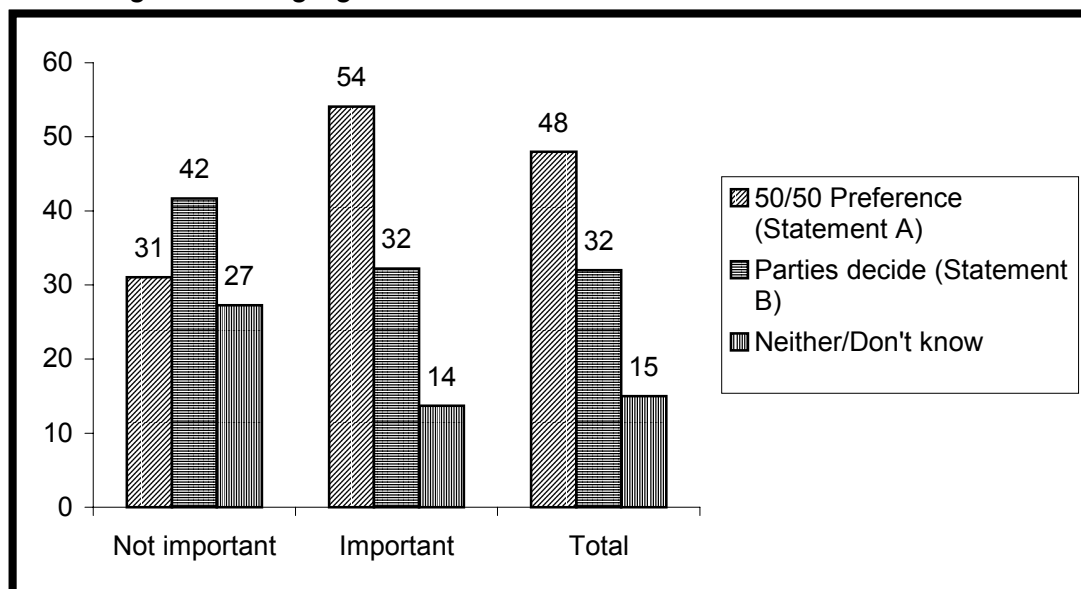
This is confirmed if we inspect the results displayed in Figure 4. This figure displays respondents' preference for a gender quota broken down by whether they believed it is important to have more women in parliament, one of the items in the index referred to above. One can see that those who believed it is important to have more women in parliament are slightly more inclined to express a preference for a gender quota (54 percent) than those who indicated that it is not important to have more women in parliament (42 percent). Also interesting to note is the fairly high percentage



(27 percent) of those who did not think it important to have more women in parliament who did not express a preference for a gender quota.

Figure 4. Preference for a Gender Quota by belief in the importance of getting more women in parliament.

Percentage indicating agreement with either Statement A or Statement B



Statement A: Some people want at least half (50 percent) of all candidates put forward for elections by parties to be women to ensure that men and women are elected in equal proportions.

Statement B: Other people say that it should be left to the parties to decide who they want to nominate and it does not matter whether men and women are elected in equal proportions.

It is quite often said that people who are more active in politics and community life would be more willing to support measures assisting women to become more active in politics, such as a gender quota. Is this actually the case? Again we constructed an index measuring respondents' level of activity in political and community activities¹⁴. This index also registered only a small correlation¹⁵ with preference for a gender quota, meaning that people who are active in political and community life are only slightly more inclined to support a gender quota.

