**Popular conceptions of democracy in international perspective – what people think it is, and how it affects their political behaviour**

***Luke Temple***

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**Abstract:**

This thesis explores how citizens around the world understand the term ‘democracy’, and it tests what effect their conceptualisation of the idea has on their own political behaviour. Through an in-depth quantitative analysis, conducted on an existing dataset collected across more than 40 countries, it examines the individual and contextual factors which shape how people mentally map out this most crucial and contested of political concepts.

The analysis builds upon a handful of recent studies which have sought to push the field of democracy studies forward by focusing less on whether citizens support democracy, and much more on how they understand its substantive meaning. Rather than designing a ‘test’ for citizens to see how close they align with the notion of liberal democracy, as many of these studies do, this thesis takes an exploratory approach to better allow for an exploration of how citizens conceptually map their understandings of democracy. The findings suggest that citizens do not adhere to any clearly delineated understandings of democracy, and instead hold understandings of democracy that combine liberal, populist, and social theoretical definitions, and, in some cases, even authoritarian ones.

Despite this conceptual fuzziness however, the two conceptualisations of democracy outlined in this study – termed compound and authoritarian – do have consistent and clear effects on informal non-institutionalised political behaviour. Therefore, this thesis argues that future research should take seriously both the notion of understandings of democracy – not simply support for democracy – as well an exploratory approach. In this way we might better understand and navigate some of the many pitfalls that can occur when two citizens passionately pay lip-service to the term ‘democracy’, yet privately hold very different, and possibly even contradictory, ideas of what it means.

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# Introduction

**“Strikingly, the belief that democracy is (in principle at least) the best system is overwhelming and universal.” (Diamond 2008a, p.xi)**

The motivation for this thesis is straightforward; scores of studies have shown that people like and want democracy, but we are much less sure about what people think democracy actually *is*. Therefore, if we don’t know how people understand or conceptualise democracy, a piece of the puzzle is missing when it comes to trying to explain their political participation. This motivation runs throughout the thesis, guiding all the following analysis.

The analysis itself details the steps I have taken – and the importance of each step and its relation to the step before – to outline the value of analysing how citizens understand democracy and the effect their understanding has on their political activities. As Cho (2014, p.240) puts it, the “cognitive domain of democratic political culture…has been an understudied area in the literature of democratisation and political culture for years” and, despite some new efforts, the “current literature on the mass understanding of democracy is in an embryonic stage and requires a great deal of systematic research exploring its nature, causes and consequences”. This thesis bolsters this newly developing field of research in a five ways.

Firstly, it provides further support for the importance of focusing on this area of research, and of moving beyond simple measurements of democratic support. Secondly, it outlines and justifies a different approach to those taken by previous research towards this topic by arguing that instead of *testing* how citizens understand democracy according to our prescribed theoretical norms, we should allow citizens a greater space to present their own conceptual mapping of democracy, and explore how they tie different characteristics of democracy together.

Thirdly, and substantively, from existing survey data my analysis takes this exploratory approach to produce and describe two dimensions of understandings of democracy. These understandings are shown to revolve around important theoretical concerns. The first is a termed a ‘compound’ understanding of democracy. Although structured around a blend of liberal ideals, it is shown that this liberal influence is not necessarily clear and distinct in the minds of citizens, compared to other ideals. Indeed, I outline how social and populist ideals are also amalgamated into this dimension. The second understanding is an authoritarian view of democracy, which does offer a clear, and problematic, understanding of what democracy means to some citizens.

Fourthly, the thesis analyses who might have these understandings and what personal characteristics shape them, alongside an examination of the importance of contextual level influences. And finally, this thesis shows how these understandings of democracy influence whether individuals participate politically.

This introductory chapter outlines the motivation behind this area of research by introducing the argument that looking at citizen *support* for democracy is not good enough, and that we must look at the substantive meanings of the term for people. This initial question – what do citizens think democracy *is*? – requires attention and leads to two further questions: Why do citizens think about democracy in a certain way? And does this understanding impact upon political behaviour?

After outlining these ideas, at the end of this chapter I discuss the specific research aims and objectives which structure the analysis I undertake to tackle these three questions.

## 1.1 Support for democracy: meaninglessly high?

The World Values Survey is a large cross-national survey, carried out in many different political systems. It has been carried out six times since the early 1980s and, since 1995, it has asked the following question across a total of 57 countries:

*I'm going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as a way of governing this country. For each one, would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad way of governing this country?*

When ‘*Having a democratic system’* is offered as the option, the results have shown an extremely clear signal for the last four waves of the survey, collected over the last twenty years. Figure 1.1 shows these basic results with the very good and fairly good options combined, and the fairly bad and very bad options combined.

Figure 1:1 Support for ‘Having a Democratic System’ to govern the country

*(Source: Integrated WVS Waves 3-6 Excludes Don’t Knows, n= 273,289)*

An overwhelming majority of people worldwide – around 9 out of 10 – routinely answer that democracy is or would be a good or very good political system for their country. And from these four data points, there does not seem to be any particular trend or change of direction for the result.

However, this is something of a blunt measurement, and so it is reasonable to ask if these large aggregate numbers are hiding patterns of difference, especially when we know that billions of people around the world do not live under a democratic system, as shown in Figure 1.2 and Figure 1.3.

These results come from Freedom House, a think-tank that measures how free a country is based on civil rights and political liberties (see freedomhouse.org). The organisation focuses squarely on judging theoretically relevant attributes of liberal democracy (Munk, 2009, p. 17). The three-category classification splits countries into Free (green), Partly Free (yellow) and Not Free (blue). Again this categorisation is blunt, but it allows us to see a clear spatial patterning of the most repressive non-democratic regimes; these can be found predominantly in sub-Saharan Africa, and then in an arc that covers much of the Middle-East, Central, and Eastern Asia. It makes sense then, to test whether this support for democracy extends to these areas with very limited experience of democracy as a type of government.

Figure 1:2 Freedom in the World 2014

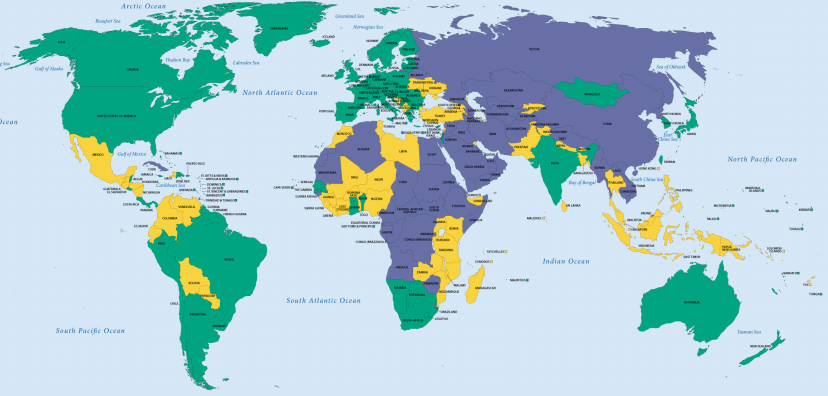
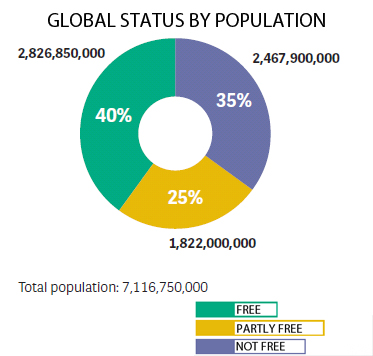


Figure 1:3 Freedom in the World Population Percentages and Legend



The first test addresses the Asian/Middle-Eastern arc of authoritarian regimes. An issue with these types of regimes is that the less democratic a regime, usually the harder it is to collect reliable survey data there. However, sticking with the WVS for now, an examination can be made using the 2005-2009 wave. According to Freedom House calculations the most repressive regimes in this survey wave are Iran, China, Russia, Jordan, Vietnam and Iraq. In the 2005-2009 wave a further question was asked which allowed citizens to give a more detailed opinion on the subject of democracy and its importance:

*How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically? On this scale where 1 means it is “not at all important” and 10 means “absolutely important” what position would you choose?*

In Figure 1.4, the results of this question are presented for two categories. The first category includes overall results for *all* countries in the wave: 72,172 respondents from 51 countries. The second category includes results for only the ‘Not Free’ regimes in the survey: 8, 663 respondents from 5 countries (Iraq unfortunately does not feature as the question was not asked there).

Once again the pattern is very clear and, more importantly, it holds for both categories. When provided with a ten-point scale, almost half of all respondents choose the highest option: ‘absolutely important’. For all countries the average score was 8.6, compared to 8.3 for the Not Free regimes. Even across these authoritarian regimes, support for democracy is extremely high.

Figure 1:4 How Important is Democracy on a Scale of 1-10 (1 = Not at all Important 10=Absolutely Important): All Countries versus Not Free

*(Source: WVS 2005-2008, total n=76,215)*

The other region containing non-democratic regimes, sub-Saharan Africa, has little history of representative national surveys and is not particularly well-covered by the WVS. However the AfroBarometer project has collected data in four waves since 1999 over a total of 36 African states and almost 99,000 respondents, providing the most comprehensive survey data for the region (see afrobarometer.org). Whilst this does not focus only on sub-Saharan Africa, it generally covers states with limited experience of democracy. In all four waves, the following question was asked:

***Which of these three statements is closest to your own opinion?***

*1) Democracy is preferable to any other kind of government.*

*2) In some circumstances, a non-democratic government can be preferable.*

*3) For someone like me, it doesn’t matter what kind of government we have.*

Figure 1.5 shows the results. Once again the majority choosing democracy is overwhelming, at around 7 out of 10 in 2008. Even when the choice of options allows for more pragmatic viewpoints to be aired, the pattern remains clear.

Figure 1:5 What Statement is Closest to Your Opinion Democracy as a Government? (African States)

*(Source: Afrobarometer Wvs 1-4. Total n = 98,942)*

Taken together, these results present an optimistic picture of support for democracy around the world. Findings such as this naturally lead to questions such as the one raised by Amartya Sen (1999), who asked: is democracy is a universal value which *‘*cannot be disposed of by imagined cultural taboos or assumed civilizational predispositions imposed by our various pasts’? After all, although the common belief is that democracy has quite specific roots in Ancient Athens, some commentators have argued that actually comparable systems developed independently in multiple locations across the world (Sen, 1999; Keane, 2009, p. xvi).

Summarising the trends and findings on survey data around the world, Diamond (2008, p.xi) noted that: “Strikingly, the belief that democracy is (in principle at least) the best system is overwhelming and universal.” However, the caveat that Diamond provides in brackets is absolutely key to my analysis: this extremely clear pattern across such a wide number of countries can only be seen as universal if the word which the respondents are all agreeing to – democracy – has a shared understanding. If this isn’t the case, we have reason to question such findings and interrogate them further.

## 1.2 In principle at least…beyond support for democracy

There is no doubt that democracy is an extremely important concept. The United Nations holds the promotion of democracy as a core ideal (Newman and Rich, 2004). International organisations, private foundations, corporations and individual governments have all taken active roles in the promotion of democracy (John O’Loughlin *et al.*, 1998). And within political science, hardly any other subject in the last quarter of the twentieth century influenced the research agenda more than the transformation of authoritarian and totalitarian political regimes into pluralist democracies (Croissant and Merkel, 2004).

With such a focus on the promotion of, and transition to, democracy, there is an implicit belief that citizens around the world *want* democracy. Qi and Shin (2011, p.247) noted that this demand-driven model of democratization has led to a standard practice where citizen demand is measured solely in terms of mass support for democracy as a regime. Measurement has focused on democracy ‘in principle’ – and the results, as outlined above, are clear: across many different types of political regime, across continents, from rich states to poor ones, substantial majorities routinely claim to support democracy.

However, what is it that they are actually claiming to support? Here, things become unclear. Indeed, the term ‘democracy’ was described almost 60 years ago as the contested political concept *par excellence* (Gallie 1956, p.184). It is one of the most complicated concepts in political science, and there exists no academic consensus on exactly what democracy is. More recently, this has led analysts to begin voicing scepticism as to the reliability and utility of survey questions measuring support for and satisfaction with democracy (Linde & Ekman 2003; Przeworksi 2003).

The quibble lies not with the results on the superficial level of the (banal) observation that people everywhere think democracy is important. There is little real disagreement here. The disagreement lies in the substantive element of what democracy *actually* *means* in this instance, and what this can tell us.

Using straight-forward cross-tabulation analysis, Linde & Ekman (2003, p.391) effectively demonstrated the shortfalls of attitudinal measurements towards democracy which focus on ‘satisfaction with democracy’. Their argument is that satisfaction with the term democracy on a superficial does not give us any insight into any support for its deeper principles of democracy. Przeworski (2003, p.119) probably put it best when he argued that untold, “pages of academic journals are filled with percentages of Americans, Spaniards, Poles or Kazaks saying that they like or do not like democracy…and there is not a shred of evidence that these answers have anything to do with the actual survival of democracy.” Coming from a slightly different angle, Inglehart (2003, p.51) has made a similar point: “Although overt lip service to democracy is almost universal today, it is not necessarily an accurate indicator of how deeply democracy has taken root in a given country.”

It could be that ‘democracy’ means X but definitely not Y to person one, and for person two it means Y but definitely not X, yet they both agree that ‘democracy’ is the best thing for their country. If this is the case, what are we learning by just looking at whether they support the term or not?

## 1.3 Examining citizens’ understandings of democracy

The examination of citizen understandings of democracy is of course not without precedent (see Prothro & Grigg 1960). However, it is only in more recent years that surveys with large sample sizes have allowed robust cross-national comparison and included results from newer or even non-democracies (Norris, 1999, p. 13).

Cross-national studies include those by Dalton et al. (2008) Norris (2011), Welzel (2013) and (Cho, 2015). In general these studies have ‘tested’ how closely citizens’ understandings of democracy match up to liberal democracy. As Cho (20145, p.255) put it,

“…little is known about the breadth, depth and distribution of democratic enlightenment among the mass citizenries of democratic and non-democratic countries in the world today or about major forces shaping their democratic enlightenment.”

Dalton et al.’s (2008, p.9) conclusion is relatively optimistic: “the identification of democracy with greater freedom and liberty has broadly diffused across the globe.” However, the other studies are more cautious. For instance, Norris (2011, pp.167–168) argued that whilst aspirations for democracy are widespread, in countries with limited experience of democracy this “should *not* be taken to mean that people necessarily yearn deeply for democratic procedural reforms, or indeed that citizens have the capacity to draw a bright line between democracy and governance.”

This caution is apparent in studies at the regional and national level, which present much more guarded results for liberal democratic understanding, using analytical approaches which are less focused on testing understanding against liberal conceptions, and more interested in exploratory analysis. In Mexico (Schedler and Sarsfield, 2007), Chile (Carlin, 2011) and across Latin America in general (Canache, 2012), quantitative studies have shown that whilst the majority of citizens support democracy, a majority *also* hold value sets that do not meet conventional liberal democratic criteria, for instance by agreeing to the exclusion of homosexual or indigenous people from politics.

Carnaghan (2011) examined understandings of democracy in Russia, combining survey and interview answers. The results from the study strongly suggest that respondents think in very different ways from each other about the same abstract term, such as “democracy” or “freedom”. As Carnaghan (2011, p.685) noted, ‘citizens may not be well schooled in the niceties of democratic theory’. The conclusion of her study was even more cautious than the those undertaken in Latin America: ‘not only can we not be sure that respondents mean what *researchers* mean when they talk about democracy, we cannot even be sure that they mean what *they say* they mean’ (ibid, p.690-692).

In the conclusion to her examination of the substantive meaning of democracy for Latin American citizens, Canache (2012, p.1150) argued strongly that we would be “well advised to step back and ask more fundamental questions regarding what citizens think democracy is”. She suggested that by focussing primarily on *support* for democracy research in this field has so far put ‘the cart before the horse’. In their study using Mexican survey data, Schedler and Sarsfield (2007, p.654) came to a similar conclusion: “Rather than resigning ourselves to the meaninglessness of overt democratic support, we should strive to uncover its structure of meaning by reading it in the context of individual attitudes towards more specific components of liberal democracy – be they conceptual, institutional or normative.”

Finally, in a study using survey data from Finland, Bengtsson and Christensen (2014, p.234) follow this developing thread of literature looking at what democracy means to people, and they ask the next, logical question of citizens: “Do they act in accordance with their beliefs or are they largely irrelevant for predicting behaviour?” Their findings suggest that they do. In their conclusion they argue that Finland is something of a ‘most likely’ case to find such patterns which means that, ”Research from other contexts is therefore necessary to establish how well the conclusions drawn here apply to other settings” (ibid, p.251).

This is what this thesis aims to do. The overarching approach is best summed up by the further research paths outlined by Schedler and Sarsfield (2007, p.654) who suggest the following three areas of interest to move the field forward:

* Drawing out fuller *portraits* of citizens’ democratic ideals
* Exploring the *origins* of different attitudinal profiles
* Studying the *consequences* of these ideological profiles

These calls for a new approach to examining citizens’ attitudes towards democracy underpin my aims and objectives. The thesis studies attitudes towards democracy, but more specifically, how people *understand* democracy. It asks the question: ‘how do people define democracy in different parts of the world?’ It seeks to extend the literature on democratic understanding at the global level, taking into account the calls for caution reflected in the regional and national level studies discussed above. It takes a further analytical step by looking at related questions such as: ‘can we explain why certain people think of democracy in certain ways?’ and then, ‘does a person’s definition of democracy affect their political behaviour?’

The following section details these aims and objectives in full.

## 1.4 Aims and Objectives

The three interlinked and overarching aims of this thesis are to:

1. Take an exploratory approach to produce dimensions of citizen understandings of democracy
2. Outline what individual characteristics, and what national contexts, explain these dimensions of understanding
3. Examine what impact these understandings have on political participation

These three aims feed into each other, so that each builds on the findings and results of the previous. In order to achieve these objectives, I have identified research objectives within each one.

*1: Understanding Democracy – From the Citizens’ Point of View*

The first step taken in this thesis is to address the gap in the literature when it comes to examining what citizens themselves think democracy is. I then identify the appropriate data and methods to help shed more light on this area, before producing new dimensions of democratic understanding that are based on the opinions of citizens. Accordingly, the research objectives for this aim are:

* 1. To detail the motivation behind this study: that measurements of democratic support have become meaningless when we do not know how the term ‘democracy’ is understood;
  2. To investigate the development of theoretical conceptualisations of democracy, to outline what role the knowledge and support of citizens play in a democratic regime;
  3. To produce a literature review to identify contemporary studies that have started to examine citizen understandings of democracy;
  4. To use the literature in objectives 1.1 – 1.3 to identify the most appropriate data and methodological approach for producing my own dimensions of democratic understanding;
  5. To examine what theoretical expectations are borne out in the descriptive data; and
  6. Using the data, to produce a framework of how citizens themselves understand democracy.

*2: Explaining Different Understandings of Democracy*

In the second step I examine which individual and contextual variables can explain the different understandings of democracy outlined in part one. The explanatory variables will draw on theoretical approaches outlined by objectives 1.1 – 1.3. In this section, the different components of the framework of understanding will be the dependent variable in the analysis. Accordingly, the research objectives of this section are:

2.1 With reference to theoretical expectations, analyse the individual variables that explain different understanding of democracy; and

2.2 With references to theoretical expectations, analyse the contextual variables that explain different understandings of democracy.

*3: Examining what affects dimensions of democratic understanding have*

The last step provides the ‘so what?’ aspect of this thesis. Beyond an academic interest in whether citizens are thinking different things when they say they support the idea of ‘democracy’, it is crucial to see if these understandings affect their political behaviour. This thesis will look at elements of non-institutionalised, informal political behaviour. The reason for this is outlined in later chapters, however, the main rationale is that these behaviours are more widely available to citizens (in theory at least), compared to institutional democratic participation such as voting, which is not. In this section, the different components of democratic understanding will be independent variables in the analysis: I want to see what explanatory power they might have. Accordingly, the research objectives are:

3.1 To determine what impact the understanding components have on non-institutionalised, informal political participation;

3.2 To compare this impact with that of other predominant theories in the field; and

3.3 To evaluate the success of the approach, and outline potential further research in this area.

## 1.5 Chapter Outline

After this introduction chapter, the following structure of the thesis is as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Chapter** | **Objective** |
| **Chapter 1** | Introduction |  |
|  |  |  |
| ***Step 1*** |  |  |
| **Chapter 2** | Literature Review | 1.1, 1.2 & 1.3 |
| **Chapter 3** | Data and Descriptive Statistics | 1.4 & 1.5 |
| **Chapter 4** | Dimensions of Democratic Understanding | 1.6 |
|  |  |  |
| ***Step 2*** |  |  |
| **Chapter 5** | Explaining Difference Understandings of Democracy | 2.1 & 2.2 |
|  |  |  |
| ***Step 3*** |  |  |
| **Chapter 6** | Understandings of Democracy and Political Participation | 3.1 & 3.2 |
|  |  |  |
| **Chapter 7** | Conclusion | 3.3 |

Before outlining the chapters in more detail I will just provide a short note on *methods*. It is noticeable in this table there is no distinct ‘Methods’ chapter in this thesis. This was a conscious choice driven by the step structure. It is important that these chapters build on the chapter before them and inform the chapter after. Each step of the analysis requires a different statistical approach; principal components analysis (Chapter 4), multilevel regression modelling (Chapter 5) and logistic multilevel regression modelling (Chapter 6). Accordingly, instead of discussing these approaches in isolation in a chapter of their own, they are discussed in direct relevance to the analysis being undertaken within the chapter in which they are used; the methods discussion becomes a part of the overall analysis within each chapter. The choice of a quantitative approach is discussed in Chapter 3.

Chapter 2, the Literature Review, examines the role that ‘the people’ are expected to play across a broad range of theoretical understandings of democracy, from thin, mechanistic approaches through to thick, deliberative approaches. It notes the importance of notions of civic culture and political support, before identifying the issue with much research, in that when it measures the degree to which citizens support democracy, it presupposes a shared understanding of democracy. The discussion then moves to look at the recent and emerging studies which have taken a conceptual step back in order to look at understandings of democracy. I focus on studies at different scales of analysis and conclude by suggesting that the exploratory approaches of lower-level studies could be applied to global examinations, and that, not only do we need to examine and outline different understandings of democracy, but we need to test them to see if they themselves can help explain levels of political participation.

In Chapter 3, I outline my analytical approach using quantitative secondary data analysis, showing how survey data is the best way to examine this research proposal, and I also discuss my choice of data. I link the questions on democracy which are available to me to the theory, drawing from the Literature Review. I then outline some of the basic patterns and results from the survey data – showing how some results are unexpected, and arguing that to best get a handle on this data, I should take an exploratory approach.

In Chapter 4 I outline the statistical technique of principal components analysis which allows me to draw out dimensions of understanding (as opposed to building clusters or running a sort of ‘civics test’ on the data). I then outline the results of the analysis, showing how two components are present in the data. I discuss these two components, which I term *compound* and *authoritarian* understandings, and demonstrate what patterns of understandings can be seen across countries.

In Chapter 5 I look at these two understandings in much more detail using multilevel regression analysis. I test numerous theoretical frameworks in a bid to see which best helps explain the individual and contextual factors which explain these two dimensions. The results show that a wide array of approaches are significant, including modernization, social capital and political knowledge.

In Chapter 6, the final analytical chapter, these two citizen conceptualisations of democracy are put to work themselves, to see if they help explain non-institutionalised political participation. I compare the conceptualisations alongside other long-standing approaches in the participation literature including grievance theory and cognitive engagement theory. I also examine if the understandings of democracy have an effect above and beyond support for democracy. The results show that the conceptualisations do have a significant and consistent effect: the compound understanding boosts the likelihood of a citizen participating, whereas the authoritarian understanding diminishes it.

Finally, in Chapter 7 I conclude. In this chapter I bring together all the previous analysis and talk through my findings in relation to the aims and objectives I outlined in the introduction. I also describe the limitations of the thesis, and show how these limitations can be the prompt for further research.

# Literature Review

**“Democracy carefully guards her secrets” John Keane (2009, p.x)**

The history of democratic theory spans thousands of years and every corner of the globe. Most texts discussing this development tend to be quite long; for instance, two academic works which broke into mainstream bookshops, Francis Fukuyama’s (1992) *The End of History* and John Keane’s (2009) *The Life and Death of Democracy*,are over 400 and 900 pages, respectively. In comparison my literature review provides only a basic overview of the historical development of democracy. This historical overview of democracy through the ages forms the shorter and introductory part of the literature review, which is followed by the more substantial material in parts two through four.

Part two discusses the most influential academic theories about democracy with a specific aim throughout to focus on one element in particular: the role given to citizens or, ‘the people’. Informed by the historical overview, I focus on the most important theoretical developments since World War 2. My approach is to look at theories of *democracy* and theories of *democratization*: that is, what democracy is and how democracy comes to be. This delineation is not perfect, but it provides a structure to follow which raises the most important points I wish to cover, and, whilst these areas of study overlap, in particular with the former informing the latter, in other ways they have developed as relatively distinct blocs of research.

In terms of the first half, on theories of democracy, Minkenburg (2007, p.890) provides a useful categorisation of the literature:

“Democratic theory can generally be dichotomised as normative theory, which argues what democracy ‘essentially’ is or should be and which discusses its normative presuppositions, and empirical theory, which does not aim to uncover an ‘essential’ core of democracy but discusses the functioning of democracy and its (empirically testable) prerequisites.”

Although not absolute, this categorisation of theory is helpful. Importantly, even the most empirical of analyses cannot operate in a vacuum – the choice of which prerequisites and functioning elements of democracy to test and measure are informed by the arguments laid out by normative theory. However, my review bears Minkenburg’s distinctions strongly in mind, and the discussion runs from the more empirical and theoretically ‘thinner’ approaches to democratic theory through to the deeper and ‘thicker’ more normative approaches (although, as a final caveat, this should not be seen as a simple continuum).

For the second half of part two, where the focus is on democratization, a two-fold divide in the theory is once again helpful. It is this time provided by Przeworski (1986) who makes the observation that studies of regime change fall into two broad categories: those which focus on structures (macro), and those which focus on individuals (agential). Once again, this distinction is not absolute, and since Przeworski made the observation, there have been a number of studies which have attempted to bridge the divide between these two, including his own (Przeworski & Limongi 1997, see also Linz & Stepan 1996, and Diamond 1999). This work often feeds into an area of research classed as ‘consolidation studies’ which focuses on the survival of democratic regimes from a convergence of structural and agential perspectives (Grugel, 2003, pp. 242–243). A discussion of this field of study concludes this section.

These two sections demonstrate that different approaches ascribe different roles to citizens. However, there are common ideas and themes regarding the nature of democracy across all of these studies. There is broad agreement that: 1) there must be some level of political knowledge amongst citizens in a democracy; 2) citizens must provide some degree of political support to a democratic system; and 3) citizens must participate in a democratic system in some way.

This paves the way for the focus of part three of this literature review, which draws out these issues in more detail by discussing the literature concerning political support and civic culture. This literature points towards the notion that citizen’s support for democracy (idea 2 above) and the extent to which they participate (idea 3) are dependent to some degree on their level of political knowledge (idea 1). Furthermore, the discussion builds on this to make three more substantive points that ultimately inform the purpose of this thesis. These points are:

* To effectively support democracy, citizens must be knowledgeable of democracy;
* Examinations of citizen support for democracy frequently *assume* a shared understanding of democracy; and
* Reported levels of support for democracy have a limited theoretical ability to explain political behaviour

And herein lies the problem. Much of the theoretical focus examines how citizens keep up-to-date with political goings-on or have factual knowledge of their government. There is much less focus on citizens’ knowledge or conceptualisations about what democracy *itself* actually means. This is the point of the final part of this literature review which looks specifically at those studies which *have* addressed this issue of the public understanding of democracy, focusing predominantly on literature from the last decade. My discussion tackles the literature in terms of scale by looking at global, regional and national level studies in turn. I conclude by placing my thesis within this body of research and, with reference to the aims and objectives outline in Chapter 1, discussing how my research adds to existing debates in this field.

Overall then, the literature review is structured as follows:

2.1 Democracy through the ages

2.2 Theoretical Approaches

2.3 People and Democracy: Political Support and Civic Culture

2.4 Citizen Conceptualisations of Democracy

2.5 Conclusions and Research Agenda

## 2.1 Democracy through the Ages

The origins of democracy as a political concept and system are lost in time. A prevalent view is that democracy was developed by the ancient Athenians. However, Kean (2009: x) notes that the roots of the idea can be traced back to the Mycenaean period, seven to ten centuries before the Greeks, whilst Sen (1999) points to early signs of democratic ideals, particularly the notion of public discussion, across the ancient world, with important antecedents in (amongst others) ancient Indian civilisations.

Regardless of whether Athens was the birthplace of democracy, it *was* unique in terms of its contribution towards the idea of democracy (Sen, 1999). The system used by the Athenians functioned at the level of the city, or *polis*. Participation in the system required one to be a citizen, and citizenship was limited to men, usually only those with some wealth. The Athenian origins of democratic theory were concerned with “direct participation, political equality, and popular sovereignty” (John O’Loughlin *et al.*, 1998, p. 546). Aristotle summed this up as ‘popular power’, or as it is commonly thought of today following Lincoln’s portrayal in his Gettysburg address: government of the people, by the people, for the people (Lincoln 1883, see Ake 1997, p.282).

Sen (1999, p.329ff) argues that whilst the informal elements of democracy have a longer history, it was in Athens that we can most clearly see the origins of the formal institutional procedures of democracy, such as balloting.

However, this flourishing of the democratic idea was not to last. It was by no means agreed that such democratic practices were effective, or even legitimate. Some of the greatest minds of the time were suspicious of the ideas inherent within democratic theory. In fact, “from Ancient Greece to the present day the majority of political thinkers, have been highly critical of the theory and practice of democracy” (Held, 1998, p. 1). Aristotle himself was gravely concerned with the concept, particularly the possibility that participation could be broadened to all people, and the subsequent idea that majorities could overrule the law, resulting in demagoguery (see *Politics,* Book Four Part IV and V in particular in Jowett [trans.] 1999, pp.84-89). He argued that, realistically, the best possible constitution involves a mixture of oligarchy and democracy in a society in which the middle classes predominate, either in the sense of being more numerous than the rich and poor, or at least numerous enough to keep a balance of power (Almond 1980, p.17). His mentor, Plato, argued that philosophers should be kings (see Reeve 1988; Plato 1763, Book *V*). Ancient Athenian democracy itself succumbed to totalitarianism and suppression on a number of occasions, and ultimately did not survive invasion by the Roman Empire.

Aristotle’s work was rediscovered in the Middle Ages. At this time the pejorative aspects of democracy were initially the most focused on and it democracy was, as Held (2006, p.33) puts it, predominantly understood as:

“…government conducted for the benefit of the poor rather than the public interest; and a form of power (to anticipate later nineteenth-century sceptics of democratic government) in which the “common people” can become tyrannical, threatening to level all social distinctions and privileges.”

Accordingly, the idea of democracy sat particularly badly with the notion of the divine rights of kings; the idea that the monarch had legitimacy to rule because they were doing so with the will of God. For the ruling classes especially, the idea of mass political participation and political equality was not a pleasant one.

However, the Reformation and the Enlightenment saw the further development of liberal ideas which later came to be bound up with the notion of liberal democracy, including a focus on individualism and rationality and the separation of the church from the state. During the French Revolution (1789-1799) some of these ideas were dramatically realised when, after a popular vote in the new assembly, King Louis XVI was beheaded in 1793. The Revolution sought to bring about egalitarian democracy through the notion of *popular* sovereignty, sweeping away *royal* sovereignty and the link between governmental authority and inherited privilege (Hydén, 1997, p. 243). In other words, the people should own the state, not any monarchy. Such radical ideas horrified other European elites who realised they had a lot to lose from this collective interpretation of democracy (Ake, 1997, p. 283).

The French Revolution itself was inspired in part by the American Revolution (1765-1783) during which the American colonies broke away from the British Empire. Fifty years later, it was a study of the system of governance in the post-Revolutionary United States by a Frenchman, Alexis de Tocqueville (1998 [1835]), which helped cement the popularity of *representative* theories of democracy. Instead of the more direct engagement of citizens in the classic Athenian system, in a representative democracy elections allowed citizens to vote for a representative to take their ideas forward to the government. Although an individual had less power in a representative democracy compared to a direct one, Tocqueville was particularly impressed with the Americans’ propensity for civic association, such as town hall debates which strengthened the connection between citizen and representative, leading him to argue that norms and networks of civic engagement powerfully influence the performance of social institutions, an idea that shapes contemporary theories of *social capital* (Putnam, 1995).

In the mid-1800s the ideas of British philosopher – and Member of Parliament – John Stuart Mill (1863; 1861) were critical in outlining and developing some of the more central mechanisms of representative democracy, which also become increasingly intertwined with the ‘liberal’ model. For the following part I draw on Held’s (1998, pp.98–120) comprehensive discussion of the philosopher’s influence, where he outlines how Mill argued there was no desirable alternative to representative democracy for both practical and theoretical reasons. Practically, direct democracy was simply not possible in the modern, much larger states of the nineteenth century, compared to the Athenian city-state model:

“According to Mill, the ancient Greek idea of the polis could not be sustained in modern society. The notion of self-government or government by open meeting is, he held (in accord with the liberal tradition as a whole), pure folly for any community exceeding a small town.” (Held, 1998, p. 107)

Mill further argued that from a theoretical perspective a representative democracy has distinct advantages to other systems. As Held summarises, this system uniquely:

“…provides the mechanism whereby central powers can be watched and controlled; it establishes a forum (parliament) to act as a watchdog of liberty and centre of reason and debate; and it harnesses, through electoral competition, leadership qualities with intellect for the maximum benefit of all.” (Held, 1998, p. 108)

However, key to the effectiveness of this form of representative democracy is a precarious balance between the influence of citizens on government and government being allowed to ‘get things done’. The intricate and complex system of checks and balances in the American constitution represents an underlying fear of there being any future rule by a ‘King George’ and, as a state, the US was founded on a mistrust of government (Nye, 1997, p. 2). Indeed, for Mill, government intervention should be minimal and stripped back and its overriding and basic aim should be to protect the liberty of the individual and little else: ‘That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm against others’ (Mill, 1863, p. 24). The realities of such an idea are enormously complex (for instance, how can we agree on what constitutes harm?) but the general principle is at the core of liberalism.

At the same time however, ‘mob rule’ or a ‘tyranny of the majority’ was seen as problematic. Mill, even as he argued strongly that democratic practices provided the best form of government to uphold liberal ideals, also “trusted extraordinarily little in the judgement of the electorate and elected” and thought that checks and balances were also required in the voting system, so that the masses would not subject the political order to “ignorance” (Held, 1998, p. 108). However, he also saw the extension of enfranchisement a way of help the ‘mental improvement’ of ‘manual labourers’ drawing from de Tocqueville’s suggestion that the engaged American Patriot was a person of ‘cultivated intelligence’ (Mill, 1861, p. 161).

Ultimately, then, the most popular form of democracy, the liberal variant, worked on the twin premise that the system would protect individual freedom through democratic mechanisms, but these mechanisms would also restrict individual political wants from overwhelming the system by having only periodic elections of representatives, and keeping decision-making relatively centralised. The details of this are discussed later, with a focus on the critical work of Dryzek (2002; 2010) and Satori ( 1987a; 1987b). But now we can briefly sketch the development of liberal democracy as a political system across the world.

## Waves of Democracy

As a modern political system in practice, Huntington (1991; 1997) has outlined perhaps the most popular framework for looking at these developments in the spread of democracy by referring to them as ‘waves’ and ‘reverse waves’:

* **The first ‘wave’:** with roots in the American and French revolutions this wave began in the 1820s and ended in the 1920s. A total of 29 democratic countries functioned during this time.
* **The first ‘reverse wave’:** starting with Mussolini’s Fascist regime in Italy, a reverse trend began in 1922 and reduced the number of democracies to 12.
* **The second ‘wave’:** after the Second World War and largely driven by decolonisation, by the end of this wave in 1960 there were 36 democratic countries in the world.
* **The second ‘reverse wave’:** 6 democracies failed between 1960 and 1975 as some entered the Communist sphere and others succumbed to authoritarian takeovers.
* **The third ‘wave’:** starting in the late 1980s, this wave primarily focusing on the former Communist bloc and the fall of the Berlin Wall. It also saw the emergence of new democracies in Latin America and in parts of South East Asia and Africa.
* **The third ‘reverse wave’**: a less clear trend, but it has been suggested there was some democratic ‘backsliding’ beginning in the mid-1990s in countries such as Russia, Venezuela, Bolivia, Georgia and Thailand (Diamond, 1997, 2008b).
* **The fourth wave(?)**: some analysis (Diamond, 2011; Popescu, 2012; Meltzer, 2015) has likened the mass protests of the Arab Spring that started in 2010 to a potential fourth wave of transitions.

Whilst the idea of democracy has a long history, it is during the twentieth century that democracy as a practiced political system has been most successful, even if this success ebbs and flows. The following section on democratic theory, whilst occasionally drawing on some of the more classic works on democracy, takes it starting point as the end of the Second World War. During this time there was a rapid expansion of literature on democratic theory and democratization, particularly from the United States. As Schmitter & Karl (1994, p.175) put it: “It does not seem excessive to claim that American political science since World War II has been obsessed with the issue of ‘democratic stability’ in the face of class conflict, ideological polarization, Communist aggression, north-south tensions, and so forth.” This makes the explosion of literature and analytical approaches to democracy in this time a useful place to start.

The following section examines theoretical approaches to democracy, from ‘thin’ more stripped back understandings to much ‘thicker’ and complex understandings. Throughout, I draw attention to what role the citizen is given in these approaches.

## 2.2 Theoretical Approaches Towards Democracy

Section 2.1 demonstrated that democracy has a long history, but as a viable political system it exploded in popularity after WWII. However, just over ten years later Gallie (1956, p.184) described the term ‘democracy’ as the essentially contested political concept *par excellence*. Indeed it can be said that: “No clear definition has been articulated, though the concept has been with us for 2,500 years” (Lagos, 2003, p. 471).

This section addresses the plurality of democratic theories by running through from ‘thin’ to ‘thick’ approaches. Thin approaches are minimalist in their framing of the required mechanisms of governance for a country to be consider a democracy – usually focusing on elections – whereas thick approaches are much deeper and see democracy as requiring far more citizen engagement, accountability, and deliberation. The fact there is such a wide spectrum of approaches to democracy and no academic consensus is clear. And if there is no shared view from the experts, we might then think to ask can we expect any shared view from the populace?

Whilst this is not strictly a chronological approach, there is a general development of theory between the two ends of this spectrum over time, from thin to thick. This section starts with electoral democracy, before moving onto polyarchy and liberal democracy. It then outlines feminist critiques of these approaches and shifts to address the impact of deliberative democratic theory and radical conceptualisations. Throughout, the review will also examine the role that citizens are theorised to have in these approaches.

### Electoral Democracy

Thin theoretical approaches are classified as such because they are concerned with minimalist interpretations of democracy that tend to focus on quite strictly mechanistic understandings of the idea. This means that if a couple of key institutional procedures exist in a system, such as voting and fair party competition, then a system can be classed as democratic. It is for this reason that such theoretical approaches are often called ‘procedural’ or ‘electoral’.

Democratic theory of this kind found its most important inspiration in the work of the Austrian-American economist Joseph Schumpeter (see Grugel 2002, p.18). In the early 1940s Schumpeter (1942) conceptualised democracy in strict mechanistic terms, outlining a narrow list of required political processes for a system to be considered democratic. The Schumpeterian approach is highly pragmatic, perhaps even cynical in the extent to which it allows any real power to be given to the people. He understood ‘the will of the people’ as a vague and unhelpful concept, and suggested there was no such thing as the ‘common good’ as understood by utilitarians. Instead, he focused almost purely on the need to institutionalise competition for political leadership, whilst not trusting the majority of citizens with any decision-making power (Grugel, 2002, p. 18). Accordingly, his oft-quoted definition describes democracy as a system ‘for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s votes’ (Schumpeter, 1942, p. 269).

The usefulness of Schumpeter’s approach to democracy is that, with such an undemanding normative element, researchers can build quantitative and empirical analysis around the theory: the simplicity of the definition lends itself to measurement and comparability across systems. Prompted by the Cold War, US academics in particular saw it as necessary to examine empirically what they considered existed in the ‘real world’, developing scales and measurement frameworks that allowed not just researchers but also political leaders to judge and describe how democratic governments were.

Accordingly, academic studies from this time tended to distance themselves from philosophical and normative arguments about democratic ideals; asking *how* effective certain procedural elements were became a more popular research question than trying to forward and expand the idea of what democracy could potentially offer citizens. This became a very popular approach for debates about democracy. However, as Pateman (1970, p.103) put it, this prevailing academic orthodoxy ‘prevented a proper understanding of the arguments of (some of) the earlier theorists of democracy about the central role of *participation* in the theory of democracy [emphasis added].’ Indeed, Pateman (1970, p.104) is particularly scathing about this development, arguing that it has resulted:

“…in a ‘democratic theory’ that in many respects bears a strange resemblance to the anti-democratic arguments of the last century. No longer is democratic theory centred around the participation of ‘the people’, on the participation of the ordinary man, or the prime virtue of a democratic system seen as the development of politically relevant and necessary qualities in the ordinary individual; in the contemporary theory of democracy it is the participation of the minority elite that is crucial and the non-participation of the apathetic, ordinary man lacking in the feeling of political efficacy, that is regarded as the main bulwark against instability”.

Indeed, the Schumpeterian approach to conceptualising democracy has faced much criticism which is well summed up by Diamond (1999, p.284) who argues that Schumpeter’s strict procedural definition of democracy is “as spare a notion of democracy as one could posit without draining the term of meaning”. Citizens are considerably side-lined in this approach – they have next to no influence on government decision-making between elections – and the focus on institutional mechanisms gives little space to examine ideas such as civil society. A famous quote from Rousseau (2010 [1762], Book 3. Chapter 15) put it most dramatically:

“The people of England regards itself as free; but it is grossly mistaken; it is free only during the election of members of parliament. As soon as they are elected, slavery overtakes it, and it is nothing.”

This critique is, in fact, of representative democracy as a whole (as opposed to participatory democracy, see deliberative democracy below). However, it highlights how problematic the minimal and purely electoral approach to democracy is for anyone who wishes democracy to empower the people, and not simply select elites. To understand democracy in any substantive terms, participation is arguably crucial, and a wider theory of democracy than the electoral approach is needed to begin addressing this issue.

### Polyarchy

Counteracting Schumpeter’s minimalism, analysis by Dahl (1956; 1961; 1989), predominantly informed by his 1961 study of governance in New Haven, sought to expand and deepen conceptualisations of democracy. The primary question in his study was: ‘given the undeniable inequalities in society, who actually governs in a democracy?’ (Dahl, 1961, pp. 4–5). Dahl argues that democracy is an unobtainable ideal, and that the idea of *polyarchy* is more useful for looking at systems of governance. With this idea, the government was not a closed and self-sufficient institution, but actually mediated between other powerful and vested interests. There are numerous centres of political power at play. The notion of polyarchy then has two broad dimensions. The first is the same as Schumpeter’s core concept of democracy: contestation. However, the second is considerably overlooked in Schumpeter’s approach: participation.

As a system, Dahl argued that the criteria for a polyarchy includes voting equality, effective participation, enlightened understanding, control of the agenda and inclusion (Dahl, 1989, p. 222). Importantly for Dahl, these criteria were strongly linked to seven institutional mechanisms, as outlined in Figure 2.1.

It is clear that the citizen, and their participation, is much more important in Dahl’s notion of polyarchy than in Schumpeter’s electoral democracy. Citizens must have access to information that is not state-sanctioned, they must have freedom of expression, and they must be able to join association groups – the bedrock of civil society – without intrusion by the state. Furthermore, the ability to vote must be free, fair, equal, and available to all.

These detailed criteria allowed modern polities to be differentiated from precursor systems of democratic governance such as that practiced in ancient Athens, or even 19th century Britain. This shows a much more considerable rebalancing of power away from elites and towards the people: although by no means is this a full swing of the pendulum.

Figure 2:1 The role played by institutions as understood in the theory of polyarchy (from Dahl 1989, p.222)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **The following institutions…** | **Are necessary to satisfy the following criteria…** |
| 1. Elected officials |  |
| 2. Free and fair elections | I. Voting equality |
|  |  |
| 1. Elected officials |  |
| 3. Inclusive suffrage |  |
| 4. Right to run for office |  |
| 5. Freedom of expression |  |
| 6. Alternative information |  |
| 7. Associational autonomy | II. Effective participation |
|  |  |
| 5. Freedom of expression |  |
| 6. Alternative information |  |
| 7. Associational autonomy | III. Enlightened understanding |
|  |  |
| 1. Elected officials |  |
| 2. Free and fair elections |  |
| 3. Inclusive suffrage |  |
| 4. Right to run for office |  |
| 5. Freedom of expression |  |
| 6. Alternative information |  |
| 7. Associational autonomy | IV. Control of the agenda |
|  |  |
| 3. Inclusive suffrage |  |
| 4. Right to run for office |  |
| 5. Freedom of expression |  |
| 6. Alternative information |  |
| 7. Associational autonomy | V. Inclusion |

The term polyarchy itself has not gained mass appeal outside of academic circles, but it has been highly influential in widening and deepening the criteria used to judge how democratic a system is. This approach, like Schumpeter’s, still allows assessments of democratic systems to be made in an empirical way, by measuring the effectiveness (or existence) of institutional mechanisms and procedures. As O’Loughin *et al.* put it (1998, p.547):

“Empirical studies of political democracy and democratization in this procedural tradition have revolved around: (a) political competition, or the extent to which structures and institutions of the state permit open competition for political power and protect the basic political rights afforded the individual; (b) participation, or the extent of meaningful inclusion of individuals and diverse groups within the system; and (c) the issue of liberties and the rule of law, or the extent to which certain political and civil rights of individuals are guaranteed within the system.”

It is this issue of the civil rights of individuals with informs the most popular and practised form of democracy, that is liberal democracy. Of course, the roots of liberal democratic theory do considerably pre-date the work of Dahl and Schumpeter (as discussed briefly in Section 2.1) and inform both.