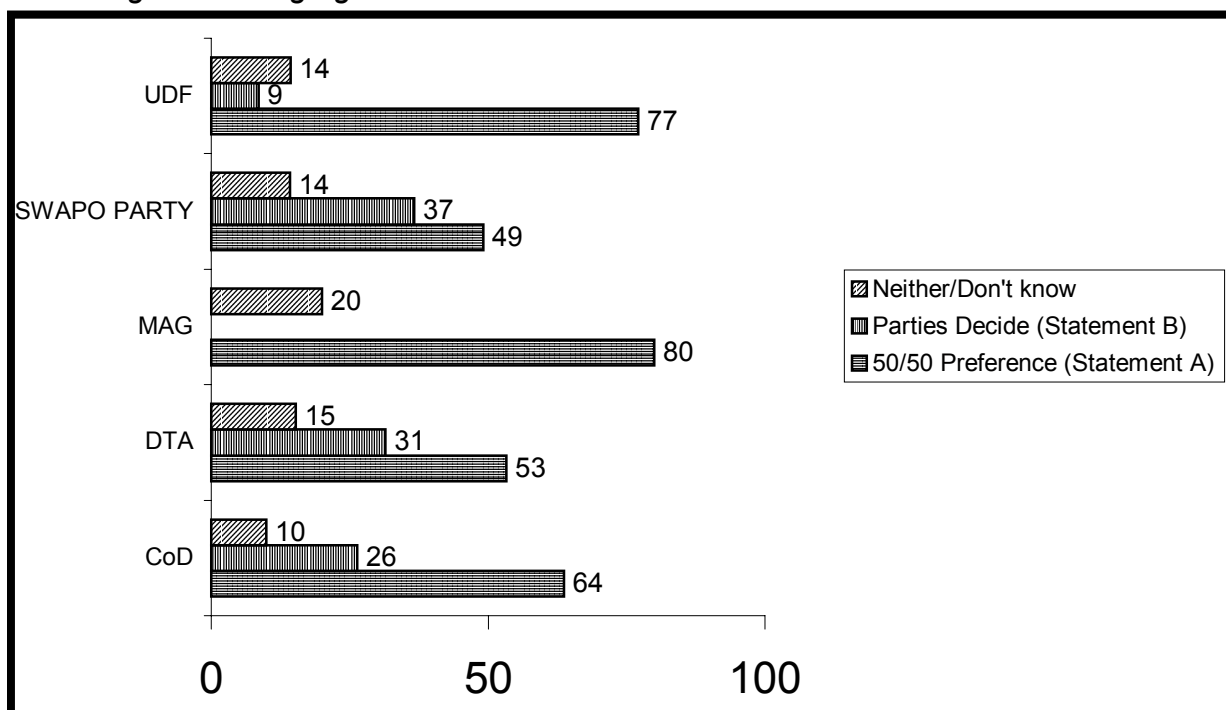
It is also often said that people with higher levels of education would be more willing to support gender sensitive measures, but again statistical analysis of the sample bears no witness to this proposition.

It also does not matter much whether people support the governing party or not. In statistical analysis almost no correlation¹⁶ was found between people's preference for a gender quota and whether they support the ruling party or not. This is evident from inspecting Figure 5.

From Figure 5 one can see that people who supported the SWAPO Party (are somewhat less inclined to be supportive of a 50/50 gender quota for political party candidates' lists than supporters of other parties. Less than half (49 percent) of SWAPO Party supporters favoured a 50/50 gender quota, compared with the DTA (53 percent), CoD (64 percent), UDF (77 percent), and MAG (80 percent), all of whom a majority favoured a 50/50 gender quota.



Figure 5: Support for a gender quota by Political Party support
 Percentage indicating agreement with either Statement A or Statement B



Statement A: Some people want at least half (50 percent) of all candidates put forward for elections by parties to be women to ensure that men and women are elected in equal proportions.

Statement B: Other people say that it should be left to the parties to decide who they want to nominate and it does not matter whether men and women are elected in equal proportions.

6. A TENTATIVE CONCLUSION

When reviewing the data presented in this paper, participants in the debate should find some cause for caution. Very often statements regarding the impact of electoral systems and quotas are made with an amazing confidence. In this paper several of these types of statements were put to statistical analysis, and at most only moderate support for any of the propositions were found. Mostly it was found that there was almost no statistical evidence for these types of propositions. The analysis done for this paper confirms that it is very difficult to prove many of the propositions normally presented regarding the reactions people should have to electoral rules.

This corresponds with the conclusion of Pippa Norris (forthcoming), Professor in Comparative Politics at the Kennedy School of Government, in a new book on electoral engineering and political behaviour. She states that far less is known about the psychological reactions of politicians and the public to electoral rules than is known about the mechanical effects of electoral systems. For example, it is fairly well established that, other things being equal, women are better represented in Proportional Representation systems than in First Past the Post Systems. Based on her review of the literature on electoral systems, she comes to the conclusion that very little is known about the reasons for that relationship.