### Liberal Democracy

As Dryzek (2002, p.9) notes, the general core of liberal theory as a doctrine is actually silent on the issue of democracy. This is perhaps surprising, since ‘liberal democracy’ is the most widely-used interpretation of democracy theory used today. The core doctrine of liberal theory, as outlined by Dryzek (2002, pp.9–10), holds the underlying assumption that individuals are mostly motivated by their own understandings of self-interest and, as Schumpeter argued, there is little adherence to, or role to be played by, ideas of the ‘common good’. This assumption is then played out in an environment of a free market economy. If this free market for any reason cannot reconcile clashes between these individual self-interests then, and only then, should politics come into play. The duty of government is to uphold individual rights:

“Liberal politics is therefore mostly and properly about the reconciliation and aggregation of predetermined interests under the auspices of a natural set of rule: that is, a constitution. A fear that self-interested individuals, even if they are in the majority, may turn public power to private advantage then necessitates a set of constitutional rights against government, and each other. These rights come with corresponding obligations to respect the rights of others and duties toward the government that secures rights.” (Dryzek, 2002, p. 9)

As Satori (1987b, p.385) concisely puts it ‘…liberalism is above all the technique of limiting the state’s power, whereas democracy is the insertion of the popular power into the state’. There is then, no need for democratic mechanisms per se to uphold a liberal system. However, the development of representative democracy, particularly in the United States, tied the two together (see Section 2.1). This tying together, of liberalism and democracy, provides one of the major conundrums of democratic political theory. Boiled down, liberalism calls for liberty yet democracy calls for equality and Satori (1987b, p.384) argues that liberty ‘has a vertical impetus’ whilst in contrast ‘equality has a horizontal urge’; perhaps more fundamentally, ‘liberty pivots on the individual, and democracy on society’. What allows them to be combined is that liberalism is not *wholly* a matter of liberty, and democracy not *wholly* a matter of equality – should they be then the contradiction would be too great and the system would collapse. And indeed if a system of liberal democracy were to swing too far in either direction it would not survive as such a system.

Satori (1987b, p.386) argues that:

“…the interplay between the liberal and the democratic components of our systems can be portrayed thus: The first is especially concerned with political bondage, individual initiative, and the form of the state; the second is especially sensitive to welfare, equality and social cohesion. What we have then is a composition, a compound.”

This description of a ‘compound’ becomes very important in the later chapters of this thesis.[[1]](#footnote-1) Liberalism and democracy then both have important roles to play when governing a modern state. Satori (1987b, pp.386–393) argues that the constitutional rights which protect an individual against governmental coercion and prevent tyrannies of the majority – ideas shaped by the work of John Stuart Mill – are the tenets of a liberal state. Without them, he argues, democracy would only follow its logic of equalization and so would become, in effect, totalitarian; without liberalism, there cannot be liberty and freedom *from* the coercive machinations of a state system. In essence, Satori suggests you cannot have the freedom *to* (equality/democracy) without freedom *from* (liberty), yet the opposite of this is not true.[[2]](#footnote-2)

As these notions of polyarchy and liberal democracies have broadened out the role played by democratic institutions in the electoral model, they have also further infused agency into the role played by citizens. In truth, in terms of participation, there is not such a large leap in terms of citizen expectations. Instead, the main areas on which more attention is focussed concern citizens’ rights and how these rights are protected, alongside citizens’ access to information so they are able to stand for election and make informed political choices. However, there is also some focus on the role of agenda-setting in polyarchy, which gets at the idea of civil society and the space outside the institutional political system which can nevertheless inform and influence politics.

To move this discussion on, the following section examines feministic critiques of certain elements of this liberal conceptualisation of politics, before moving onto the notion of deliberative democracy, which moves the participation of citizens into the centre stage. Finally, I discuss radical democracy, which reformulates conceptions of citizenship and subsequently pulls away from the liberal understanding.

### Feminist Critiques

Whilst the notion of liberal democracy is now the orthodoxy in Western democratic theory, it is not without its critics. The strands of critique discussed in this review are the feminist, deliberative, and radical approaches. The feminist critique in particular rebuts certain key elements of liberal democracy in way that lays the groundwork for deliberative democratic theory, discussed in the following section.

One of the earliest treatises to directly tackle the issue of gender rights in connection to liberal democracy was *Vindication of the Rights of Woman* written by Mary Wollstonecraft in 1792. Wollstonecraft (1792 [2004]) argued that women had the capacity to think rationally, and should be educated together with men so that they can contribute to more actively to wider society and not just be, as Rousseau suggested in *Emile*, the playthings of men. Although she still saw very clear demarcations between the genders, Wollstonecraft also believed it important for women to be far more present in the public sphere – their poor showing in her time, Wollstonecraft argued, had nothing to do with any innate properties of women, but because of the oppressive behaviour of men, confining women to the cage of the private sphere: “provided with food and raiment, for which they neither toil nor spin; but health, liberty and virtue are given in exchange” (*ibid*, p. 146). It was because of her innovate grappling with the deeply gendered public/private sphere that Held (1996 p.63) has argued that “Mary Wollstonecraft has rarely been considered one of the key theorists of democracy, but she ought to have been.”

At the time, Wollstonecraft’s arguments were particularly radical and indeed, these arguments weren’t addressed comprehensively again until John Stuart Mill continued the theme over seventy years later in *The Subjection of Women* (1869). Mill argued that the relationship between men and women was almost entirely coercive, right through to the legal structure which still saw marriage as possession and denied property rights to women. Men were masters and women were subjects. In his discussion of Mill’s work, Held (1998: 112) outlines how he critiqued this state of affairs:

“The position of women, Mill concludes, is a wholly unwarranted exception to the principles of individual liberty, equal justice and equality of opportunity – a world in which authority and privilege ought to be linked directly to merit, not to institutionalized force.”

For Mill, equality between the sexes is a fundamental requirement for liberty and freedom, and so is required for a democratic way of life (Held, 1998, pp. 113–114). Yet despite core elements of feminism being traceable back to this strand of 17th century liberalism which ‘rejected the patriarchal basis of political power’, liberal democratic theory, and the system in practice, has ‘been slow to acknowledge women as equal citizens; and even after their belated enfranchisement, women have continued to feel themselves second-class citizens’ (Phillips, 2000, p.511).

Critiques of liberal democracy from contemporary Feminist scholars have come from a number of angles. Perhaps the most prominent critique is that liberal democracy is theorised around equal political rights, but such an idea is undermined considerably by realities of social and economic inequality. As Anne Phillips (1992a, p.72) put it: “Part of the traditional critique of liberal democracy is that it concedes only the formality of political equality, while ignoring or indeed condoning the social inequalities that are associated with the market economy”.

And there are deeper theoretical concerns for feminist scholars which developed in particular in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Two prominent ones discussed here are the perceived patriarchal basis of the social contract and subsequent problems of the public/private divide (Pateman, 1988, 1989), and the shortcomings of liberalism’s focus on individualized conceptions of citizenship, which is further linked to problems of political participation (Young, 1989; Phillips, 1992a, 1992c; Mansbridge, 1993; Ackerly and Okin, 1999).

Carole Pateman (1988) criticised liberal democracy theory via the fact that the liberal idea of the state and the political rests upon ideas informed by social contract theory. This theory can be traced through numerous scholars including Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Kant and Rawls, from Enlightenment philosophy through Romantic to contemporary.[[3]](#footnote-3) Whilst the details vary considerably, the essential premise of social contract theory is that at some point in (hypothetical) history, humankind must leave an unceasingly violent and pre-political ‘state of nature’ and produce a ‘society’, governed by rules enforced by an overseer: in Hobbe’s case an absolute sovereign power (the *Leviathan*).

As Pateman (1988, p.2) put it:

“One interpretation of the original contract is that the inhabitants of the state of nature exchange the insecurities of natural freedom for equal, civil freedom which is protected by the state. In civil society freedom is universal; all adults enjoy the same civil standing and can exercise their freedom, by, as it were, replicating the original contract when, for example, they enter into the employment contract or the marriage contract.”

Such a vision of the development of society was popularised by major political developments, in particular the French Revolution. Here, the motto ‘liberty, equality, fraternity’ became a rallying trio of ideas for the building of representative, elected government and then liberal rights.

However, Pateman demonstrates there are a number of problems with this story, in particular when it comes to the expected gender roles played out in the ‘social contract’ society. Firstly, the French Revolutionary motto includes the often-overlooked value ‘fraternity’, which means ‘brotherhood of men’. This is not only a semantic point. The social contract sought to nullify the paternal structure that gave the father complete dominion over the family (and, more specifically, the son). With a social contract realising political and civil rights for the individual, the communal glue to hold such a polity together was *fraternal*: masculine. Furthermore, this contract was seen by social contract theorists as forging the public sphere of civil freedom. In this sense, the private sphere of human affairs is simply seen as the opposite, non-politicized arena of life. The public sphere is of civil freedom where ‘politics’ happens between male individuals. The ‘private sphere is not seen as politically relevant’ (Pateman, 1988, p. 3), and to this sphere, traditionally seen as the ‘women’s domain’, is relegated the family, as well as the marriage contract which traditionally treated the bride as subordinate, and even the property of the groom. By building liberal democracy on such an understanding of society, women find themselves depoliticized, disempowered, and subjugated, in what is actually a *sexual* contract. Pateman (1988, p.2) argues that the ‘[social] contract is far from being opposed to patriarchy; contract is the means through which modern patriarchy is constituted.’

The second line of critique discussed here concerns the individualism of liberalism and its focus on human rights which understand equality in a homogenous way, rather than via recognition of difference. The problem with this approach of liberal democracy is that it ‘recurrently returns us to the individual as the basic unit of political life, blocking serious consideration of the empowerment of disadvantaged *groups* (Phillips, 1992a, p.80, emphasis as in original). Influential essays by Iris Marion Young outlined the implications of this in detail (Young, 1989, 1990). Young sees the notion of a singular conception of citizenship which enacts a general will to be problematic. Such an idea enforces homogeneity upon citizens and reinforces the existing power structure in society, which, following Pateman and others, has been argued to be patriarchal, especially within the public, political sphere. As Young (1989, p.257) argues:

“In a society where some groups are privileged while others are oppressed, insisting that as citizens persons should leave behind their particular affiliations and experiences to adopt a general point of view serves only to reinforce that privilege; for the perspectives and interests of the privileged will tend to dominate this unified public, marginalizing or silencing those of other groups.”

Following this, Young argues for *differentiated*, not individual, group recognition and ‘special rights’ that attend to such group differences.

Whilst seeking to redefine ideas of rights and representation, a consequent seam of feminist thinking operating across these critiques also calls for increased participation in public life. Part of the rationale for this is the ‘transformative significance of meetings, discussion, talk’ that can produce ‘conscious-raising’ amongst women and other oppressed sections of society (Phillips, 1992b, p.76). The point is not to generate a unified or homogenous ‘sisterhood’, but to acknowledge the multiple and socially-constructed identities of woman in relation to both the public and private sphere. And as Phillips (*idib*) notes: “The further one goes in this direction, the more crucial is that vision of wider participation that informs critics of liberal democracy”. This participatory emphasis of feminist critique segues into the theoretical field of deliberative democracy. Before moving onto this field however, it is worth discussing critiques of some of the feminist formulations for citizenship in a democracy. Two of the proposed solutions in feminist theory, primarily with regards to their differentiated conceptions of citizenship, seek to either replace the liberal (male) conception of citizenship with a maternal version (Ruddick 1989; Elshtain 1981) or create alternative forms of citizenship that are differentiated along gender (Pateman 1989; 1988) or group lines (Young 1990; 1989). In the works of Ruddick (1989) and Elshtain (1981), the rejection of a universalist identity in the public sphere, as espoused by liberalism, is replaced by a form of citizenship informed by ‘maternal thinking’. In this approach, the private realm is reified and seen as morally superior to the public liberal formulation, drawing as it does on something linked to common humanity – the family and parent (mother)hood – as opposed to a singular, individualist notion of the political. This would lead to a far more compassionate, loving, empathetic, conception of citizenship built around the concept of female identity and centred on the (potential) role of motherhood. Dietz (1985, p.31) however, provides a rebuke to this argument by questioning how citizenship can be built on a relationship that is not in any way equal in its principles:

The mother and the child are in radically different positions in terms of power and control. The child is subordinate to the mother, and the need relations are highly differentiated as well.

This is misaligned with the needs of a democratic citizenship which must be ‘collective, inclusive and generalized’ (Diez 1985, p.31). Therefore, Dietz argues, this foundation for citizenship is not satisfactory.

In contrast, Pateman (1989) seeks to conceptualise something different as a response to what she identifies as the patriarchal underpinnings of liberalism. Whilst she too rejects the liberal unitary conceptualisation of citizenship, her response is to configure an idea of citizenship that identifies women *as* women – and all that entails – alongside the liberal conceptualisation, resulting in what Chantal Mouffe (2005, p.81) categorises as ‘two sexually differentiated forms of universality’. Young (1989, p.272) takes this further to reject universality completely and argue that citizenship should be built around differentiated rights for minority groups, which leads to a positive obligation of this state to protect, for instance, minority languages and culture. This creates a heterogenous public space founded on the positive recognition of difference, a completely different understanding of democracy compared to the liberal one.

Mouffe however has problems with all these solutions, and she critiques them from the perspective of her understanding of radical citizenship. The details of this are discussed in detail below. For now however it should be outlined that at core, the problem Mouffe (2005, p.86) has is that all these approaches in some way have an ‘essentialist’ notion of identity or group which sees politics as ‘a process of dealing with already constituted interests and identities’. To see identity in such a way sees it as something essentially pre-existing and *out there* that must be reflected in the political system in exact accordance to its need. Discussing how Young’s group-differentiated citizenship conceptualises politics, Mouffe (2005, p.86) notes that “there are groups with their interests and identities already given, and politics is…about finding ways to satisfy the demands on the various parts in a manner acceptable to all.” In contrast, Mouffe herself sees identity as always under construction and something that is partial and nodal, that tries to gain power through the construction of hegemony, yet is never permanent and so is anti-essentialist (Mouffe 2005).

These critiques of feminist formulations of citizenship are substantial, however, when it comes to the short-comings of liberal democracy what feminist theory did much to elucidate is the issue of wider, or, more accurately, *deeper*, understandings of political participation. It is to this I know turn to through the lens of deliberative democratic theory before returning to conclude this discussion with the notional or radical citizenship and its implications for liberal democratic theory.

### Deliberative Democracy

Fishkin (1991, pp.1–2) argues that through the artificial public/private divide and the expectations of representative liberal democracy it appears we are given a ‘…forced choice between politically equal but relatively incompetent masses and political unequal but relatively more competent elites.’ Theories of deliberative democracy challenge this conception and seek to institutionalise the notion of participation for the masses and not simply limit democracy to a system that aggregates preferences. Since the early 1990s the deliberative turn in democratic theory has arguably gone from strength to strength (Dryzek, 2010, p.3), spawning a large literature.

Deliberative approaches encourages the active participation of those affected by a collective decision, looking to develop and support opportunities to discuss, debate, and communicate about that decision in a consequential way. It should involve two-way communication and engagement, so that anyone involved could change their position on the issue at hand – this means it must be free of any manipulation in the form of threats, lies, abuse, command etc. For Cohen (1989, p.33) ‘…ideal deliberation aims to arrive at a rationally motivated consensus - to find reasons that are persuasive to all who are committed to acting on the results of a free and reasoned assessment of alternatives by equals”. It is this arena of deliberation that becomes the focus of legitimacy for a democracy, not the majority vote.

Most deliberative theorists see deliberation in a sense as enriching or deepening democratic legitimacy within a liberal democratic apparatus. However, Dryzek (2002; 2010) offers up his more radical notion of ‘discursive democracy’, which greatly reduces this reliance. Summarising Dryzek’s arguments, Fabre (2003, pp.107–108) suggests that this model is supposed to improve on the deliberative model by:

“…being more flexible with respect to legitimate modes of discourses and interests, and by affording civil society, and the various groups, associations and individuals that constitute it, central importance: some collective decisions…are best taken by (a part of) civil society, not by the state.”

This approach to democratic theory then greatly increases the role of the citizen. Whereas the citizen in many of the electoral and elite-focused theories is passive the majority of the time, they are far more active in deliberative theory. Indeed this approach harks back to ideas of direct democracy, in which the citizen is at the centre of the theoretical approach, as opposed to being side-lined by electoral mechanisms and elite institutions.

However, in her critique of discursive democracy, Fabre (2003) questions how radical and distinctive this idea can be when Dryzek still theoretically agrees that the state must retain its monopoly on the use of violence, and so ultimately retains its role as arbiter of conflict. And as discussed, the liberal democratic state is one bound up in the protection of individual political rights. This makes it hard to accept Dryzek’s claim that discursive democracy does not operate *within* the liberal democratic model.

A comprehensive and broader critique of deliberative conceptualisations of democracy is also offered by Przeworski (1998) in his discussion of deliberation and ideological domination. The crux of his critique is built around a quote from Hilary Clinton to the *New York Times* in 1994: “I did not know how sophisticated they [the opposition] would be in conveying messages that were effective politically even though substantively wrong”.[[4]](#footnote-4) In highlighting this comment, Przeworski goes on to draw out a number of issues: 1) how can we be sure that a ‘free and reasoned’ debate is occurring amongst ‘equals’; 2) what happens if a ‘rationally motivated consensus’ is not reached; and 3) what about ideological domination and ‘false beliefs’?

In order, Przeworski (1998, pp.140–141) answers these issues in the following way: 1) realistically, we simply cannot provide such a forum; 2) if there is no consensus we are left with the unavoidable and ‘vulgar’ fact we have to vote, and that the vote will go against many; and 3) actually, ‘deliberation may lead people to hold beliefs that are not in their best interest’ quite a lot of the time.

Certainly, then, the more radical elements of deliberative and discursive democracy are difficult to practically implement at a system level. However, that is not to say the principles and values espoused by deliberative democracy theorists have not had any impact. In many European democracies, for instance, there has been an important rise in the influence of Parliamentary Committees, which boost the deliberative mechanisms within the system (Strøm, 2000). Furthermore, online political participation has been seen as a way of facilitating deliberation with the public and significantly boosting the input of citizens, albeit one that is still a long way from realising its potential; as an example, even in an advanced democracy such as the UK, digital engagement is yet to live up early hopes and expectations (Simon *et al.*, 2017) and international comparisons have also suggested it may simply reflect, and even entrench, existing inequalities in participation (Marien, Hooghe and Quintelier, 2010). Yet despite such setbacks, it is hard to see a future direction for democratic theory that does not take the ideas of deliberative democracy seriously.

### Radical democracy- ‘agonistic pluralism’

A final field of critique discussed here, sometimes broadly classed as ‘radical interpretations’ of democracy, outlines limitations of liberal democracy and certain elements of the feminist critiques, discussed previously. Two key thinkers in this field, Chantel Mouffe and William Connolly, both discuss variations on what is referred to as ‘agonistic democracy’; this is, at core, a *conflictual* or *discordant* way of thinking about democracy, as opposed to the more common *consensual* or *concordant* approaches outlined by liberal thinkers (see Connolly 1987, p.10)*.* Democracy understood in this discordant way is about the never-ending management of constantly re-formulating conflicts. As Mouffe (2005, p.10) puts it, “liberalism is unable to adequately grasp the pluralistic nature of the social world, with the conflicts that pluralism entails; conflicts for which no rational solution could ever exist.”

In their radical interpretations, both Connolly and Mouffe see shifting political identities as the unit of democratic participation, which are forged into non-permanent communities. These communities are not static and what they always have (by definition) is an ‘other’ or a ‘them’. Connolly (1987, p.11) notes that “the ontology of discordance identifies some form of otherness as the unavoidable effect of socially engendered harmonies”. In a similar fashion, when talking about her alternative understanding of citizenship Mouffe (1993, pp.84-85) notes how “every definition of a ‘we’ implies the delineation of a ‘frontier’ and the designation of a ‘them’…There will always be a ‘constitutive outside’, an exterior to the community that is the very condition of its existence”. Therefore, Mouffe argues that the common good – problematic from the individualised liberal perspective because liberalism ‘evacuates the idea’ – exists in her radical formulation, however it can never be fully realised: it is an unreachable ‘vanishing point’ (ibid).

By building her conceptualisation of democracy around the idea of ‘agonistic pluralism’ Mouffe ultimately offers a way of thinking about democracy that challenges many of the discussions had here so far. To outline this approach, we need to start with Mouffe’s distinction between ‘the political’ and ‘politics’. Because of the delineation of different interest groups always generates a barrier, ‘the political’ is inherently antagonistic. Crucially, this characteristic is ever-present. Therefore, politics is “the ensemble of practices, discourses and institutions which seek to establish a certain order and organize human coexistence in conditions that are always potentially conflictual because they are affected by the dimension of ‘the political’” (Mouffe, 2009, p.101). However, a second distinction must be made between *antagonism* and *agonism*. Antagonism is a clash between enemies who seek to eradicate each other, whereas agonism is a clash between adversaries who, even if they will never agree on anything else, recognise the legitimacy of each other to exist. This means that ‘the aim of democratic politics is to transform *antagonism* into *agonism*’ (Mouffe, 2009, p.103).

This approach problematizes the rational consensus-seeking approach of the deliberatives as well as the essentialist citizenship solutions of the feminists by positing that due to the boundlessness of conflicts in democracy, power and legitimation are ever-shifting and dependent on the creation of different interest groups and their ability to develop a hegemony (which of course, is always subject to change). Participation in this system then is crucial, but Mouffe has little to say on its substantive content as such. As long as participants understand themselves as agonistic adversaries (which the system should promote them to think) then their participation is about the creation of identities and can in fact operate – for the most part – within the apparatus of a liberal system (see Mouffe 2009, p.102). Mouffe only notes that identities are processual and in this sense must be understood as non-essential and contingent; in contrast, essentialist notions of what has become called ‘identity politics’ violates a radical and pluralist understanding of citizenship. The essentialist understanding of identity “cannot be managed by democracy” and if ascendant will lead to “an explosion of antagonisms that can tear up the very basis of civility” (Mouffe, 2009, p.104).

Therefore, conceptualisations of participation in the radical interpretations of democracy is perhaps not widened as such, but re-imagined. In order to engage with democracy, participants must be able to work with towards a ‘conflictual consensus’, and know that their victories are never absolute.

### Summary

The role of the citizen can be seen as evolving through these theories as we move from the thinner conceptualisations to the thicker ones. Whilst the citizen is side-lined in the elitist and electoral model, they become the basis of legitimacy for the deliberative model. In the reality of an actual democratic political system, the role of the citizen arguably lies somewhere between these two extremes. To use a car analogy, in some ways, the thinner understandings of democracy see citizen input in the role of the ignition, used to start the journey but then the car runs for the distance without using it again. In comparison, thicker understandings conceptualise the input of citizens more in terms of the fuel, which supplies the car throughout the journey and should it ever dry up, would see it come shuddering to a halt.

We can conclude here that whilst ‘the People’ provide some form of lynchpin within democratic theory, the role they play is conceptualised differently across different approaches. Whilst the thin, mechanistic approaches are empirically useful, they are open to numerous criticisms in that they are somewhat elitist in their view of citizens, and see little role for them past that of voters. In contrast, theories on polyarchy and liberal democracy must respond to the criticisms of individual rights to better conceptualise citizen engagement. There is an important critique here to acknowledge about the gendered presumptions of power in these understandings of democracy, and furthermore, deliberative theorists would argue that they do not go anywhere near far enough in theorising the contributions that ‘the People’ should, and must, play in a democracy.

To better understand the role of the citizen in a democracy however, this discussion needs to go further and open up a different angle of study. By looking not simply at what democracy is theorised to be, but also how it is theorised to come about and develop, we can start to hone in on ideas of how citizens should engage in a democracy. This helps lead us towards the importance of citizen support in a democracy, the idea of political knowledge and, ultimately, how ‘the People’ understand what democracy itself is, and why it should be studied further.

## Theories of Democratization: How does democracy come about?

As noted in the introduction, what democracy is, and how it comes to be, are relatively different areas of interest, although there are of course some overlaps. Przeworski (1986) observed that studies of regime transition tend to fall into two types, macro-oriented or agent-led, with macro-orientated studies focusing on ‘objective conditions’, such as social and economic development, and usually taking an empirical approach and modernization theory as a starting point. They address a county’s development path and establishment of democratic governance through *structural* change. In contrast, agent-led studies focused more on the elite political players, and how their decisions and pacts might bring about regime change in a country.

This section discusses these two approaches in turn, before then addressing the notion of consolidation which is a natural extension of this approach, and which looks much less at how democracy comes to be, and more on how it survives once it comes to be. This section will also look at post-modernization, an area of study which tries to bridge some of the gaps that developed between all these different approaches to democratization.

### The Structural Approach and Modernization Theory

Drawing on Schumpeter’s thin and procedural definition of democracy, Lipset (1959, p.86) outlined what requisites are needed in a country for democracy to develop and have a chance of surviving, arguing in particular that, “economic development involving industrialization, urbanization, high educational standards, and a steady increase in the overall wealth of the society, is a basic condition sustaining democracy; it is a mark of the efficiency of the total system”.

As well as the economic requisites, Lipset contended that instrumental legitimacy is required, i.e. that the democratic political system is seen to work effectively for its citizens. In other words, the chances of democracy taking hold in a poor country with no education system and a corrupt government is almost non-existent: it simply would not function. In this capacity, citizens are seen as requiring education in order to accept good governance from those in power. There is little analysis in Lipset’s account of the role played by civil society as a whole, however. Lipset’s seminal work informed *modernization theory*: the belief in a positive and linear relationship between levels of economic development and democracy, seeing democratic development as something that *evolves* (Arat 1988, p.23). According to this theory a modern society is essentially the product of capitalism, associating economic growth in a causal relationship with progressive political freedoms, ultimately predicting an outcome of democracy if countries follow the correct transitional path (Grugel 2002, p.49). Macpherson's (1977, p.173) claim that, quite simply, “liberal democracy is strictly a capitalist phenomenon” also suggests a strong link between the notions of economic growth and democracy. There is little space in the theory for noneconomic determinants of democracy (Bollen & Jackman 1985, p.28).

Modernization theory, then, offers a framework with the potential to predict when a country would develop a democratic government, and its positivist usefulness led to it being the flagship theory for much of the empirical study of democratic development in the 1960s. Following Lipset, modernization theory was applied to the analysis of both economic development and political legitimacy. In 1960 Rostow put forward the idea that economic development progressed in five stages. A traditional agrarian society (Stage 1) develops infrastructure and becomes transitional (Stage 2), before taking off with growing investment (Stage 3), matures through economic diversification and innovation (Stage 4) and develops through to a mass consumption society (Stage 5) (Rostow, 1960). A post-materialist economy is sometimes argued to be a logical following stage (Inglehart, 1997; Doorenspleet, 2012, p. 291). This development framework strengthened the idea of modernization and continued the theme of linear development along capitalist lines, although Rostow (1960: ix) did see his framework as, ‘one component of a dynamic, disaggregated general theory of production’.

Indeed, the modernization approach faced immediate criticism. For instance, Moore (1966) agreed that industrialization and urbanization were linked to profound regime change. However, he argued the *direction* of change was more circumscribed by historical and societal constraints than modernization theory seemed to allow. Of particular importance was the relationship between the elites and the agrarian workers (lords and peasants) in a society. If elites were strong enough to coerce and control the means of production, then fascism was a likely outcome (Germany and Japan). If elites were weak and exerted little control then a communist uprising was possible (Russia and China). The middle road taken in Britain, France and to some extent the US saw a feudal nobility develop above the peasants but below the monarchy, who were then able to instigate a bourgeois revolution that led to a form of representative democracy. Notably, Moore (1966, p.29) concluded that even the outcome considered most positive out of these choices – democracy – occurred after “massive violence [was] exercised by the upper classes against the lower”. Such upheaval did not really feature in modernization theory.

In a similar vein, Roxborough (1979, p.114-117) suggested that ideas of modernization were somewhat ‘abstract’ and ‘ahistorical’. He used the example of Chile, an unequal country with a very wealthy elite, that nonetheless developed and maintained a health democracy throughout much of the twentieth century. For Roxborough (1979, p.116) it was not necessarily modernization as outlined by its advocates that was responsible for this, but it would be better understood that:

“In a complex process of concessions, repression and occasional political upheaval, the confident and unified ruling classes of Chile gradually admitted the parties of the middle and the working classes to the political arena, incorporating them into the political system as brokers between the ruling class and the subordinate classes.”

This idea of class buffers and elite bargaining was taken up in later studies on democratization and inequality by Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) and Ansell and Samuels (2014), respectively (see Chapter 5, Section 5.2 for further discussion). In sum, for Roxborough and for Moore it was not about democracy developing out of economic growth *per se* that mattered, but ‘the constellations of class conflict which give rise to specific political forms’ (Roxborough 1979, p.115-116).

Critiques of modernization approaches to democratization did not go away. Over two decades later, Grugel (2002, p.48-49) argued that the suggested linear relationship between economic (i.e. capitalist) development and democracy is problematic as it can be construed as ‘ahistorical, ethnocentric and overly structural’. As a model, it is predominantly informed by developments in Western countries. For example, within a simple modernization framework it is difficult to explain how China or Singapore are continuing economic successes yet remain stubbornly authoritarian one-party states, or at the other end of the spectrum, how it is that India is a long-standing democracy.

More broadly, the idea of modernization is a “big” process, and it is difficult to work out the exact micro-level mechanisms that are generating change, in order to generate testable hypotheses (Gill 2001, p.119). Aside from the issue of its broad focus on economic drivers of democratic development, modernization theory has also been criticised more generally because it utilises Schumpeter’s approach to democracy, which, as already discussed, is frequently criticised for being elitist and too ‘thin’.

For instance, using survey data from the Latinbarometer, collected across Latin America and over time, Lagos was able to isolate the impact of five years of continuous economic growth on a region that had been flatling for the previous 25 years. Her conclusion was that that “five ‘virtuous years’ have shown that economic growth in itself is not a democratizing agent” (Lagos 2008, p.118). Further statistical analysis of the same region supports this view, noting that modernization can create a false equivalence between economic freedom and political freedom (Landman 1999, p.626). Landman argues that other developing areas, such as Asia and Africa, must be examined to test further the universal aspirations of the modernization perspective (Ibid).

In this approach towards democratization, citizens are examined primarily as a mass political body, driven and motivated primarily by their economic status. The poor, middle class and elite groups are often typified in homogenous ways, which is just one of the reasons it can be difficult to isolate more specific mechanisms that bring about change. Drawing on this criticism, the next major development in democratization studies saw a move to focus much more on the role played by people in the process – however, with the people in this case being very much the elites who were seen as the agents of change.

### Agential

#### Transitional Studies

The second reverse wave of Huntington’s classification of the spread of democracy in the 1960s and 1970s heralded a period of negativity in the academic literature. For a time it seemed the critics were right: a singular modernization path to democracy did not seem at all guaranteed. Substantial shifts towards autocracy were occurring in developing countries including Kenya, Thailand, Zambia, South Korea and Turkey and to a lesser extent in Lesotho, Malaysia, Somalia and the Philippines (Loughlin et al. 1998, p.560). And poorer developing countries were not the only ones under duress. Middle-income countries, some such as Chile and Argentina with democratic histories, were also experiencing erosion of their democratic credentials. And Western countries appeared to be struggling too. There, mass protests (often student-led) in the 1970s prompted academic studies to question if the world was ‘witnessing a crisis of democracy’ (see Crozier et al. 1975).

In reality the answer appears to have been ‘no’. Democratic developments may have stalled but the reverse wave did not challenge the very *idea* of democracy. In retrospect, such predictions were exaggerated, especially for the Western democracies. In fact Crozier et al (1975, p.113), concluded that what was occurring was “excess of democracy” in the West, with too much participation within institutions making the system ungovernable. This conclusion highlights quite clearly the different theoretical assessments of democracy that could occur between elite-focused liberal democrats and deliberative democrats.

In general, as noted by Dalton (Dalton 2004, p.21), these accounts of crisis, particularly in the West, ‘often lacked substantive evidence to support their negative evaluations about the state of democracy’, whilst the ‘empirical evidence was very mixed’. However, if there was not a crisis of the core ideals of democracy, it remained clear that the modernization paradigm was struggling to explain many scenarios of change occurring in the real world. There occurred a shift in academic focus away from structural forces of change towards change focused on individuals. As Boix (2003, p.233) outlined:

“The authoritarian spell of Latin America and the solid redemocratization of Southern Europe in the 1970s pushed most researchers…to emphasize the autonomy of political elites. Accordingly, the democratization literature focused on examining the negotiating skills of politicians as well as the ways in which different constitutional structures may contribute to the stability of democracies.”

Such *agent*-led analyses had an approach arguably more dynamic than one grounded in structural analysis. In their seminal work, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*, O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986, p.4) argued:

“When studying an established political regime, one can rely on relatively stable economic, social, cultural, and partisan categories to identify, analyse, and evaluate the identities and strategies of those defending the status quo and those struggling to reform or transform it. We believe that this “normal science methodology” is inappropriate in rapidly changing situations where those very parameters of political action are in flux.”

The agency approach emphasized the importance of elite-led bargaining and pacts, control of military factions, hard and soft-liners within the incumbent regime and the opposition and the strength of civil society. There is an implicit focus on identifying sites of power, and attempting to predict how they will behave.

Critics of this approach have argued that that by squarely favouring specificity and micro-analysis instead of generalizations, the agency-centred approached ‘stripped politics from its social moorings’ and becomes limited by a focus on specific historical conjunctures (Remmer 1991, p.482). In a similar critique, Levine (1988) argued that a focus on actors must be grounded within some overall democratic theory. If the nature of the democracy a country develops towards is not outlined, then there is potential to be left with an ‘empty set of concepts’ or a descriptive, rather than analytical approach (Levine 1988, p.385). This led some to describe transitions studies as ‘a literature rich in description but relatively poor in testable hypotheses’ (Bunce 1995, p.122). Indeed, O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986) admitted themselves that the process which tends to be analysed is change from authoritarian rule to an often unidentified ‘something else’. Levine’s critique (1988, p.338) added that:

“Leaders and followers cannot be examined in isolation, but must be grasped through the construction of organized social and political relationships, and through the day-to-day struggle whereby issues are framed and legitimating arguments advanced in concrete societies and social groups.”

By attempting to address the short-comings of modernization theory and focusing on micro-level developments, transitional studies were susceptible to neglecting the strengths of such an approach, assigning individual agents and elites too much power, and underestimating structural considerations. As Bunce (1995, p.124) put it, in a strong critique of ‘transitology’:

“…one has to wonder whether, in focusing so heavily on the machinations of elites, transitologists have not committed the very transgression they have lamented in the work of area scholars: the preference for a particularistic and voluntaristic understanding of social reality over one which is more general and structural.”

Here, area studies referred to literature with a specialised focus on a particular place, an approach sometimes deemed to be more descriptive than analytical, and without a focus on the generalization and empirical comparisons favoured by scholars in other academic disciplines that examine democratization (see Schmitter & Karl 1994). Much critique towards transition studies stemmed from the collapse of the USSR, and the attempt of scholars to study events in Eastern Europe using approaches developed in the analysis of Latin America and Southern Europe. The focus on elites then led to an overlooking of citizens once again, as they had been seen as ‘demobilized’ during regime changes and democratization in Latin America and Southern Europe. Yet they were central to the revolutions in Eastern Europe (Bunce, 1995a).

This critique of transitological approaches was never truly resolved. However, as the collapse of the USSR took many by surprise, in particular its timing and speed, in the rush to catch up there followed another shift in the academic literature on democratization, this time towards the process of what become called ‘consolidation’ (with some naming themselves consolidologists), that is, how democratic regimes *survived*.

#### Converging Perspectives: Consolidation and Post-Modernization

Starting in South America in the early 1980s and followed by the collapse of the Soviet Union and subsequent end of the Cold War, the third wave of democratization was by far the biggest in history. Such dramatic change brought about widespread optimism for the future of democracy and the idea of a new world order. A natural endpoint for the trail of theories outlined so far lies in the consolidation literature, which focuses on how systems stabilize and protect themselves over time. Although predominantly occupied with examining how democracies establish themselves, consolidation studies have also examined how autocracies manage to retain power and stay in existence for as long as possible (Besley and Kudamatsu, 2007).

In her overview on the development of democratization studies, Grugel (2003, p.242-243) pointed to the importance of scholars such as Przeworski, and the way they ‘opened a dialogue with modernization’ arguing that economic growth is beneficial to the consolidation of democracies. Przeworski (2005, p.253) has himself insisted that democracies with a per capita annual income higher than $6055 (which matches that of Argentina in 1997) are impregnable. Przeworksi (2005, p.254) also purposefully circumvented the difficulties experienced by those studying transitions by keeping his analysis focused on a more straightforward issue:

“Note that I say nothing about the mechanisms that give rise to democracy – I believe that we do not know enough to model them – but only ask what makes democracies survive once they are established.”

The crux of consolidation studies is therefore simple: *regime survival*. Beyond references to economic baselines and political institutionalism, consolidation studies also integrate the role of civil society. Grugel (2003, p.243) pointed to the work of Larry Diamond, noting that he “pulls together an emphasis on the role of culture and capitalism with a conservative assumption that it is primarily the behaviour of elites that matter”. Diamond (1999, p.65) uses the notion of the ‘only game in town’ as his benchmark:

“…consolidation is most usefully construed as the process of achieving broad and deep legitimation, such that all significant political actors, at both the elite and mass levels, believe that the democratic regime is the most right and appropriate for their society, better than any other realistic alternative they can imagine.”

It is perhaps not surprising that after such upheaval and changes of government across the world the focus of theory moved towards how a democratic regime might go on to survive. However, just as the undertow of the second reverse wave prompted unsubstantiated negativity, the unprecedented scale of the third wave may have over-egged some of the assessments being made (see Fukuyama 1992). For the year 1995 Diamond (1999) classified 117 out of 191 countries in the world as electoral democracies. As Merkel pointed (2010, p.19) out:

“[Diamond’s] list included Yeltsin’s oligarchic kleptocracy, the corrupt regime in Georgia at the beginning of the 1990s, the by no means transformed Belarus, the crony system in the Philippines, the anarchy of Bangladesh, and Sierra Leone shaken as it was by the throes of civil war, along with Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, and Great Britain. Even a mildly critical glance suffices to show that there was a substantial difference between the logic of political rule in the first group of countries and the regime logic in the second group of established democracies.”

Such an assessment highlights the importance of whether a ‘thin’ or ‘thick’ understanding of democracy is being utilised, as it can clearly lead to different conclusion on the state of democracy in the world.

And in fact, this type of optimistic assessment was rather short-lived. Back during democracy’s ‘crisis’ in the 1970s Crozier et al (1975, p.160) declared that there also seemed to be a, “dissipation of religion, the withering away of nationalism, the decline—if not the end—of class-based ideology.” In the 1990s and early 2000s this statement was severely undermined. Ethno-nationalist politics led to genocide in Yugoslavia whilst the 9/11 attacks on New York highlighted a seemingly global form of terrorism underpinned by Islamic fundamentalism. The order was turning to disorder. In terms of democratic developments, by the 2000s there was clear deterioration of democratic practices in Russia, Georgia, Ukraine, Belarus, Venezuela, Bolivia and Thailand. A decade after his optimistic list of democracies, Diamond (2008b) turned to outlining fears of a ‘democratic rollback’ across the world; it appeared a new reverse wave was taking hold and dragging democracies under.

Much of the problem with the consolidation literature lies with the static, ‘tick-box’ approach it has towards analysis. The list of requirements is very much built around the concept of liberal democracy, and by taking them as ‘there or not’, shades of graduations and shifts within the system (regressive or progressive) can be lost. Bunce (1995, pp.124–125) took this issue further by asking is democratic consolidation then, just a matter of time? What about the system capacity to withstand crises? And finally, deliberative and radical democratic theorists were also pointing towards a reconceptualisation of democracy as, “a process, not a result”, questioning if “the democratic project can never be completed, then how can we understand the term ‘consolidation’ with its implication of democracy as an end state?” (Bunce, 1995b, p. 125).

However, many theorists have rallied against this barrage of criticism. Welzel (2009, p.80) looked again at the modernization thesis and argued that whilst it has been repeatedly challenged, time and time again it has been re-established. It has certainly responded to the criticism levelled at it across the years. For instance, nearly all contemporary interpretations of modernization theory drop the straightforward linear causality of earlier work and attempt to integrate civil society and civic freedoms into the model. Focus shifted away from the genesis of democracy towards its consolidation. Perhaps its most substantial reworking has been in the work of Inglehart and Welzel (see Inglehart & Welzel 2010; Welzel & Inglehart 2010; Welzel 2007; Welzel et al. 2003; Inglehart 2003; Inglehart 1997) whose ‘human development’ theory argues that economic development leads to a change in citizens’ value sets, and this human development ultimately results in the people calling for democratic institutions to meet their political agency, in a reciprocal, rather than linear, relationship.

The value change is seen as spawning from increased economic development and wealth in society which allows citizens to shift their attention away from material requirements such as shelter, and towards issues of personal autonomy. In this development of ‘postmodernization’ (Inglehart 1997), the impetus for change is far more readily ascribed to ‘people power’ as opposed to elites and their bargaining, or the determinism of structural development.

### Summary

This section has discussed the two main approaches to the study of democratization, structural and agential, before introducing the notions of consolidation and post-modernization, which can be understood as attempts to bridge the divide inherent within these two different focuses.

For structuralists the role of people in democratization is understood at the macro-level, and they are generally seen to operate in rather homogenous groups (rich, poor, middle-class), with various relations to the process depending on the economic development of the country. For those taking a more agential approach, some people are given far more power and agency, but those give such power comprise only a very select few – elites who often already have access to levers of power in authority positions. Once a regime is in place, however, it will require legitimising by ‘the People’ if it is to consolidate and survive; citizens must be ‘on board’.

However, all these theories, whether broad and structural or narrow and elite-focused still tend to neglect the more important details on exactly why it is that citizens are motivated to support democratic regimes and engage with them. It is to this issue that I turn to in the next section of this review, which looks at fields of study on political support and civic culture, and which sets up the final rationale for why we must address citizen understandings of democracy.

## 2.3 People and Democracy: Political Support and Civic Culture

Compared to the theoretical fields focused on so far, the role and behaviour of citizens is more at the fore front in studies that examine political support of political regimes and civic culture. When Schumpeter notes that in a democracy political elites should be involved in a competitive struggle for people’s votes, obvious questions to ask include: why *do* people vote for particular politicians; and how and why do people support governments? Even if we take a very minimal approach to understanding democracy, there is no way to avoid the fact that politicians need a mandate to govern. Usually this is provided during election time, but in general, a culture needs to exist that allows democracy to operate. For all these considerations the behaviour of citizens is key.

In this part of the literature review I trace the development of literature which examines the political support, knowledge, participation and behaviour of citizens, particularly in democracies. Throughout I raise three observations that lead into the final part of this chapter. These observations concern the importance of having an understanding of democracy, the study of mass support for democracies, and the impact this has on further analysis of political behaviour. My discussion starts with two seminal bodies of work: the first concerns Easton’s concept of ‘political support’, the second concerns Almond & Verba’s analysis of ‘civic culture’.

### Political Support and Civic Culture

Easton (1957; 1965; 1975) formulated a framework for understanding the multi-dimensionality of political support for political regimes, and provides a useful starting point for discussion. Through his schema he argues that support is not all of one piece, and a distinction is required between *diffuse* and *specific* support. The fundamental premise of such a division is that citizens distinguish between varying levels of abstraction when analysing their government, from the individual incumbent political party, all the way up to the ideals of the regime and attachment to the nation.

In Easton’s (1965) framework, specific support refers to citizens making a rational calculation based on the actions of authorities and institutions (such as the political leaders, judiciary or bureaucracy) and determining whether they deserve any degree of support. As he notes, conceivably a person may have little trust in the political authorities and may not even believe in their legitimacy, but if the person perceives their demands have been met, they may be prepared to extend limited support to the particular incumbents in office (Easton 1975, p.438). In contrast, diffuse support refers to a citizen’s belief in the ideology underlining a particular system: such as democracy.

This formulation by Easton has been highly influential. His 1965 text, entitled *A Systems Analysis of Political Life,* is considered something of a classic text in the field (Schedler & Sarsfield 2007, p.655; Mishler & Rose 2002, p.6) and many studies have utilised this approach to undertake a more finely-grained analysis of citizen support (for instance Qi & Shin 2011; Crow 2010; Norris 1999). Studies using this framework have shown how this differentiation of general support for the overall political system to support for specific governments helps explain why percentages that trust politicians can be so low, yet support for the idea of democracy can be so high.

But when outlining the relationship expected between the people and democracy, support for a political system is not the only thing we are interested in. Also important is to look at the link between political attitudes and behaviour. One of the most influential contemporary examinations of this issue is the path-breaking study, *The Civic Culture* by Almond and Verba (1963). They outlined that in a nondemocratic society, people can be understood as subjects only, and their behaviour is expected to be one of passivity, loyalty and acceptance of authority (Almond & Verba 1963, p.162). However, in a democracy, things are different. The people must be subjects to an extent in that they have some loyalty and acceptance (more on this below), but people in democracies are also citizens and are expected to participate:

In democratic societies, on the other hand, his role as subject does not exhaust what is expected of him. He is expected to have the virtues of the subject – to obey the law, to be loyal – but he is also expected to take some part in the formation of decisions.” (ibid)

What made this study so important was that Almond and Verba looked far beyond a Schumpeterian conceptualisation of the people in democracy – i.e. simply voters – and tried to unpack much more what attitudes and understandings gave rise to a civic society.

Borrowing from other disciplines such as sociology, social psychology and pyschoanthropology (Almond 1980, pp.10-15), the study argued that if citizens are to make demands of a democratic system, it is important to understand the nature of these demands, and whether citizens might withdraw their support for democracy if their demands are not met.

Using survey data analysis, Almond and Verba analysed the cultural orientations required for citizens not only to attitudinally support a democratic system but also to get involved and be active in their local community and political affairs. Socioeconomic development was argued to be central as it fostered trust, tolerance and developed mass education, central to strengthening values that supported capitalism and democracy. Key to a stable democracy was a ‘mixed political culture’, a balance between citizen demands (voting, lobbying) and their acceptance of policy outputs if the democratic process was fair (loyalty). Such examination was furthered by using surveys to measure issues such as citizen’s pride in certain aspects of their country, satisfaction with the participation processes available to them, and perceptions of what qualities made popular leaders (Almond & Verba 1963).

Upholding this balance requires a knowledgeable citizenry because “voters who are knowledgeable about politics are better able to process new information, weigh the pros and cons of different proposals, identify and connect their own preferences to those of political parties and candidates, and they are more likely to participate by voting in elections” (Shehata 2013, p.200). Not only that but, for balance, they must be aware of the limits of participation and the types of demands that a democracy can handle.

This approach to analysing political behaviour, looking at attitudes, values and support for democracy, has spawned something of an academic ‘industry’, but it has not gone uncriticised (Barry, 1978; Przeworski, 2003). One issue raised is that the idea of ‘political culture’ is really analogous to early work on ‘national character’, an approach which Barry (1978, pp.8-9) argued is somewhat conservative in nature, drawing from a strain of political sociological literature which understood events such as the collapse of the Weimar Republic and the Russia Revolution as evidence that popular participation leads to absolutism. When survey data results were interpreted to demonstrate that people were frequently irrational, Barry argued the regressive focus then becomes: how can social order be maintained?

Przeworski (2003) highlighted the conceptual and methodological pitfalls which Barry noted over two decades previously and expands upon his own critique which is that in these studies what is often outlined is how particular elements might coincide (high educational attainment and high participation) but this line of ‘theorising’ does not pick away at *why* this is the case, as opposed to rationalist models based on game theory for instance, which are more focused on trying to explain the *why* part of the story.