Taking these cautionary words into account, the majority of respondents, mostly from the governing SWAPO Party, were found to be slightly in favour of a ward-type electoral system where voters directly elect candidates in the areas where they live. However, there is a sizeable proportion, mainly from opposition parties, who would prefer a Proportional Representation system using party lists. Although no definitive data could be found to support propositions that this



preference for a ward-type system is due to a lack of trust in politicians, policy makers should take notice of this desire of a large proportion of voters to have more direct contact with their elected representatives. Even if a Proportional Representation system with party lists is finally decided upon, initiatives where representatives are more regularly in contact with their voters should be encouraged.

Opposition party leaders should take note of the preference among their supporters for a Proportional Representation system.

Overall, respondents are very much in favour of increasing opportunities for women to participate in the political process, and to some extent also for implementing measures that will ensure that men and women are elected in equal proportions. However, the high level of support for including more women on all levels of the political process does not translate into automatic support for gender quotas. Respondents may be more supportive of other types of measures to improve the level of female participation. Future surveys could be done to find out what kind of measures may receive more support.

It was also found that there is very little difference between men and women regarding the question of a gender quota. People who participate in the debate should be very careful not to support their arguments either in favour or opposing such quotas by reference to differences between genders.

¹ Hermann Thiel worked as a special consultant at the IPPR during November 2002.

² An example of how the different types of electoral systems can influence the outcome of elections is the difference in the outcome of the 2002 elections in the Netherlands and France. In the Netherlands the right-wing Pim Fortuin Party gained 17 percent of the votes and through the Proportional Representation system used in that country, became the official opposition party. In France, the right-wing party of Jean-Marie Le Pen also gained 17 percent of the vote, but they were completely excluded from representation through the majoritarian electoral system used in France.

³ In Namibia seats are allocated through a quota needed to require one seat. The quota is calculated by dividing all the votes cast by the total number of seats in the National Assembly (72). After all the seats have been allocated using these quotas, the remaining seats are allocated to the parties with the largest remainder, in sequence of the size of the remainders.

⁴ Pearson's $r=0.135$, significant at the .001 level. For political party support a dummy variable was created, indicating only whether people support the Swapo Party or not.

⁵ Percentages in this graph, and all the other graphs, may not add up to 100 percent because of the rounding of figures. Within the different breakdowns missing values were excluded from the calculation, while they were included with the calculation of the total frequencies, which may also account for slight discrepancies.

⁶ For a description of how this index was calculated, see Keulder (2002).

⁷ Pearson's $R=.16$, significant at the .001 level.

⁸ Pearson's $R=.17$, significant at the .001 level.

⁹ Respondents were asked: "Below is a list of events that are organised for the public to participate in. Please tell us whether or not you participate in them". This index consisted of five items: "Meeting organised by political parties"; "Meeting organised by a ministry"; "Church service or event"; Meeting organised by a community organisation"; and "Meeting organised by the school". These five items loaded on one factor (Eigenvalue 2.76) in a factor analysis making use of Principle Components analysis with Orthogonal rotation. The Cronbach's Alpha reliability score for the index is 0.8.

¹⁰ Pearson's $R = .12$, significant at the .001 level.

¹¹ Pearson's $R = .07$, significant at the .01 level.



¹² Respondents were asked: “Please tell us whether or not you think each of the following is important for a country like Namibia.” This index consists of three items: “More women in parliament”; “More women as candidates during elections”; and “More women as ministers”. These three items loaded on one factor (Eigenvalue 2.56) in a factor analysis making use of Principle Components analysis with Orthogonal rotation. The Cronbach’s Alpha reliability score for the index is 0.91.

¹³ Pearson's R = -.16, significant at the .001 level.

¹⁴ Respondents were asked: “Below is a list of events that are organised for the public to participate in. Please tell us whether or not you participate in them.” The index consists of five items: “Meeting organised by political parties”; “Meeting organised by a ministry”; “Church service or event”; “Meeting organised by a community organisation”; and “Meeting or event organised by the school”. These five items loaded on one factor (Eigenvalue 2.76) in a factor analysis making use of Principle Components analysis with Orthogonal rotation. The Cronbach’s Alpha reliability score for the index is 0.8.

¹⁵ Pearson's R = -.12, significant at the .001 level.

¹⁶ Pearson’s R = .06, significant at the .01 level.

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