However, these criticisms aside, it cannot be overstated how important the Civic Culture research has been in informing subsequent work on conceptualising political support and helping us to understand why certain patterns of support are as they are, especially the consistent finding that democracy has such strong support, and politicians suffer from such low support.

Figure 2.2 demonstrates how Norris (1999, p.10) and Dalton (1999, p.58) have updated Easton’s framework of political support and the concepts highlighted in Almond and Verba’s civic culture study to systematically examine political support for democratic governance. The scale from diffuse support through to specific support is split into particular levels of focus; community, regime and authorities. The community is the most diffuse, and relates to values of national pride. The regime is more specific. It a democracy it can be examined by looking at support for democracy as a system (see Chapter 1) but also performance of the governments and trusts in the party system. Finally, at the most specific level, we can examine feelings towards party leaders and strength of partisanship.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of Support** | **Level of analysis** | **Affective orientations** | **Instrumental evaluations** | **Summary of Trends** |
| *Diffuse Support* | *Community* |  |  |  |
|  |  | National Pride | Best nation to live in | *High* levels of support |
|  | National Identity |
| *Regime* |  |  |  |
| * Principles | Democratic Values | Democracy best form of government | *Varied* satisfaction with the workings of the regime |
|  |  |  |
| * Performance | Participatory Rights | Satisfaction with democratic process |
|  | Political Rights | Evaluations of rights |
|  |  |  |  |
| * Institutions | Institutional expectations | Trust in institutions | *Declining* confidence in government institutions; *low* levels of support in many newer democracies |
|  | Support for parties | Trust in party system |
|  | Output expectations | Performance judgements |
| *Authorities* |  |  |  |
|  | Feelings towards party leaders | Evaluations of politicians | *Mixed* trends in trust in politicians |
| *Specific Support* |  | Party identification |

Figure 2:2 Conceptualising Political Support (adapted from Norris 1999, p.10 and Dalton 1999, p.58)

The affective orientations and instrumental evaluations columns in Figure 2,2 outline the important elements of aspects of civic culture at each level of support. When it comes to regime principles for a democratic state, ‘democratic values’ are obviously the most important. Norris (1999, p.11) notes that this dimension refers to ‘“idealist” definitions of democracy derived from classic liberal theory’. However, she goes on to acknowledge that democracy is ‘an essentially contested concept, open to multiple meanings [and] there is no consensus about which values should be nominated as important’ (ibid).

What this means is that empirical testing of support for democracy has been undertaken using very narrow questions which only ascertain whether the respondent thinks democracy is a good thing or not. As Qi and Shin (2011, p.247) put it: “In testing this demand-driven model of democratization, a standard practice has been to measure citizen demand for democracy solely in terms of mass support for democracy as a regime.” The questions used for this measurement are often along the lines of: *“On the whole are you very satisfied, rather satisfied, not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with the way democracy is developing in our country?”* Questions like this tap into support for the term ‘democracy’ only: it is not clear how the term is understood by the respondent. Other questions, such as “*How democratically is this country being governed today (on a scale of one to ten)?*” or levels of agreement with phrases like *“Democracies are indecisive and have too much squabbling”* and *“Democracies aren’t good at maintaining order”* delve slightly deeper into issues of quality, yet they share the same difficulty: we still don’t know what democracy means to those answering the question.

From this discussion, we can take two consequent points. If political knowledge has such an important role in generating support for democracy and prompting participation, awareness of what democracy means must be widespread amongst citizens – otherwise there would be an unworkable disjuncture between regime capabilities and public expectations. Hence:

**1) To effectively support democracy, citizens must be knowledgeable of democracy**

However, secondly:

**2) Examinations of citizen support for democracy frequently *assume* a shared understanding of democracy**

In the *Summary of Trends* column of Figure 2.2 it is clear that at the diffuse level, political support for the political community within countries tends to be high. We know from numerous examples outlined in Chapter One that support for democracy as a concept, as a term, is very high. Using the World Values Survey (WVS), Diamond (Diamond 2008a, p.xi) calculated that 80% of respondents thought democracy was the best form of government, whether they came from Western European countries, the former Soviet Union or the democracy-deprived Middle East. Support for democracy as an ideal is high in most industrialised Western nations, and continues to increase in many (Klingemann, 1998; Dalton, 1999; Norris, 1999).

However, what these studies rarely assess in any detail is what citizens have in mind when they say they support democracy. We know that support for more specific things, such as institutions or politicians, is mixed and more often than not low ( (Klingemann, 1998; Dalton, 1999; Holmberg, 1999). So it appears that it is not democracy – the term – citizens dislike, but their governments and representatives. Indeed, this schism between the strength of diffuse and specific political support forms the nexus of Norris’s (2011; 1999) concept of ‘critical citizens’ or, alternatively, ‘dissatisfied democrats’. Norris argues that there has been a growth of more critical citizens who value democracy as an ideal yet who remain dissatisfied with the performance of their political system, and particularly the core institutions of representative government (Norris 1999, p.269). This idea was bolstered by further evidence from a wider selection of countries a decade later (Norris 2011).

For Norris, the growth of these critical citizens is not necessarily a negative development. For studies of citizen opinions, emphasis revolves around political support, trust and participation. Norris (1999, pp. 257-270) argued that within established democracies, those citizens who show distrust in politicians and institutions could act as a check on state power, through non-institutional activities such as protest marches, boycotting, occupy movements, unofficial strikes or petitions alongside conventional participation such as voting. As long as they continue to act democratically, they bolster democracy. Critics of this theory however have pointed out that those who lack trust in politicians can also lack trust in society. To see the rise in critical citizens as a good thing could be masking problems of institutional failure (Trägårdh 2013, p.102). Others have demonstrated negative behavioural traits associated with low levels of political trust, showing that those who can be classed as a critical citizen appear more likely than more supportive citizens to accept illegal behaviour such as tax fraud (Marien and Hooghe, 2011).

These studies are still built around political support but with only a secondary emphasis on understanding. Having such a large majority of support for a contested term actually makes it difficult to examine this political support further, for instance, to examine Norris’s idea further and scrutinize whether citizens’ understandings of what democracy *is* influences their political behaviour as citizens. There is a difficulty in establishing the precise impact of the decline in institutional confidence in any quantifiable way (Norris 1999, p.257).

Returning to Przeworksi’s critique (2003, p.119), he expressed scepticism with the focus on support, and its one-dimensional measurement, complaining that:

‘…pages of academic journals are filled with percentages of Americans, Spaniards, Poles or Kazaks saying that they like or do not like democracy…and there is not a shred of evidence that these answers have anything to do with the actual survival of democracy’.

Furthermore, Inglehart and Welzel (2003, p.72) argued that these high levels of support for democracy are simply paying lip service to an abstract idea, and there is little evidence to say that they are necessarily linked to a belief in democratic values.

It is not difficult to see where this mass support for democracy might come from. Democracy is consistently held up as an idea tied to concepts such as freedom, fairness, equality and justice. Today, the United Nations holds the promotion of democracy as a core ideal (Newman and Rich, 2004). International organisations, private foundations, corporations and individual governments have all taken active roles in the promotion of democracy (John O’Loughlin *et al.*, 1998). Survey respondents are quite likely then to believe it is socially desirable to answer a question on democracy in a positive fashion.

Overall, then, from an analytical point of view this means high levels of ostensible support for democracy in surveys worldwide might simply reflect a social desirability bias and hence mass support for democracy as a concept is problematic, as we cannot be sure that it stands as a proxy for democratic values and knowledge. Further analysis of how different understandings of democracy affect the behaviour of citizens is limited. This is point three:

**3) Reported levels of support for democracy have a limited theoretical ability to explain political behaviour**

The three points made throughout this section of the literature review provide the motivation behind this thesis and form the focus for the research. In sum, without knowing what knowledge, or understanding, a citizen has of democracy, their support for it becomes meaningless, and we are unable to see if there is an effect of understanding on participation and behaviour. The following and final section of this chapter examines what steps have been taken so far to remedy this situation, and demonstrates where this thesis fits into this body of literature.

## 2.4 How Do Citizens Themselves Understand Democracy?

The three points made in the last section make a clear case; further research is needed into how citizens understand democracy, not just whether they support it or not. Since democracy is such a contested idea, when it comes to the previous studies on democratic support, ‘the concept of democracy people have in their minds, will have an impact on the responses to any empirical measure’ (Lagos 2003, p.471).The issue here is probably put best by Canache (2012, p.1150) who noted that our focus on support for democracy puts “the cart before the horse” and so we would be “well advised to step back and ask more fundamental questions regarding what citizens think democracy *is*” (emphasis added). Similarly, Schedler and Sarsfield (2007, p.654) suggested that:

“Rather than resigning ourselves to the meaninglessness of overt democratic support, we should strive to uncover its structure of meaning by reading it in the context of individual attitudes towards more specific components of liberal democracy – be they conceptual, institutional or normative.”

There are two points to pick up from these quotes. The first is how recently Canache’s suggestion was made: 2012. It is only in the last decade or so that interest has turned seriously towards examining how citizens understand democracy.

Of course this field of interest is not without precedent. Prothro and Grigg (1960) examined this topic over 50 years ago and found consensus for supporting democracy in the abstract, but this consensus disappeared when specific questions were asked concerning for instance, issues of free speech and minority representation. However, Prothro and Grigg used a very small sample (less than 250), and their study was limited to two communities in the US. It is only in more recent years that surveys with large sample sizes have allowed robust cross-national comparison and included results from newer or even non-democracies (Norris 1999, p.13). Thomassen (1998) examined in more detail whether people in democracies might prioritise the liberal or equality elements to democracy, although this study was predominantly limited to citizens within mature democracies in Western Europe.

The second point is Schedler and Sarsfield’s suggestion that research should engage in unpacking the meanings behind public support for democracy, which advocates the use of liberal democracy as a comparative baseline for our studies. This will be examined in more detail throughout the final part of this literature review. This last section examines the studies which have been done into citizen understandings of democracy. These have mainly undertaken at three levels – global, regional and national. I discuss the studies using these groupings.

### Global Level Studies

In one of the first studies to examine this issue at the global scale, Dalton *et al.* (2008) examined open-ended definitions of democracy provided by citizens from 49 countries in five groups of states (Established Democracies, African, Eastern European, Asian, and Latin American). The definitions provided by respondents were then classed as “Liberty/Freedom”, “Institutions/Procedures”, “Social Benefits”, “Other” and “Don’t Know”. The study recorded two important findings. First, those in established democracies are no more likely to offer a definition of democracy than those in non-democracies (ibid, pp.3-6). Second, contrary to what sceptics might expect, respondents’ understandings of democracy conformed to liberal democratic ideals: “the identification of democracy with greater freedom and liberty has broadly diffused across the globe” (ibid, p.9). In other words, respondents were seen to understand democracy in the ‘correct’ liberal democratic way, and did not confuse it with any social benefits, such as increased wealth or prosperity.

There are two issues to highlight with this study. The first is the issue of transparency, as it is not made clear how the definitional classifications of the open-ended survey responses were generated. We can guess at the criteria, but the “Other” and “Don’t Know” categories accounted for around a third of answers across all the different groups of states (Dalton *et al*., 2008, pp.4-5). The second is the nature of the question itself. Dalton *et al*. coded and aggregated open-ended definitions of democracy, arguing that this allows for a rigorous test of understanding. A potential issue with this is that open-ended questions often allow only one or two responses. In this case, procedural accounts of democracy – elections especially – are well-known and spring to mind straight away. In Canache (2012, p.1141) Latin American survey (discussed in detail below), respondents were allowed to provide up to three definitions of democracy in an open question: only 8% gave three distinct definitions, 64% offered one or two, and almost 28% did not give any. Questionnaire fatigue is an issue, especially for such demanding questions. It is important to point out that when answering these open ended-questions it is quite possible that the citizen *starts* with a liberal characteristic or two, yet that does not mean that is where their definition of democracy *stops*.

Cho (2015), Welzel (2013) Norris (2011) and use a different set of questions for their global level analysis, but take a similar approach to examining citizen understandings. The authors all draw from a set of ten questions newly introduced to the WVS 2005-2008 survey, shown in Figure 2.3. This table also shows the differing classifications used by each author for each characteristic. These questions are also utilised in this thesis and I discuss the full details of this in Chapter 3. In Figure 2.4, I outline how these questions are used to test citizen knowledge of democracy in each study.

These questions are designed to probe much further into understandings and definitions of democracy amongst citizens than surveys have in the past. The choices are purposely designed to match certain elements of liberal democratic theory.

Figure 2:3 Questions on Democratic Characteristics from the WVS2008 and their theoretical classification by Cho, Welzel and Norris

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *Many things may be desirable, but not all of them are essential characteristics of democracy. Please tell me for each of the following things how essential you think it is as a characteristic of democracy. Use this scale where 1 means “not at all an essential characteristic of democracy” and 10 means it definitely is “an essential characteristic of democracy”:* | | | |
|  | | ***Cho (2015)*** | ***Welzel (2013)*** | ***Norris (2011)*** |
| People choose their leaders in free elections | | Essential | Liberal | Procedural |
| People can change the laws in referendums | | - | Liberal | Procedural |
| Civil rights protect people’s liberty against repression | | Essential | Liberal | Procedural |
| Women have the same rights as men | | - | Liberal | Procedural |
| Governments tax the rich and subsidize the poor | | - | Social | Instrumental |
| The state provides benefits for the unemployed | | - | Social | Instrumental |
| The economy is prospering | | - | Populist | Instrumental |
| Criminals are severely punished | | - | Populist | Instrumental |
| The army takes over when government is incompetent | | Non-essential | Authoritarian | Authoritarian |
| Religious leaders interpret the law | | Non-essential | Authoritarian | Authoritarian |

Figure 2:4 Configuration of the WVS2008 questions to test democratic understanding across three studies

|  |
| --- |
| ***Cho (2015): “Informed understanding”:*** (Elections + Civil rights) – (Army takeover + Religious authorities) |
| ***Welzel (2013): “Popular views”***: (Elections + Civil rights + Referendum + Gender rights) – (Army takeover + Religious authorities + Criminal Punishment + Prospering Economy) |
| ***Norris (2011): “Enlightened understanding”*** (Elections + Civil rights + Referendum + Gender rights) – (Army takeover + Religious authorities + Criminal Punishment + Prospering Economy + State aid + tax subsidisation) |

The analysis by Cho (2015) use only four of the available characteristics to make a basic cognitive map to test if respondents ‘correctly’ identify that elections and civil liberties are essential democratic characteristics whereas military intervention and law-making by religious authorities are non-essential and in fact anti-democratic. The study found that informed understandings of democracy varied substantially across countries and individuals and that higher levels of education and media us predicted better informed understanding of democracy, which Cho (2015, p.255) chalks up to processes such as modernisation, social capital, and political learning.

Welzel (2013) and Norris (2011) categorised responses to all ten questions with a more complex theoretical grounding by using all ten of the questions, but there are slight differences between the approaches, which lead to three different scales being used across the studies (see Figure 2.4). Norris is guided by theory whilst Welzel used factor analysis to initially demonstrate that there are four distinct groupings within the set of questions (this is discussed in Chapter 4 and presented in Figure. 4.2). The top four characteristics concerning elections civil rights, referendums and equal gender rights match directly with theories of liberal democracy. Noticeable is that they are referred to as ‘liberal’ by Welzel. This is a far more encompassing term than the term ‘procedural’, used by Norris, which has Schumpertarian overtones related to mechanisms of governance, rather than wider conceptions of citizen rights. However, both authors see these four characteristics together as the ‘right answers’ to classify understandings of democracy.

In contrast, the bottom two characteristics in Figure 2.3 concern religious authorities and the army and are authoritarian, and considered anti-democratic, as seen in the study by Cho. The remaining four characteristics are a little trickier to categorise. As outlined in Figure 2.4, Welzel classifies a prospering economy and severe criminal punishment as populist ideals that are perhaps desirable outputs of democracy for particular citizens, but are not inherent to the ideal of democracy. He then builds a classification of popular views of democracy by subtracting the authoritarian and populist measures from the liberal ones. The characteristics on taxing the rich and subsidising the poor and aid for the unemployed load together in his factor analysis and are considered to constitute a type of liberal democracy (social-liberal, as opposed to market-liberal) and so they are not included when he designed his scale to test how well citizens understand democracy. However, Norris (2011: 159) uses more demanding criterion as she *also* subtracts the score for these two social characteristics from the liberal ones.

The approach of these three studies is prescriptive; with slight variations, the authors generate a type of ‘civics test’ to see if citizens are answering correctly (prioritising the liberal/procedural elements over the rest) or incorrectly according to the expectations of liberal democratic theory. This produces a one-dimensional scale of, as Cho refers to it, ‘informed understanding’ or as Norris calls it, ‘enlightened democratic knowledge’. The actual dimensions and structure of understandings across these ten characteristics are considerably simplified by such an approach.

Norris’s (2011, pp.167-168) study ends on a more cautious note than Dalton *et al.* (2008), arguing that whilst aspirations for democracy are widespread, in countries with limited experience of democracy this “should *not* be taken to mean that people necessarily yearn deeply for democratic procedural reforms, or indeed that citizens have the capacity to draw a bright line between democracy and governance.” On the other hand, Welzel (2013, p.331) examines the impact that post-modern values have on his scale of understanding, arguing that emancipative values such as freedom of choice and equality of opportunities “couple people’s desire for democracy with a more critical rating of their society’s actual democratic quality”; in this case Welzel’s formulation of democracy focuses on the liberal characteristics, but not the populist ones (see Figure 2:4).

The methods and approaches used in these studies by Norris and Welzel in particular inform the methods and analyses undertaken in this thesis. This is discussed in further detail in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4. For now, this literature review moves to a lower scale and considers studies undertaken at the regional level.

### Regional-Level Studies

Using survey data from African states (ranging from the oppressive Zimbabwean regime to the democracy of Cape Verde), Bratton (2007; 2010) broadly agrees with Dalton *el al*.’s assessment that liberal understandings of democracy are widespread. After correlating national average scores on an AfroBarometer democratic quality question against Freedom House scores of the level of political freedom in each state, Bratton (2007, p.104) argues that “ordinary Africans and specialists arrive at almost identical assessments” of democracy. In effect, this suggests that citizen understandings of the term are aligning with experts who are making their judgements based on liberal democratic ideals. So, whilst this does not suggest that citizens are definitely informed about democracy in this way, Bratton’s conclusions certainly hint that the potential is there.

In contrast, evidence from many states of the former Soviet bloc is less reassuring, as the democratization literature has struggled to grapple with and explain the variety of regimes types that sprang up after the fall of the USSR (Kopecký and Mudde, 2000). Support for democracy in these regions seems particularly influenced by economic developments i.e. if the economy is growing under the democratic regime and living standards are improving it is suggested that people are more likely to support the idea of democracy (Mishler & Rose 2002; 1999) rather than it being for purely principled support. Further, whilst ‘colour revolutions’ erupted against a number of authoritarian leaders throughout the late 1990s and early 2000s, there has been limited democratization since, even from ‘successful’ revolutions in Serbia, Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan (Marples, 2006; Kalandadze and Orenstein, 2009).

In East Asia the focus has been on whether the emphasis in Confucianism and Buddhism on group interests and submission to authority is incompatible with the individualistic notion of civil rights in liberal democracy. For instance, Huntington (1996, p.238) strongly contended that Confucian values are obstacles to democratization. More nuanced analyses (e.g. Sen 1999) have suggested that this obstacle occurs when these belief systems are co-opted to meet the needs of the state, as is argued by McCargo (2004) in the context of Buddhism in Thailand and by Chaibong (2004) regarding Confucianism in China and Singapore. Yet overall, the conclusion of Chang *et al.* (2007) is that an ‘authoritarian nostalgia’ exists in the region, as young and fragile democracies struggles to live up to the economic boom before the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis, or simply appear economically sluggish compared to authoritarian China. Substantive examinations of what democracy means to citizens in East Asia are also limited, but Chang *et al*. (2007, p.75) argue that “across East Asia the acquisition of liberal-democratic values has been slow and uneven”.

In contrast, Welzel (2011) used the ten WVS 2005-2008 questions on democratic characteristics (the same data as outlined in Figure 2.3) to argue that the differences between Asian and Western populations over liberal democracy appear to be gradual and not categorical. Over time, Welzel argued, modernization will see East Asian values and understandings of democracy catch up with the West.

It is in the region of Latin America that most progress has been made in studying citizen understandings of democracy. Two regional studies are discussed here before moving onto two national studies in Mexico and Chile in the following section.

Using cluster analysis of results from the AmericasBarometer 2006-2007 across 12 countries, Carlin & Singer (2011) examined whether respondents’ understanding of democracy matched the criteria set out in Dahl’s concept of polyarchy (see Section 2.2). The cluster analysis produced five profiles of understanding. Full ‘polyarchs’ were liberal on all variables entered into the analysis, but made up the second-smallest group, with 17.9% of all respondents. In comparison, every other group was, at the very least, ambivalent towards the idea that everyone should be able to participate in the democratic process. The biggest cluster, ‘power refrainers’ (24% of the sample), were actually illiberal towards institutions and procedures: answers on this concept tapped into whether it would ever be acceptable to suspend the legislative body or Supreme Court (Carlin & Singer 2011, p.1506).

When studying Latin Americans’ open-ended definitions of democracy, Canache (2012, p.1144) noted there is “significant variation in the ability of citizens to define democracy across and within nations”. In terms of just providing *any* kind of definition for democracy, the results ranged from 90% of people answering in Uruguay versus only 54% in Paraguay (ibid, pp.1139-1140). The study further assessed the substantive content and complexity of answers provided. Those providing liberal definitions also varied considerably, from 79% in Venezuela to 30% in Colombia. When examining the impact these understandings had on political behaviour, Canache (ibid*,* p.1145) notes that “when the content of democratic conceptualisations veers away from liberty, the general tendency is for democratic support to decline.”

These cautious conclusions are reiterated at the national level.

### National-Level Studies

Using survey data from Mexico, Schedler and Sarsfield (2007) examine whether illiberal values were demonstrated by those who supported democracy.[[5]](#footnote-5) Their study sought to classify ‘democrats with adjectives’, moving past a one-dimensional approach to democratic support, and trying to uncover a multi-dimensional or ‘polysemic’ understanding of democracy. Cluster analysis was used to classify five different types of democrat, along with one group of ambivalent non-democrats. Almost 75% of the population were classed as theoretically supporting democracy over dictatorship. Yet strikingly this support was often combined with support for severe limitations on the extension of liberal values, such as the exclusion of homosexual or indigenous people from politics, or disallowing the freedom of expression (Schedler & Sarsfield 2007, p.651). Those classed as fully ‘liberal democrat’ made up only 13.6% of the population and were the second-smallest group of respondents. Other groups deemed it acceptable to restrict certain indigenous groups from the democratic process (exclusionary democrats, 12.4%) whilst larger groups were homophobic when it came to homosexuals being allowed to participate in politics (28.2%) or paternalist (18.8%) in that they scored very low on freedom of organisation.

In the same vein, a study in Chile (Carlin, 2011) also used cluster analysis and reported similar findings; one fifth of those supporting democracy actually had autocratic values, and a further fifth were illiberal. Those considered fully supportive of liberal democratic values made up the smallest group of just 16.5% of respondents.

Carnaghan (Carnaghan, 2011) took a more qualitative approach to examine understandings of democracy in Russia, combining survey and interview answers. The results from the study show clearly that respondents think in very different ways about the same abstract term, such as “democracy” or “freedom”. For some democracy itself meant freedom, others focused more on it as an absence of corruption. As Carnaghan (2011, p.685) notes, “citizens may not be well schooled in the niceties of democratic theory”. The conclusion of the study is even more cautious than the Latin American results: “not only can we not be sure that respondents mean what *researchers* mean when they talk about democracy, we cannot even be sure that they mean what *they say* they mean” (ibid, pp.690-692).

Finally, a study of Finnish citizens explicitly examined whether conceptualisations of democracy had an impact on political behaviour (Bengtsson and Christensen, 2014). Using survey data, this study outlined three different understandings of democracy: representation elite; expertise technocratic; and, participation pluralistic. The first is focused on a Schumpeterian notion that elected officials make the decisions, and the most important participatory mechanism is voting. The second has emphasis on experts making the decisions, with interest focused much more on the quality of output in the system, and not any participatory processes. And the final one is much more aligned with a deliberative form of democracy with the active involvement of citizens (*ibid*, p.240).

The authors found evidence to suggest that these different conceptions of democracy have effects on participation – those who conceptualise democracy as representational elite’ were more likely to vote. The technocrat supporters are less likely to get involved in institutional forms of participation, and the participatory democrats were more likely to be involved. The authors (ibid p.252) do provide a note of caution however, that:

Finland can be considered a ‘most likely case’ for finding the expected patterns. Research from other contexts is therefore necessary to establish how well the conclusions drawn here apply to other settings.

It is, of course, this idea of examining other contexts that drives the later analytical chapters in this thesis.

## 2.5 Conclusions and Research Agenda

To conclude this literature review and outline a research agenda I will return to a quote which I used to outline the introductory chapter:

“Strikingly, the belief that democracy is (in principle at least) the best system is overwhelming and universal.” (Diamond 2008, p.xi)

It is the point in brackets which drives this thesis: *in principle at least*. The point of this literature review is to build up to the argument that we must know more than this notion of democracy ‘in principle at least’, and we should be examining the substantive idea of democracy as it is understood by the people.

A brief historical overview demonstrated that whilst the history of democracy is extremely long, it is only in relatively recent times that the idea has come to have the global reach that it has today. Although academic literature on the topic draws from across this timespan, especially in terms of theory, the real explosion of analysis of democracy and democracies has been since World War II.

By discussing modern theoretical developments in the fields of democracy and democratization, I outlined the way that citizens are placed in this field of work. The idea of ‘the people’ is clearly the lynchpin of democracy, but the way their role in the system is conceptualised varies across different approaches. In the ‘thin’ approaches, citizens are seen as voting in elections to choose between governing elites and little else is needed except some tacit acceptance of the result. This broadens considerably as theories deepen; polyarchy introduces much clearer ideas of participation and varying sites of power in a democratic regime, whereas deliberative democracy fully integrates the citizen back into an almost direct form of active engagement first envisioned in Ancient Greece.

Moving the discussion forward to the idea of democratization I suggested that, whilst these varying conceptualisations of ‘the People’ have their own strengths and weaknesses, it must be said that is difficult to envision a democratic regime coming into existence, and surviving, without citizen engagement and knowledge. Both structural and agential explanations of democratization require citizens to be ‘on board’ to allow a democracy to function. Taken together this pointed to the importance of a closer examination of citizen support for, and engagement with, a democratic system. Then I moved onto discuss the research areas which directly address citizen support and the idea of a civic culture.

Drawing predominantly on the seminal studies by Easton and Almond and Verba, and the critical engagement with these studies, the next stage of the literature review outlined how political support is conceptualised, and how it is deemed to develop in a civic culture. The findings of this section led to three interconnected conclusions being drawn: firstly, to effectively support democracy, citizens must be knowledgeable of it; secondly, examinations of citizen support for democracy frequently assumed a shared understanding of democracy amongst the citizenry; thirdly, this suggests that reported levels of support for democracy have a limited theoretical ability to explain political behaviour.

A literature is now developing to try and address the second and third of these three points, a literature which is small, but growing. In the final part of the chapter I looked across this literature, examining it at three different levels of analysis: global, regional and national. The broad, global level studies have painted generally positive picture of citizen understandings of democracy, albeit with some caveats. However, at the lower levels of analysis the conclusions tend to be far more critical. Generally, they demonstrate a mixed picture of results, which tend towards a lack of conceptual understanding. Few studies have taken these findings any further and asked whether this understanding, this cognitive mapping of democracy, has any effect on political participation.

It is in the literature that this thesis fits. My aim is to return to the global level studies of democracy and present a different approach to examining how citizens understand democracy. At the national and regional levels studies were built around dimensional or clustering approaches to outlining understandings of democracy, and my study utilises such an approach. This is in contrast to the ‘test’ approach that has been used so far. It is also an alternative to Dalton *et al*.’s (2008) use of open-definitions, an approach which I argue is limited for not being transparent enough or fully addressing the survey fatigue potentially brought about by the contested nature of democracy.

The thesis then looks at what explains the different understandings of democracy that are uncovered. This is something addressed in more recent studies, but there needs to more evidence to help identify why different types of understanding are occurring. Finally, the thesis looks to take a step further by seeing if these understandings of democracy themselves having the ability to explain political participation, something which is much less focused on in the existing literature. The idea is that, should these different understandings not have an effect on how people behave politically, then we do not need to worry too much about the variations in democratic understanding. However, if they do, then we need to start thinking about how people understand democracy, and how this may affect both longstanding democracies, and also countries which are making a transition to democracy.

In terms of the aims and objectives outlined in Chapter 1, this literature review has fulfilled aims 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3. These aims will now be taken forward to inform Chapter 3, which looks at aims 1.4 and 1.5, which address the best available data to start looking into citizen understandings of democracy, link the data to theory, and examine if the theoretical expectations are borne out in the basic descriptive statistics. This lays the groundwork for Chapter 4, which undertakes aim 1.6, that is, to build a dimensional framework of how citizens understand democracy.

# Exploring Understandings of Democracy

**“We are accustomed to thinking of democracy as standard liberal representative democracy, with elections as by far the most important device” (Saward 2003, p.169)**

In this chapter I build on the conclusions and findings of the literature review to outline a different way of examining citizen understandings of democracy. The approach I discuss is a quantitative one, utilising secondary survey data. The main source of data used is the World Values Survey collected from 2005-2008 (henceforth WVS2008), which included a new group of questions on ten democratic characteristics – these were briefly introduced in the previous chapter, in Section 2.4. At the national level, these data are supplemented from numerous sources. In this chapter I firstly discuss the reasons for using survey data, and for using this particular survey data in particular. The chapter then examines the theoretical expectations behind the characteristics of democracy which are available for analysis. I address how these questions would be answered in line with the theory, and then compare these expectations to the actual answers of survey respondents, discussing the differences and analysing who might hold these different perspectives on democracy.

The core of this chapter is an exploration of the patterns of democratic understanding using descriptive statistics and basic analysis. The idea is to paint a picture of the global understanding of democracy by looking at these characteristics one by one, and in detail. This groundwork description is needed before the more sophisticated analysis in Chapter 4, which digs down below these summary trends to examine dimensions of democratic understandings, and then Chapters 5 and 6, which looks at what might explain these understandings of democracy, and whether these understandings affect political behaviour.

This chapter is structured as follows. Section 3.1 discusses the use of survey data to address this issue of understandings of democracy, and justifies the importance of the WVS2008 in particular. Throughout section 3.2 I discuss the theoretical argument behind each of the ten characteristics in the group of democracy questions. It is important that the theoretical grounding behind each choice is outlined. These questions are related to liberal democracy, social democracy, populist politics and authoritarian concepts. The degree to which citizens agree or disagree on the essential nature of each question is important when later looking at dimensional understandings of democracy.

Section 3.3 examines these ten questions at the individual level across gender, age, education, group membership. and media use. It then demonstrates the range of averages across questions from the 46 countries in the dataset, and compares results across Freedom House, communist and religious classifications. Finally, it then examines these averages with the level of development of a country, as measured by HDI.

Section 3.4 concludes by discussing the aims and objectives that have been met in this chapter, before looking forwards to the dimensional analysis of democratic understanding which is undertaken in the following chapter.

## 3.1: Taking a Cross-national Quantitative Approach and using Survey Data

Firstly, why I am using survey data to address citizen understandings of democracy? The simple answer is that at this level of analysis, there is no suitable alternative. Whilst qualitatively-driven examinations provide rich and detailed studies of citizen understandings of complicated concepts (see Carnaghan 2011), they are time-consuming and rarely able to provide multinational comparisons. In an era when protest movements around the world are couching themselves in the language of ‘democracy’ (Shaykhutdinov & Achilov 2014; Finkel & Brudny 2012; El-Mahdi 2009; Joya 2011; Dalton & van Sickle 2005) this thesis is interested in examining and explaining global *patterns* and *trends* of how citizens understand the term.

Pierce (2008, p.42) notes that a quantitative approach “offers the best means of identifying and comparing the distribution between people, places and times of phenomena such as party membership, voting, income, poverty, housing conditions, and changing attitudes”. This focus on distributions and comparisons is important first for validating and extending the findings of existing approaches to this topic – as discussed in Section 2.4 (Cho 2015; Welzel 2013; Norris 2011; Dalton *et al* 2008) – and secondly for attempting to explore and categorise the potential attitudes and conceptualisations of democratic understandings.

Building on previous studies, this ‘mapping’ out of democratic understanding, taking an alternative and more exploratory approach, is a key way of developing this area of research, and one which could also lay the groundwork for qualitative investigation that could seek to understand the deeper complexities of the categorisations presented here, or look to isolate and examine in depth any outlier case-studies which quantitative research is especially able to identify. Taking a multi-country approach also has numerous advantages, several of which are outlined by Landman (2003). Firstly, it’s clear that an “extensive coverage of countries allows for stronger inferences and theory-building” (ibid, p.25). This is useful when taking survey questions which are theoretically informed (see Section 3.2) and trying to see how they play out in the minds of citizens across numerous contexts to see if they see things in a theoretically coherent or incoherent way. Landman (*ibid*) also supports the idea that quantitative, statistical analysis can identify outliers which require further analysis and prompt researchers to tweak or adapt theory. This multi-country approach, examining global level patterns and trends also rules out experimental surveys as the resources simply do not currently existing to undertake work at this scale.

Trying to tackle this research interest from a qualitative approach would be problematic as such investigatory methods “…generally require a richer level of information, such as deep history of all the countries, which is often difficult to collect and synthesize.” (*ibid)*. Furthermore, “it is more difficult to draw strong inferences from these data since they cannot be subjected to statistical analysis” (*ibid*). This is problematic when interested in global level trends as this thesis is, however, survey data is testable and can be examined in this way.

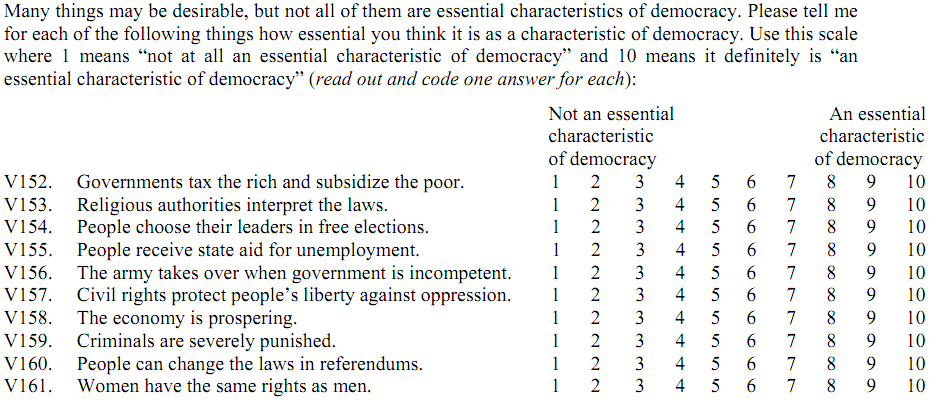
Regarding survey data and its analysis, Pierce (2008, p.42) adds that such methods “employ very large samples designed to reflect and be representative of the population being studied. The use of questionnaires ensures that every member of the sample is asked the same question in the same manner.” This systematic nature of survey data collection and analysis is important to this thesis as it seeks to set out an initial exploration of how conceptualisations of democracy are structured by citizens at the global scale. An advantage of such an analytical approach is that the “…accuracy of the estimates and the margins of error around the estimates vary in predictable ways with the size of the sample. None of the steps in this process are easy. But the techniques are well known and well honed” (Vogt 2011, p.xxv). I primarily draw upon two well-established statistical techniques: multilevel regression modelling (Aitkin and Longford, 1986; Goldstein and Paterson, 1991; Goldstein *et al.*, 1993), and principal components analysis alongside exploratory factor analysis (Kaiser, 1960; Kim and Mueller, 1978).

Despite this justification for a quantitative approach and the strengths that such methods offer, it is also important to discuss the limitations. Schedler and Sarsfield (2007, p.638-640) identify four potential issues with the collection and analysis of survey data on democracy in particular:

1. Interviewer effects
2. Vacuous conceptions of democracy
3. Competing conceptions of democracy
4. Conflicting values.

To discuss these issues in detail I will introduce the questions used in this thesis again (I briefly discussed them in the Literature Review, Section 2.4). However, I also further justify the used of the World Values Survey in the following section. The questions appear as follows in the survey:[[6]](#footnote-6)

Figure 3:1 Questions on Democratic Characteristics from the WVS2008



The ‘interviewer effects’ problem occurs because democracy is frequently seen as a socially desirable idea - for instance, the UN, US, European Union, World Bank and other powerful global leaders explicitly promote democracy (Rossteutscher 2010; Newman & Rich 2004; John O’Loughlin et al. 1998). As a result, an interviewee may feel judged or pressured to choose what they believe are pro-democratic answers, especially if questioned face-to-face. This is slightly lessened by the wording of these questions as they ask, are these characteristics ‘essential’ to the idea of democracy? This does raise the issue of the interviewee feeling they might be getting an answer ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ but it does not ask about the characteristic in terms of whether it is itself necessarily ‘good’ or ‘bad’.

The list of ten characteristics are also not presented in any obvious order, giving the interviewee space to make up their mind with less concern about the desirability of specific items. For instance, a single and focused question on the interviewee’s belief in the required degree of criminal punishment in society could be quite ‘intense’, whereas this is lessened when the topic is discussed as part of a broader topic, and is asked amongst numerous other options.

However, it is important to acknowledge that overall, some elements of interview effects are impossible to avoid. Yet this is also a prevalent issue in qualitative studies, and the best thing to do is make sure that is borne in mind.

In terms of vacuous or competing conceptualisations of democracy and conflicting values, this is clearly an issue when questions on democracy are used to understand levels of support or preferences for political systems. Carnaghan (2011, pp.690-692) argues this even more strongly in her study of understandings of democracy amongst Russian citizens: ‘not only can we not be sure that respondents mean what *researchers* mean when they talk about democracy, we cannot even be sure that they mean what *they say* they mean’. Further, citizens may claim to support liberal democracy but not civil rights, which would be, theoretically at least, a contradiction. Not just when it comes to examining democracy, but across studies on attitudes and opinions it has long been pointed out that respondents can ‘make up’ an opinion when asked a question they previously had not considered, or hold conflicting values and provide contradictory responses across, or even within, surveys (Bourdieu, 1979; Zaller and Feldman, 1992).

Some of these issues are lessened for this particular group of questions, whilst others are not. In one respect, the problem of being provided with shallow or contradictory notions of democracy is tackled head on by the set of questions themselves. They ask about characteristics of democracy, not simply if a citizen supports democracy. The way the questions are worded is important; they make abstract reference to ‘democracy’, *not* the particular political system the respondent currently lives under (which may not be democratic), or a system they would prefer to live under. In other questions directly before and after this group there is specific reference to issues in ‘*this* country’ or ‘*a* country’. This should help draw attention to the fact that this group of ten questions ask about defining the concept, not experience or judgement of the respondent’s own system. Furthermore bold, value-laden either/or choices are not used, and the scalar response allows for more nuanced responses to the issues raised.

This does not extinguish the problem entirely – with a survey there is always the chance that respondents arbitrarily tick boxes just to get through to the end. However, many of these surveys are collected face-to-face, and the interviewer effect in this case be more positive and alleviate this issue somewhat, compared to an unsupervised individual filling out a postal or online form.

Finally, the issue of conflicting values is that simple questions on democratic support may not at all appreciate the different alternative values that an individual holds, which may conflict with a wider understanding of democracy. This, of course, is a primary motivator for this thesis.

However, against this backdrop of potentials issues, survey data has specific advantages over qualitative ethnographic studies or in-depth interviews. Here I want to talk about these in four areas:

1. Comparability
2. Standardization
3. Generalization
4. Replicability

Comparative survey research enables scholars to test cross-national variation in attitudes towards democracy and the extent to which they can be explained, expanding our understanding of democratic values and democratization in different contexts (Ariely and Davidov, 2010). Largely due to the time and expense of data collection, even the most structured of non-survey-based interviews will struggle to produce enough data to be considered comparable internationally, and in-depth interviews will struggle even more.

By facilitating the study of political behaviour across a variety of political contexts, cross-national public opinion projects enable researchers to link individual-level outcomes to institutional settings through increasingly “large-N” analyses (Jusko & Shively 2005, p.327). Because of comparability advantages, survey data are also more effective for the generalization of results. Data coding frameworks are predetermined and consequently much quicker, and when organised internationally (as in surveys such as the WVS), collating and presenting the data is undertaken with comparison as a central requirement. This standardization of the data collection is designed to minimise issues such as interview effects and differences caused by, for instance, asking questions in a different order. If specific cultural differences appear to notably affect the interpretation of a question, pilot questionnaires and additional information are recorded and available for the secondary researcher to access (see worldvaluessurvey.org).

The entire WVS dataset from 1981 onwards is freely available online for researchers to examine. This means that, if I am transparent about my methods, another researcher is free to check my results. If researchers are open and clear about the methodological procedures they use in examining survey data, they can avoid potential ‘black box’ issues: inferences made from data without a full explanation of the processes used to produce them. Since data is anonymised another researcher cannot find the original respondent to confirm their answers. However, by making survey data and methods available, other researchers can at least attempt to replicate results, in order to check accuracy and approach (Brunsdon, 2016). This is far more difficult for coding and analysing interview transcripts, as these data are frequently not available for secondary analysis.[[7]](#footnote-7)

As with all research approaches, survey data has it strengths and weaknesses, and acknowledging these is essential. For this thesis, which examines overall trends, typologies and configurations of attitudes towards democracy, survey data is clearly the most appropriate.

The next section discusses the particular survey dataset used for this project, the WVS2008. It outlines the coverage of the WVS on key measures – governance, GDP and development – as well as discussing issues of missing data.

### The Data: World Values Survey 2005-2008

The choice of the WVS2008 is also relatively straightforward: it has the broadest scope of all international surveys on values and opinions. By running near-identical surveys across countries it provides unique comparative depth for studies of public opinion, covering polities in the global north and south, established and emerging democracies, and even some autocracies The WVS has been running large-scale multinational surveys since 1989 and is one of the most – if not *the* most – established sources of data for this type of work (see worldvaluessurvey.org).[[8]](#footnote-8)

Perhaps the only comparator at this level is the Global Barometer series of surveys (globalbarometer.net). These are also excellent sources of information. But they have yet to run completely comparable surveys across continents, which means a larger scale comparison is not possible.

A more important issue is the availability of questions. The WVS2008 is the first wave to feature the block of ten questions on essential characteristics of democracy, as opposed to support for and good/bad questions. This makes it ideal to examine citizen understandings of democracy, and was the first cross-national survey to do so in such a level of depth. This also means a longitudinal study was not possible in this instance (although discussed in Section 7.4 is the following wave of the WVS, which features similar, but not identical questions in this battery).

For the WVS2008 nationally representative samples were collected in 57 different countries around the world (see worldvaluessurvey.org for full technical details of each individual country). In the majority of countries, questionnaires were filled out face-to-face with an interviewer present. The main exceptions were Australia, Japan and USA, all of which used a self-completed postal form, Peru, which used a self-completed form with interviewer spot-checks, Taiwan, with a mixed approach, and Burkina Faso, which used group interviews. The procedure followed in Malaysia, meanwhile, was undefined, although according to the pilot-scheme information it was likely conducted face-to-face.

Due to incomplete coverage of the set of questions required for this research, this thesis uses 46 countries with a total of 45,545 respondents. Figure 3.2 contains the full list of countries, plus three-letter identifier used later in the study, year of survey, sample size, GDP per capita for the survey year, HDI classification and Freedom House classification. The following section discusses the coverage the WVS provides for these measures.

Figure 3:2 Countries used in this analysis

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Country** | **Identifier** | **Year** | **Sample Sizea** | **GDP per Capita (US$)** | **Freedom House (2005)** | **HDI** |
| Australia | AUS | 2005 | 1421 | 34128 | Free | 0.925 |
| Brazil | BRA | 2006 | 1500 | 5793.4 | Free | 0.681 |
| Britain | GBR | 2006 | 1041 | 40335.4 | Free | 0.842 |
| Bulgaria | BGR | 2006 | 1001 | 4313.4 | Free | 0.729 |
| Burkina Faso | BFA | 2007 | 1534 | 449.3 | Partly Free | 0.295 |
| Canada | CAN | 2006 | 2164 | 39162.3 | Free | 0.883 |
| Chile | CHL | 2006 | 1000 | 8912.2 | Free | 0.764 |
| China | CHN | 2007 | 2015 | 2651.3 | Not Free | 0.639 |
| Cyprus | CYP | 2006 | 1050 | 23848.3 | Free | 0.798 |
| Egypt | EGY | 2008 | 3051 | 2079 | Not Free | 0.608 |
| Ethiopia | ETH | 2007 | 1500 | 251.6 | Partly Free | 0.309 |
| Finland | FIN | 2005 | 1014 | 37289.9 | Free | 0.863 |
| France | FRA | 2006 | 1001 | 35558 | Free | 0.86 |
| Georgia | GEO | 2008 | 1500 | 2918.8 | Partly Free | 0.697 |
| Germany | DEU | 2006 | 2064† | 35429.5 | Free | 0.881 |
| Ghana | GHA | 2007 | 1534 | 1084.5 | Free | 0.459 |
| India | IND | 2006 | 2001 | 857.2 | Free | 0.491 |
| Indonesia | IDN | 2006 | 2015 | 1585.7 | Partly Free | 0.568 |
| Iran | IRN | 2005 | 2667 | 2753.6 | Not Free | 0.66 |
| Japan | JPN | 2005 | 1096 | 35627.2 | Free | 0.873 |
| Malaysia | MYS | 2006 | 1201 | 5887.4 | Partly Free | 0.731 |
| Mali | MLI | 2007 | 1534 | 509.7 | Free | 0.298 |
| Mexico | MEX | 2005 | 1560 | 7972.6 | Free | 0.727 |
| Moldova | MDA | 2006 | 1046 | 950.6 | Partly Free | 0.613 |
| Morocco | MAR | 2007 | 1200 | 2388.8 | Partly Free | 0.551 |
| Netherlands | NLD | 2006 | 1050 | 41458.9 | Free | 0.882 |
| Norway | NOR | 2007 | 1025 | 82294.2 | Free | 0.937 |
| Peru | PER | 2006 | 1500 | 3312.4 | Free | 0.7 |
| Poland | POL | 2005 | 1000 | 7963 | Free | 0.775 |
| Romania | ROU | 2005 | 1776 | 4572 | Free | 0.733 |
| Russia | RUS | 2006 | 2033 | 6946.9 | Not Free | 0.7 |
| S Africa | ZAF | 2007 | 2988 | 5930.1 | Free | 0.59 |
| S Korea | KOR | 2005 | 1200 | 17550.9 | Free | 0.851 |
| Serbia | SRB | 2006 | 1220 | 3942.6 | Partly Free | 0.724 |
| Slovenia | SVN | 2005 | 1037 | 19409.3 | Free | 0.813 |
| Spain | ESP | 2007 | 1200 | 32129.6 | Free | 0.857 |
| Sweden | SWE | 2006 | 1003 | 43948.6 | Free | 0.885 |
| Switzerland | CHE | 2007 | 1241 | 57490.4 | Free | 0.876 |
| Thailand | THA | 2007 | 1534 | 3642.9 | Free | 0.642 |
| Trinidad & Tobago | TTO | 2006 | 1002 | 13912.4 | Partly Free | 0.721 |
| Turkey | TUR | 2007 | 1346 | 9246 | Partly Free | 0.672 |
| Ukraine | UKR | 2006 | 1000 | 2303 | Partly Free | 0.703 |
| Uruguay | URY | 2006 | 1000 | 5974.5 | Free | 0.74 |
| USA | USA | 2006 | 1249 | 44663.5 | Free | 0.897 |
| Vietnam | VNM | 2006 | 1495 | 731.4 | Not Free | 0.547 |
| Zambia | ZMB | 2007 | 1500 | 957.4 | Partly Free | 0.37 |

a Sample size once all missing data is removed is provided in the Appendix

#### Freedom House

The sixth column of Figure 3.2 presents Freedom House (FH) scores for the year the survey was taken. The FH classification grades political rights and civil liberties for every country from the highest degree of freedom (scored 1) to the lowest degree of freedom (scored 7). It combines the results into three overall types: Free, Partly Free and Not Free. Although the FH scoring has its limitations (see Munck 2009), the three categories are distinct and straightforward. Additionally, FH scores are not only one of the most widely used political indicators in comparative research but also highly correlated with other democracy measures including the Polity Index (Sung 2006, p.320). On this measure the dataset demonstrates some bias. Out of the 46 countries in the data, 66.3% are considered Free, 19.4% are Partly Free and 14.4% Not Free. In comparison, the averaged global distribution of scores for 193 states (2005-2008) was 46% Free, 17.5% Partly Free and 36.6% Not Free. In other words, there are more Free and democratic countries in the dataset at the expense of Not Free countries. Such a pattern is unfortunate but not unexpected; it is decidedly easier to administer surveys and examine public attitudes in open and democratic societies compared to closed and authoritarian societies. Again, the WVS does better than other major surveys in this respect, and so remains the best option for comparing trends across different political contexts.

It is important to note that the FH scores reported here are for the specific year the survey was taken in that country. Whilst many of these countries have stable scores, it is worth highlighting those with fluctuating scores around the time the survey was administered. Trinidad and Tobago upgraded to Free from Partly Free in 2005, a year before the WVS was conducted there. Indonesia and Ukraine were also upgraded the same year; however Ukraine was downgraded again in 2010. Russia was downgraded to Not Free in 2004, two years *before* the survey was taken. Jordan was downgraded to Not Free in 2009, two years *after* the survey was conducted, and Ethiopia followed suit in 2010, three years after the survey. Finally, Thailand’s classification fluctuated due to a coup d’état in 2006 which removed a democratically elected government; Thailand was Free in 2004, Partly Free in 2005, Not Free in 2006 and back to Partly Free in 2007, with the change driven by the political rights aspect of the classification.

This is of course the issue with snapshot analyses (something I also discuss in Chapter 7, Section 7.3). However, in later chapters different approaches are used to try and account for these issues, such as scores that examine democratic history, as opposed to simply current standings.

#### GDP per capita

Countries in the dataset vary considerably in their levels of economic development, as indicated by the wide range of national Gross Domestic Products (GDP) per capita. Mali, Ethiopia and Burkina Faso all have per capita a GDP of $510 or less, suggesting a high degree of people living on less than a dollar-a-day, a widely acknowledged measurement of poverty (see un.org/millenniumgoals/poverty.shtml). South Africa represents the richest African state with a GDP per capita not too dissimilar to Romania or Russia. However, in general the African states are by far the poorest. The Islamic states are slightly wealthier, followed by the Latin American, but Western states plus Japan and South Korea make up a substantially richer group of states. The mean GDP per capita for these states is around $39,000 a year per capita, almost 80 times that of the poorest in the dataset.

According to the World Bank the average global GDP per capita in 2008 was $9,161. In comparison the weighted average GDP per capita for the dataset (minus Taiwan) is $13,538. Although this is quite a bit higher, considering the range of the data (and accordingly a high standard deviation), this provides a satisfactory representation of the global picture.

#### HDI

The Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite measure that integrates numerous indicators into one score, in order to judge the development of a country beyond singular economic measures. Alongside Gross National Income (GNI) per capita, the index also includes life expectancy at birth, expected years of schooling and mean years of schooling. The index is aggregated geometrically, meaning uneven development across the attributes is considered. Even with the extra factors, the HDI score and GDP per capita do strongly correlate (r=0.73 at p<0.001).T he same set of countries – Mali, Ethiopia and Burkina Faso – are the lowest scoring, 0.309 or less out of a possible 1. This puts them in the “Low” development category, and in 2010 they were ranked in the bottom 13 in the world (see hdr.undp.org/en/reports/). The pattern for the other groups of countries also remains similar to that of GDP.

The global picture in 2008 was an average HDI of 0.634 from 168 states. For the states available in the data, the average score was 0.72. As with GDP per capita, this result is as good as could be expected, considering the usual underrepresentation of poorer and less-developed countries.

### Summary

Overall, the WVS2008 provides a very good representation of global data, and is the best available. There will always be limitations in such datasets, and these should be acknowledged; there is underrepresentation in the WVS2008 of poorer countries, particularly in Africa. There are also some missing large autocracies and Islamic states. There is overrepresentation of rich and Western nations. However, there is no comparable dataset that captures the range of countries available in the WVS2008, and so despite these weaknesses, it remains the most appropriate dataset for a global test of democratic understanding.

## 3.2: The Data and the Theory

The set of questions on democratic characteristics used in the WVS2008 is the first of its kind, and as such cannot be compared back to previous surveys. So far the full battery of questions has been utilised in most detail by Welzel (2013; 2011) and Norris (2011). However, neither author presented an in-depth discussion on exactly what these questions are examining in terms of democratic theory. They also provided limited descriptive analysis of the results. This chapter fills this gap; first by unpacking the relationship between each question presented to the respondent and democratic theory, and then with individual and national-level descriptive statistics. As a reminder, the group of questions I will be using from the WVS2008 was presented in Figure 3.1.

In terms of other global analyses of understandings of democracy, Dalton et al.’s (2008, pp.3-11), analysis came to conclude that:

1. Contrary to what sceptics might expect, respondents’ understandings of democracy conformed to liberal democratic ideals; and
2. Consequently, even in less-developed natures, relatively few people equate democracy with such social benefits as a higher living standard, secure employment, or personal security

I structure my descriptive statistics around assessing these conclusions in more depth. There is a fundamental difference between the approach used by Dalton et al(2008), and my approach. I analyse a set of questions on a 1-10 scale between ‘Not at all essential’ and ‘Completely essential’. To come to their conclusions, Dalton et al asked respondent’s to fill in an open-ended question on their understanding of democracy. My argument is that an open-ended question is not necessarily the best way to examine this issue as democracy is such an essentially-contested and complicated concept it is likely prone to issues of questionnaire fatigue and shallow responses: the WVS2008 provides more comparable and generalizable data.

The following section discusses the questions in groups of procedural, instrumental and authoritarian characteristics.

### Procedural Characteristics

Welzel (2013; 2011) and Norris (2011) class the four procedural characteristics in this set of questions as: ‘People choose their leaders in free elections’; ‘People can change the laws in referendums’; Civil rights protect people’s liberty against oppression’; and, ‘Women have the same rights as men’. This section discusses these characteristics in order. I argue that these are essential characteristics of liberal democratic theory and if people understand democracy in a liberal democratic manner, they will score these characteristics highly.

#### People choose their leaders in free elections

Without elaborating on exactly who the ‘we’ might be, Saward (2003, p.169) makes the general point that; “We are accustomed to thinking of democracy as standard liberal representative democracy, with elections as by far the most important device.” I used this quote to open this chapter, as it makes a clear point on what we might expect to be at the core of any understanding of democracy. A polity cannot be a democratic system without a system of voting; even in the most elitist and minimalist definition of democracy, being able to vote representatives into government is considered a basic requirement (see Schumpeter 1947, and Chapter Two, Section 2.2).

It is during free and fair elections that power is wielded by the people, making them the central mechanism of accountability that differentiates democracies from non-democracies; it is a highly essential characteristic of democracy.

#### People can change the laws in referendums

In theoretical terms, referendums sit between ideas of representative and direct democracy. Usually referendums are handed *down* to citizens, with the topic and timing decided by government. However, citizen-lead initiatives are growing in popularity. Here, a policy suggestion supported by a number of signatures is passed *up* to government, which is expected to at least raise and discuss the idea. Such proposals can then spawn a referendum (whilst not at the national level, in California this approach has led to almost 80 proposed referendums in the last century, with 48 qualifying and run, and 20 being approved by voters).[[9]](#footnote-9)

Compared to elections, there are issues particular to referendums which make it trickier to judge how essential they are as a characteristic of liberal democracy. Three issues are highlighted here, using examples from two parliamentary democracies, the UK and New Zealand. There are clearly differences between referendums and elections, but also variability between the countries for these issues too. When compared to general elections, referendums are:

1. Usually rarer: at the national-level, New Zealand has held ten and the UK has only held three (with the most recent being 23 June 2016).
2. More variable in how much they capture public interest; in 1993 the second-stage of the New Zealand referendum on changing the electoral system attracted an 83% turnout, whereas the 2011 UK referendum on electoral change attracted a turnout of 42%.
3. On narrower topics; some are more technical and institutional, such as electoral change, but some are more involving, such as abortions, same-sex marriage or independence.

Whilst not as pivotal to democratic systems as a general election, referendums are popular with the public. Bowler et al (2007) found that, in 14 out of the 16 affluent democracies they looked at, the majority of those surveyed supported the idea of referendums. Where support was not in the majority, attitudes were ambivalent rather than negative. Saward (2003, p.168) argues that the ‘direct’ nature of a referendum is appealing to citizens because, compared to general elections:

“…the device of the referendum offers a broader and more radical interpretation or enactment of the principle of political equality, since it bypasses a more-than-equal group of representatives, placing power instead in the hands or the votes of the primary community of citizens.”

Bowler et al (2007) argue that referendums are not seen as about becoming full participatory citizens, but rather as ‘instructive’ mechanisms that allow citizens to ‘keep watch’ on government. They are, “a tool for making delegates in the legislature adhere more closely to constituents' preferences”, not necessarily for constituent’s themselves to get their hands dirty (ibid*,* p.361).

In sum, referendums are arguably not completely essential in the way that elections are, as a democracy could exist without having them. However, they provide a deeper conception of democracy and a mechanism for providing checks and balances on government policy, in a more specified way than a ‘wholesale’ electoral vote might.

#### Civil rights protect people’s liberty against repression

Since voting is a central element of liberal democratic theory, there needs to be discussion around the idea that citizens should have access to, and protection of, this act. If there is no guarantee of protection against violence or coercion when casting a vote then an election cannot be considered free and fair (as the election characteristic makes clear). International observers regularly question the integrity of elections around the world: notable cases from this dataset include Russian in December 2011, Iraq in March 2010 and Jordan in 2009.

Alternatively, if the public are technically able to go and vote, yet face repression in every other sphere of their lives, it would be disingenuous to describe the system as democratic; such a system is better described as ‘electoral authoritarianism’ (Levitsky and Way, 2002). This is where the characteristic that ‘*civil rights protect people’s liberty against repression*’ fits into liberal democratic theory.

The details of how civil rights are integral to liberal democracy are discussed in the literature review, and so won’t be repeated in detail here. A concise reminder is provided by Held (1996, pp.81-82) in his discussion of how Locke’s philosophical arguments

“…helped inaugurate one of the most central tenets of European liberalism; that is, that government exists to safeguard the rights and liberties of citizens who are ultimately the best judges of their own interests; and that accordingly government must be restricted in scope and constrained in practice in order to ensure the maximum possible freedom of every citizen.”

Yet there is a tension between the mechanisms of democracy, particularly its focus on equal individuals (see Satori 1989, p.386 and Chapter 2, Section 2.2, in particular the section on Liberal Democracy). As Held (1996, p.80) further notes, Locke is clear that:

“…authority is bestowed by individuals in society on government for pursuing the ends of the governed; and should these ends fail to be represented adequately, the final judges are the people – the citizens – who can dispense both with their duties and, if need be, with the existing form of government itself.”

In a liberal democracy, then, a citizen must have rights that free them from any government repression. And this is particularly so when it comes to political participation, freedom of expression and freedom of organisation, because these types of political participation help keep governments in check. Civil rights understood in this manner are essential characteristics of democracy.

#### Women have the same rights as men

In the literature review, it is made clear from Wollstonecraft (1792) through to Mill (1898) and with the works of Pateman (1970; 1988), Phillips (1992a), and Young (1989), that the role of men and women in liberal democratic theory is open to criticism on a number of fronts. Much of this critique concerns the historical conceptualisation of civil rights and their relationship with the state and the subsequent impact of this relationship on the public/private sphere. Yet, in principle, the notion of equal rights to participate in democracy means that women *should* have the same rights as men. Whilst the liberal conceptualisation problematizes this issue, even then, theoretically, individuals should be protected equally by civil rights. Accordingly, the prediction is that citizens should score this characteristic of democracy as highly essential.

### Instrumental Characteristics

The four instrumental elements in this set of WVS2008 questions are: ‘Governments tax the rich and subsidise the poor’; ‘People receive state aid for unemployment’; ‘The economy is prospering’; and, ‘Criminals are severely punished’. This section discusses these characteristics in order, grouping the first two together, and then the second two. The importance of these characteristics to democracy is less straightforward than is the case with the four procedural characteristics.

The first two instrumental characteristics are linked to ‘social’ democracy, they can potentially be stretched and fitted into democratic theory, *if* one integrates ideas of social justice into the definition of democracy. But there is no consensus on this approach and so how essential they are to democracy is not clear-cut.

The second two are ‘populist’ characteristics. For the most part the literature suggests that they are not essential to democracy, but it is important to discuss the reasons why this is so, and acknowledge the limitations of the questions. It is unclear exactly how to draw the distinction between ideals inherent to democracy and *policy outputs* that citizens might want a democracy to provide. This conceptual confusion is raised in the discussion below, and then outlined in more detail in the summary of this section.

#### Social Security and Redistribution

At first glance there appears to be vast swathes of literature on democracy, redistribution, and social security. However, this work generally focuses on issues of how they relate to each other, addressing issues such as whether redistribution leads to democracy or democracy leads to redistribution (Boix 2003); whether certain levels of income make a country more likely to transition to democracy; whether at certain income levels democracies are impregnable (Przeworski, 2000), and so on. This literature is quieter on the theoretical or normative questions of whether redistribution, safety nets and economic growth are essential requirements *of* a democratic system.

So why would liberal democratic theory necessarily have anything to say on the issue? It depends on quite how wide the account of democracy is stretched. So far this chapter has argued that democracies require the process of voting to hold political leaders to account and to affect policy – from this the government gains its legitimacy. Further, it has pointed out the role that civil rights have in protecting this ability to vote, as well as making sure the rule of representatives never becomes oppressive.

As such, thicker conceptualisations of a democratic system require its populace to be ‘citizens’ and not just an apolitical mass. TH Marshall’s influential theory on citizenship (1950, p.8) divides the concept into three elements: civil, political and social. The first two of these feature in the democratic characteristics discussed so far. The social element is new – if individuals can’t meet the social needs that are expected in their society, to live free from deprivation and poverty for instance, how can they be expected to participate? As Dalton et al (2008, p.3) note, “proponents of this view argue that the democratic principles of political equality and participation are meaningless unless individuals have sufficient resources to meet their basic social needs”.

It is not difficult to see why citizens may emphasize a social dimension when defining democracy, away from overt political, civil or procedural issues. Whilst in theory political rights are seen as fundamental, in reality, food, shelter, clothing and the means to provide these, will likely take centre stage in a citizens’ life, especially when these are hard to come by.

As discussed in Chapter Two, Satori (1989, p.384) suggests that democracy has an equalizing urge, making redistribution a key part of such as system. Indeed, the issue of redistribution is extremely important to governing a state (Przeworski 2005) and indeed some go as far as to argue that redistribution is essential in order to placate the poor and keep revolutions at bay (see Zhaohui 2007; Wallace 2013). However, there is no consensus on whether these are fundamentally issues of social justice *required* in a democracy, or a *preferred* material output of the system. It depends on how thick or thin the understanding of democracy might be. This is reflected in the fact the two other major studies to use this set of questions treat these characteristics differently: Norris (2012) takes it as an instrumental variable and not essential to democracy; in her approach it is wrong to see these two characteristics as essential to democracy. In comparison, Welzel (2011, 2013) omits it from his calculations of democratic knowledge, suggesting that seeing it as a democratic necessity matches models of *social* democracy, and would not be a ‘wrong’ answer in this sense.

And so the academic jury is out as to whether these two characteristics are theoretically essential to democracy or not. This thesis, by allowing citizens to choose a degree of essentialness for these items, then demonstrates what the popular response might be to this academically contested issue.

#### Law and Order and Economic Growth

The first populist characteristic discussed here concerns whether criminals should be severely punished in a democracy. The link between criminal justice and democracy receives limited attention within democracy studies.[[10]](#footnote-10) Zimring and Johnson (2006, p.267) complained that “criminologists and sociologists rarely make the political dimension of crime policy a principal concern, and political scientists almost never do”. Further, Karstedt and LaFree (2006, p.6) suggested:

“The connection between democracy and criminal justice is so fundamental as to be self-evident: the rule of law guarantees due process, and the observation of human rights is an integral part of the emergence and institutionalization of democracy.”

Similarly, Burk (2002, p.10) noted the crucial condition that a liberal democracy must protect the rights of individuals by “instituting a rule of law enforced by punishment”. But this offers little clue as to the actual nature of punitive policy we can expect in liberal democracies.

The term ‘policy’ is perhaps useful to focus on here. Aside from human rights issues, the way democracies deal with criminals is based on policy, which is generated from the democratic process. It is not necessarily predicted to be one thing or the other. There is a wide spectrum of punitive approaches across longstanding democracies. Scandinavian democracies are typically used as examples where there is a strong orientation towards rehabilitative policy and low levels of incarceration (Pratt 2008a;2008b). At the other end of the scale, it is widely acknowledged that, compared to other democratic states, the US stands out in terms of its high homicide and incarceration rates, punitive policy and use of the death penalty (Karstedt, 2006; Lafree and Tseloni, 2006; Spierenburg, 2006).

Whereas for the previously discussed issues of redistribution and social security it is possible to link these to deeper conceptualisations of social democracy, it is less clear how a particular punitive approach to criminal behaviour conceptually fits into the essential characteristics of democracy. What this variable is focused on, then, is not something which is inherent to the theories of democracy outlined in this thesis. Rather it is a particular policy output certain citizens may be interested in, depending on their understanding of criminal punishment or rehabilitation.

However, the WVS2005-2008 group of questions explicitly states that: “*Many things may be desirable, but not all of them are essential characteristics of democracy*”. The question itself allows citizens to make the judgement whether the characteristic is inherent to democracy. It allows, for instance, for a respondent to have a preference for criminals to be severely punished, yet be of the opinion that this is a preferred policy, and not essential to a democratic system. The problem is, we don’t know from the way the question is answered if this is the case. This conflation of preferred policy and characteristics of democracy might be considered a limitation, yet it also insightful in itself. I discuss it in further detail at the end of this section.

The same issues arises for the issue of economic growth, and in particular whether a prospering economy is essential to the idea of democracy. To date, richer states have been more likely to be democratic than poorer ones (see Lipset 1959, Almond & Verba 1963, and Przeworski 2005). Citizens then may conflate economic growth and democracy.

The literature overall comes to mixed conclusions on whether democracy is necessarily good for growth, with some saying it is generally negative (Tavares and Wacziarg, 2001) but others saying it is generally positive (Gerring et al 2005) and others suggesting a positive interaction between growth and democracy in both directions (Feng, 1997). A more recent meta-review of the literature argued that democracy does not appear to be detrimental to economic growth, and may indeed have a positive effect, albeit indirectly (Doucouliagos and Ulubaşoǧlu, 2008).

The problem with this relationship is the various conceptualisations of both sides of the relationship can lead to diverging results, and new innovations can often call into question previous findings. For instance, an oft-repeated finding that authoritarian regimes grow quicker than democratic regimes has been recently questioned by (Magee and Doces, 2015) who use night time light imagery from satellites to suggest the economic data provided by authoritarian regimes is overstated.

Accordingly, the picture is complicated when it comes to the relationship between democracy and economic growth, and it wouldn’t be surprising if there was no citizen consensus on how essential economic growth is as a characteristic of democracy. Theoretically however, a democracy should function on a systemic level whether the economic is booming or in a depression. Therefore, economic growth is not essential to democracy, yet popular understandings might be predicted to be unclear on this issue.

### Authoritarian Characteristics

The final two characteristics in this set of questions are ‘The army takes over when the government is incompetent’ and ‘Religious authorities interpret the law’. This section discusses these two in that order, and makes the argument that theoretically they are authoritarian, and so anti-democratic, ideals.

#### The Army Takes Over when Government is Incompetent

When it comes to the role of the military in a democracy, there is a paradox that the “very institution created to protect the polity is given sufficient power to become a threat to the polity” (Feaver 1997, p.214). A military strong enough to uphold and protect the regime can topple and replace it, too. This can be highlighted with many examples but some of the more recent and high-profile cases include coup d’états in Egypt in 2013, Nigeria in 2010, Madagascar in 2009, Mauritania in 2008 Thailand in 2006, and Fiji in 2006.

Huntington’s (1957) seminal study *The Soldier and the State* guided much of the research that followed on military-power dynamics and particularly their relationship to liberal democratic theory. In liberal theory, the military is there to protect democratic values (particularly individual liberty) from external threat. Political and military spheres are separate. Simply put, “civilian control is identified with democratic government, military control with absolute or totalitarian government” (Huntington 1957, p.82). However, having civilian control of the military is not straightforward. Too much control from civilians leads to the military detrimentally following the whims and passions of the majority, but too little control can threaten sovereign power (Burk 2002, p.10). A middle-ground suggestion is that of ‘objective civilian control’ where “civilians would dictate military security policy, but would leave the military to determine what military operations were required to secure the policy objectives” (Burk 2002, p.10). In other words, the people decide ‘what’ whilst the military decide ‘how’. Notably, the ‘how’ need not be democratic in nature.

As Burke (2002) pointed out however, this liberal conceptualisation of the military-civilian relationship came about during the Cold War, and the context is now very different. The distinction between military and political spheres is less defined, and increasingly blurs into the economy with the privatization of military training and use of contractors. Issues of how to conduct military action are less bound to single state decisions and often negotiated in transnational bodies, with their own problematic relationships with sovereignty.

Military coups have in the past led to democracy, or at least appeared to have the tacit approval of large swathes of the population. The “Carnation Revolution”, a bloodless coup in Portugal 1974, was conducted by the military that overthrew a dictatorship then oversaw the introduction of a successful democracy (Maxwell, 1995). This event informed more optimistic predictions for the outcome of the uprisings in Egypt, Tunisia and beyond (Celestino & Gleditsch 2013, p.385). In 2006 the Thai military overthrew the elected government of Thaksin Shinawatra, with seemingly wide-spread support from the population, especially the middle-classes (see Jäger 2012). Many in the country saw the government as corrupt. Thailand has since returned to an electoral democracy, and has slowly improved its civil liberties and political rights in the years since, moving from Not Free to Partly Free according to Freedom House. It is not, however, back to the category of Free which it was from 1999-2005.

Of course, as Barany (2011) noted, that there are numerous paths the military can take in situations where there appears to be large-scale disapproval of a regime. If they think it advantageous, they can side with an existing autocratic regime and violently repress any pushes for democracy. Or if they remove a democratic regime they could install their own regime. If a democratic regime is sliding into authoritarianism, it is perhaps possible to crowbar the notion of a “democratic coup” into liberal democratic theory. But this requires interpreting non-institutional mass protest as public support, and, obviously, circumnavigating the wishes of an elected government. This is a contentious suggestion since there is no guarantee this path will lead back to democracy.

Ultimately, a military takeover demonstrates that government leaders have lost control of the state’s coercive organisations, and when this happens to a democracy, democracy can be no longer said to function: the checks and balances that keep a democratic regime in check cannot then keep a military junta in check. Regardless of what path the military chooses to take once it has initiated a coup, military rule is anti-democratic because it lacks authority of a legitimate nature (Finer, 1962). Army rule is based on force, which is an open invitation to a challenge. In fact, many coups inspire counter-takeovers from other factions within the armed services, something Londregan & Poole (1990) referred to as the ‘coup trap’.

Despite the complexities of the topic, the characteristic offered in the WVS is, overall, not a characteristic of democracy. If the characteristic noted that the existing government was clearly sliding into authoritarianism in some manner, it could present more of a grey area as some citizens may believe the government would ultimately restore democracy. But an *incompetent* democratic government should never be taken over by the army. In terms of democratic theory then, this choice is rejected out of hand as not at all essential to democracy.

#### Religious Leaders Interpret the Law

The relationship between religion and democracy has been relatively neglected in democratic theory (Minkenberg, 2007) and comparative politics overall (Grzymala-Busse, 2012). The role of religion in a democracy generally taken for granted. As Collins and Owen have noted (2012, p.500-501), “Since the Enlightenment, liberal democratic theorists have advocated secularism as essential to democracy, so that no one religion has institutionalized.”

Political scientists often cling to the notion that church and state should be kept separate, and it is an established concern that democracy and religion do not mix. Elshtain (2009, p.7) provided a reason as to why this might be:

“The vast majority of political scientists, having reduced religion to a set of private attitudes that had to give way before the onslaught of the powerful forces of modernization—which also meant secularization—lacked interest in the study of religion.”

In a liberal democracy then, religion is conceptualised as a private matter. Protected by civil rights, individuals are free to pursue their religious interests as long as they do not infringe upon the rights of others. It is this relegation of religion to the ‘private’ sphere that explains its neglect in theories of liberal democracy. Religion is not the state’s business, and the state is not religion’s business.

Religion as a private issue should be non-political in liberal democracy (see Pateman’s critique of this however, discussed in Chapter Two, Section 2.2 in particular the section on Feminist Critiques). This is further supported by the notion that not only is religion private but, as the quote above suggests, in a modernized world it should be an issue that weakens over time. When societies modernize – in particular when standards of living and educational opportunities improve – citizens are expected to abandon spirituality and superstition for rationality and scientific reasoning (see Gill 2001 for a discussion). The expected knock-on effect is that over time fewer people consider themselves religious.

However, things have not played out as cleanly as this; first, the sharp distinction between ‘public’ state affairs and ‘private’ individual concerns is rarely so clear-cut. Indeed, religious actors have been key players in the democratization process in – to cherry-pick some of the more well-known examples – the UK, USA, Spain, Poland, South Korea, Taiwan, Chile and Brazil. Second, the relationship between modernization and religion has not been as straight-forward as predicted. Religion has not faded away, and has indeed seen a rise of fundamentalist forms, some linked to terrorism.

Overall, this legacy of neglecting the role of religion in democracy has led to a lack of systematic theoretical approaches to tackling the issue. Recently, analysts have started to try and fill this gap. Fox (2006) has argued the need to accept that the actual separation of ‘church’ and state is far less distinct than many commentators would have us believe. This has led to a renewed focus on how democratic theory can integrate the role of religion more effectively (Stepan, 2000; Bader, 2003).

Stepan (2000) has outlined a systematic approach to addressing this issue, with his notion of the ‘twin tolerations’. The basic premise is that minimal boundaries of freedom and action must be understood for political institutions vis-à-vis religious authorities, and for religious authorities vis-à-vis political institutions (ibid 2000, p.37). For instance, the democratic right to freedom of organisation would allow religious-orientated political parties to form. At the same time, should these parties violate democratic principles the courts can then sanction or constrain them, as they can any party that promotes anti-democratic policy.

The question in the WVS2005-2008 outlines a characteristic where ‘religious authorities interpret the laws’. The wording here is a little ambiguous.[[11]](#footnote-11) However, here is no real notion of ‘*can*’ or ‘*could’* – this is a statement in which this role *is* carried out by religious authorities. In this sense, interpreting the law suggests the possibility of putting forth an understanding of a law that is not necessarily what was meant by the political establishment that created it. This violates the idea of twin toleration, as the ‘fusion of religious and political power under religious control’ is theocratic, not democratic (ibid 2000, p.43).

Accordingly, along with army takeover, this characteristic is anti-democratic, and, theoretically, not at all essential to democracy.

### Summary and Discussion

Figure 3.3 provides an overview of the arguments made above, outlining what type of characteristic each of the ten questions pertains to, and whether they are *theoretically* considered essential to democracy or not (it also provides a short-hand for each characteristic, to ease the discussion of results below). In the discussion I noted when the theory was less clear, in particular for the instrumental and populist measures, and so these are noted as theoretically debatable. For the instrumental characteristics in particular I raised some points when citizens may veer towards higher levels of essentialness than certain parts of the literature would suggest, but, as discussed, the exploratory analysis in the following Chapter will highlight where these characteristics sit and how they are combined by survey respondents.

Figure 3:3 A summary of theoretical expectations for each characteristic of democracy

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Characteristic** | **Short-hand** | **Type** | **How essential?** |
| People choose their leaders in free elections | Elections | Procedural | Essential |
| People can change the laws in referendums | Referendum | Procedural | Essential |
| Civil rights protect people’s liberty against oppression | Civil rights | Procedural | Essential |
| Women have the same rights as men | Equal gender rights | Procedural | Essential |
| Governments tax the rich and subsidize the poor | Tax | Instrumental/Social | Debatable |
| People received state aid for unemployment | Unemployment aid | Instrumental/Social | Debatable |
| The economy is prospering | Economy | Instrumental/Populist | Debatable |
| Criminals are severely punished | Punishment | Instrumental/Populist | Debatable |
| Religious authorities interpret the law | Religious authorities | Authoritarian | Non-Essential (Anti-Democratic) |
| The army takes over when the government is incompetent | Army takeover | Authoritarian | Non-Essential (Anti-Democratic) |

The final discussion point is to consider how the management of those which I have labelled as ‘debatable’, but also the broader approach of the thesis towards these questions and their analysis. Bratton (2010: 107) suggests that “a closed-ended list of attributes…tends to prompt respondents to conflate democratization with the satisfaction of material needs”. In some ways, this is a fear of these particular questions. Yet in others, this potential conflation is a finding in itself. The question is clear about linking the characteristics to democracy. If respondents link material outputs with the idea of democracy itself, then we should explore the finding that this is what they think. Indeed, Bratton (2010: 111) goes onto note that the “next step in our research agenda is to explore the causes and consequences of differential interpretations of the ‘D-word’ [democracy] among individuals”. If individuals interpret the ‘D-word’ to be one that contains particular policy outputs, then whether this aligns with theoretical distinctions between inherent characteristics or policy output should be commented upon, but should not stop this result being considered a conceptual mapping of democracy. The citizen was asked if it was an essential characteristic of democracy, and that is their answer. That is why this thesis does not use the civics-test approach of Welzel (2013) and Norris (2011) as outlined in Section 2.4, but allows these characteristics to be folded into the conceptualisations of democracy that citizens have, if that is what they chose.

In some ways this is a fine line to tread; by outlining these theoretical expectations there is arguably some degree of a confirmatory approach being undertaken. Yet, the underlying point here is that whilst this discussion tying the questions into the literature should help in the interpretation of the results in the following chapters, the approach of Chapter 4 does not use these theoretical expectations to structure the analysis. The obvious structuring is that of the set of ten questions themselves; this framework is provided by the survey. However, beyond that, the way that citizens map out the essentialness of these ten characteristics to build their own understanding of democracy is driven by the responses, not by the theory or a framework that I impose onto them in order to judge how ‘theoretically correct’ they might be. It is in that sense that there is an exploratory analysis taking place, very different to that of the studies which have utilised this data so far (see Cho 2015, Welzel 2013, Welzel 2011, Norris 2011 and Section 2.4 and Section 4.1). It is exploring the combinational approaches taken by citizens that provide the key interest here, and the way these characteristics are placed together is something buried by the existing studies and their ‘civics test’ approach: there is no detailed way to know ‘how’ the citizen failed the test in these studies, and what alternative conceptualisation they might have in mind. The details are lost. Therefore it is the alternative, primarily exploratory approach to citizen understanding, that I prioritise in this thesis, and which is the primary focus of Chapter 4.

Before the exploratory dimensional approach is taken the final section of the current chapter examines the descriptive statistics for these characteristics to get a sense of whether these theoretical expectations are played out in the answers of citizens. It starts with the individual level and moves on to the national level. It also focuses on the most important conclusions of Dalton *et al*’s (2008) study discussed at the start of this section (and also in Chapter 2, Section 2.4): that those in established democracies are no more likely to offer a definition of democracy than those non-democracies; that citizen ideas of democracy align with liberal democratic theory with instrumental characteristics not chosen as democratic necessities; and that it doesn’t matter where citizens are from when it comes to offering a definition of democracy.

## 3.3: Descriptive Statistics

Figure 3.4 presents descriptive statistics for each characteristic, outlining the mean and standard deviation at the individual level. It also reports the country-level variance presented as a percentage. This is the intraclass correlation (which is produced on a 0-1 scale) multiplied by 100. This allows us to determine how universal this mean is: the higher the variance, the larger the difference in means between countries. The closer the result is to 0, the less the second level grouping entity (country) is having an effect, and the closer to 1, the more effect it has (i.e. there is more variance in that level to be explained). The formula for this calculation is outlined in the Appendix, Section A. To put this another way, the higher the ICC, the more impact *place* is having on an individual’s answer to the question (more detail on the ICC is available in Chapter 5, Section 5.4).

The country-level variance is calculated using a null (or empty) multi-level regression model: this is a model calculated without any independent variables. This technique calculates the variance of the average for all individuals (level 1), and it also separately calculates this for all the countries (level 2). The level 2 variance can then be worked out as a percentage of the overall variance. Multi-level regression is discussed in more detail in Chapter Five, Section 5.3. The full results can be seen in the Appendix, Figures A1-A10.

It is also necessary to test whether the impact of this country level variance is significant in explaining the results. This is done with likelihood ratio tests which compare a single-level null model with a multi-level null model. This is significant for all ten variables (details in Appendix, Figures A1-A10), demonstrating the importance of both individual and country level analysis, which justifies the multi-level approach taken in later chapters.

The results of this table are discussed in conjunction with the results shown in Figure 3.5 which shows the distribution of individual responses for the ten characteristics using bar charts. Before discussing the results in detail, it is worth pointing out the results show that respondents are happy using all available options in the scale, and are clearly not put off choosing the more extreme values. This further justifies the use of absolute values in later analysis, discussed in Chapter 4, Section 4.2

Figure 3:4 Mean and Standard Deviation of Democratic Characteristics (0 Not essential – 10 essential) and Country Level ICC as a %

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | ***Individual (45,454)*** | | ***Country (46)*** |
| **Characteristic** | **Mean** | **Std. Dvt.** | **ICC** |
| *Procedural Characteristics* |  |  |  |
| Free Elections | 8.58 | 2.17 | 5.9% |
| Equal Gender Rights | 8.51 | 2.32 | 7.4% |
| Civil Rights | 8.02 | 2.44 | 11.8% |
| Referendum | 7.93 | 2.51 | 10.0% |
| *Instrumental Characteristics* |  |  |  |
| Prospering Economy | 7.89 | 2.46 | 12.7% |
| Criminal Punishment | 7.70 | 2.76 | 11.8% |
| Unemployment Aid | 7.38 | 2.71 | 10.9% |
| Tax Subsidies | 6.67 | 2.95 | 9.90% |
| *Authoritarian Characteristics* |  |  |  |
| Army Intervention | 4.47 | 3.26 | 15.2% |
| Religious Authorities | 4.36 | 3.10 | 23.2% |

The procedural characteristics clearly score very highly (remembering that higher scores on these variables means a stronger sense that the characteristic is absolutely essential for democracy). The highest average result is for elections with a score of 8.58, and the lowest standard deviation of 2.17. The bar chart for elections demonstrates that the distribution of responses across the ten-point scale is clearly skewed to the high scores: 54% choose the highest available option of 10, indicating that they see elections as absolutely essential for democracy. Only 11% of respondents score it 5 or less. Furthermore, only 5.9% of variance in these results is at the national level; in other words, it doesn’t matter very much where you are from when it comes to answering this question. Elections are considered highly essential to democracy by most respondents, which aligns with the theoretical expectations.

Figure 3:5 Percentage Distribution Graphs for the Ten Democratic Characteristics



The other procedural characteristics show the same pattern of results, although none quite so strongly. For the referendum characteristic, some of the complexity of the role of referendums in liberal democratic theory is borne out in the fact that whilst the average out of ten is 7.93, still a very still high score, it is the lowest scoring of the procedural characteristics. Referendums also produce the highest standard deviation of the procedural characteristics, at 2.51. This can be seen in the distribution graph, with a more varied spread of responses across the 5-10 choices, compared to the distributions of responses for elections.

A majority give the civil rights characteristic a score of 9 or 10, demonstrating that the importance of civil rights in conceptions of liberal democracy is shared by citizens. However, the country-level variance for civil rights is the highest of the procedural categories at 10.6%, almost double the amount present for the elections variable.

Equal gender rights score very highly here, and are perceived as essential requirements of democracy, only just less so than the results for elections. They also have relatively low country level variance of 7.4%. This is perhaps surprising considering there was a need for Millennium Development Goals to specifically dedicate a goal to “promote gender equality and empower woman” and this has been continued with The Girl Declaration (see un.org/millenniumgoals and girleffect.org).

The instrumental characteristics show two different sets of results. For the populist questions on the economy and criminal punishment, the pattern is very close to that of the procedural characteristics, with a tendency for more respondents to see these characteristics as near-essentials for democracy. There is a strong negative skew in the distribution of responses, producing a high average of 7.89 and 7.7 for the economy and punishment, respectively. In terms of the average, distribution and variance of these two characteristics, they are very similar to the results for referendums and civil rights.

This result already suggests a difference between the theoretical expectations and the ideas that citizens have of democracy. These are populist options, linked to voter preference for the policy output of regimes; they are not essential or inherent characteristics of democratic theory. However it appears that they are of considerable importance when it comes to citizens’ definitions of democracy. At this stage there does not appear to be a clean-cut distinction between liberal ideas and populist ideals when it comes to citizen conceptions of democracy.

The other two instrumental characteristics show a different pattern. Tax redistribution and unemployment benefit score averages of 6.67 and 7.38 respectively, with, in comparison, much flatter spreads of results, indicating greater variation in how essential individuals see these attributes as being for democracy. Tax redistribution in particular has a standard deviation of almost 3.

This would seem to reflect the tricky theoretical issues highlighted by the contrasting approaches of Welzel (2013; 2011) and Norris to these characteristics (2011). Are these issues extensions of notions of social justice, and so can they be considered under wider conceptions of democracy? Or do they really pertain to material benefits that citizens want as policy outputs as a regime – as could they not be provided by an authoritarian government seeking to gain support from the masses whilst still withholding any kind of democratic political rights? The range of scores for these characteristics could suggest that citizens’ perspectives cover this spectrum of possibilities.

The two authoritarian characteristics present a very different set of results. The good news, in terms of the theoretical expectations, is that these results score on average the lowest of all the characteristics, suggesting that they are least likely to be seen as democratic essentials. On average, citizens score army takeover in times of government incompetence at an average of 4.47, and religious authorities interpreting the law scores at 4.36. The bad news is that, considering these are *anti*-democratic, from a theoretical standpoint these results would be hoped to be lower. For instance, the number of respondents rejecting these characteristics as not at all essential does not mirror the strong majorities that choose elections as completely essential.

Furthermore, these results have considerable standard deviations, 3.26 for army and 3.10 for religious authorities, suggesting wide diversity of opinion on whether or not these are essentials: there is no unanimity of perspective among WVS respondents. The country level variance is also high: for the army it is 15.2%, almost three times that of the elections result. For religious authorities it is 23.2%, over four times that of the elections result. In other words, citizens’ opinions towards these authoritarian characteristics vary considerably from country to country.

Alongside the fact that the populist characteristics score very highly, it is clear that there are potential combinations of democratic understandings possible from these results that differ significantly from liberal democratic ideals. The following section now examines if these patterns vary across individual demographic characteristics.

### Characteristics of Democracy at the Individual Level

This section discusses the patterns associated with each characteristic and a range of sociodemographic variables. These characteristics align with the theoretical discussion introduced in Chapter 5, Section 5.1, and full details for their expected relationship with democracy can be read there. At this stage, I use them as frequently explored sociodemographic variables of interest to explore initial patterns in the data. Age and gender are acknowledged to be important demographics to examine when considering political behaviour and understanding (Pattie & Johnston 2008, p.685). Through the modernization thesis education has long been linked to political understanding (Bell 1973); the measures here – lower, middle and higher – roughly map onto primary, secondary and university education, but are simplified to account for the numerous different educational classifications recorded by the WVS. De Tocqueville’s study of American democracy in the 1830s clearly emphasised the importance of membership of associational organisations and so I examine how the characteristics are scored by whether the respondent is a member of one, multiple, or no associational organisations. Finally, I look at media use as a way of seeing how many sources of information a respondent might be exposed to in their information environment (Jerit, Barabas and Bolsen, 2006). Figure 3.6 displays the results, showing the mean (out of ten) for each characteristic plus the standard deviation in brackets. The final column outlines the *n* for each category, out of the total 45,545 respondents overall.

The gender variable shows no difference across the democratic characteristics for men and women, with all means within 0.1 of each other, except the variable on gender equality which women on average scored 0.2 higher than men. There are however generational differences for a number of the characteristics. For the four procedural characteristics (elections, referendum, gender quality and civil rights), the oldest age group score around 0.5 higher on these the youngest age group, with a general sliding scale across the categories (and the essentialness never falling on average below 7.5, and so clearly remaining high). It is possible that being of a generation closest to major twentieth centuries events such as World War 2 and the Cold War, who saw democracy under duress around much of the world, leads to one being more convinced of the essentialness of these procedural and liberal characteristics in a democracy. Such a feeling may be less acute in younger generations who are more likely to either be born in a democracy or be in a world is which democracy is more safely in the ascendancy, a trend with potentially problematic implications for support of democratic regimes in the future (Foa and Mounk, 2017). The pattern is the same for the characteristic that tax should be redistributive and also, more strongly, for the idea that state aid should provide a safety net for the unemployed. Again, this could demonstrate that those growing up in an era of welfare development and modernization are more likely to believe people need support from government. Research has suggested that people’s attitudes are hardening towards welfare, even those of the younger generation who may be more likely to be struggling in the job market or be the first generation to be less wealthy overall than their parents (Taylor-Gooby, 2011): this result provides tentative evidence to support this notion. Interestingly however, the generational differences disappear when it comes to both a prospering economy and criminal punishment – all age groups on average score the economy a high 7.7 on the scale of essentialness, whereas punishment only varies between 7.5-7.7. Clearly these populist issues of law and order and economic growth are seen in fact to be very important in a democracy, despite the expectations of the literature in Section 3.2, Chapter 3, and previously in this chapter, which suggested that these will be contested issues when related to democratic theory. The standard deviation of these variables is slightly higher than for the procedural issues, yet not by a huge amount, suggesting that whilst contestation over the issues *is* played out amongst respondents, they are not as conflicted as the literature on the issue might predict. Finally for the age variable we can see that for the authoritarian issues there a clear pattern again, that younger respondents score them *higher* on average than the elderly respondents: 4.6 for 15-24 year olds compared to 3.7 for 75+ when it comes to religious authorities interpreting the law, and, using the same age groups, 4.7 compared to 3.8 for army intervention. This is perhaps a surprise as more authoritarian, or at least more conservative attitudes, are associated with older generations (Stenner, 2005, p.154), yet here there is a clear suggestion that the elderly are scoring these characteristics as less essential than average than the younger respondents. This raises the concern that there is potentially a *de-*consolidation of democracy as younger generations are less inclined to support democratic and liberal/procedural ideas (Foa and Mounk, 2017).

However, what we do not know at this stage, and which is crucial for further study, is whether this reflects the importance of socialization and that democratic ideals are learnt by respondents over a lifetime, or if we are indeed seeing younger generations scoring such democratic characteristics less than they used to.

When it comes to education a similar pattern appears across elections, gender equality and civil rights: those with higher levels of education score these higher than those with lower levels. There is around a 0.5 difference, but no group scores less than 8.0, and so these are varying levels of essentialness, rather than fundamental differences in attitude. The referendum variable shows far less difference, between 7.8 for low and middle levels, and 8.0 for the highest level. When it comes to the instrumental characteristics the relationship is reversed but the gaps are smaller. In general these issues retain a high level of essentialness – especially a prospering economy – and again do not show the large conflict in opinions that the literature might expect; at least, these differences are not highlighted by age, gender, or education. The largest gap for educational attainment is demonstrated in the authoritarian characteristics. Here, those of a lower attainment score the essentialness of religious authorities at 4.8, compared to only 3.4 for the higher attainment. For the army intervention issue, this pattern is 4.8 compared to 3.6. Therefore, in this preliminary analysis we might expect to see that education is important in dissuading people that religious and military authorities should have a say in democratic governance.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Election** | **Ref.** | **Gender** | **Civil R.** | **Tax** | **State Aid** | **Economy** | **Punishment** | **Religious** | **Army** | ***N* (%)** |
| **Gender** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Female* | 8.5 (2.2) | 7.8 (2.5) | 8.7 (2.2) | 7.9 (2.5) | 6.5 (2.9) | 7.3 (2.6) | 7.7 (2.5) | 7.5 (2.8) | 4.3 (3.0) | 4.4 (3.1) | 22,793 (50%) |
| *Male* | 8.6 (2.2) | 7.9 (2.5) | 8.5 (2.3) | 8.0 (2.5) | 6.5 (2.9) | 7.2 (2.7) | 7.8 (2.5) | 7.6 (2.8) | 4.2 (3.0) | 4.3 (3.2) | 22,752 (50%) |
| **Age** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *15-24* | 8.3 (2.3) | 7.5 (2.6) | 8.4 (2.4) | 7.6 (2.5) | 6.4 (2.9) | 7.1 (2.7) | 7.7 (2.5) | 7.6 (2.7) | 4.6 (3.0) | 4.7 (3.1) | 7, 970 (17%) |
| *25-34* | 8.5 (2.2) | 7.8 (2.5) | 8.4 (2.3) | 7.9 (2.5) | 6.5 (3.0) | 7.2 (2.7) | 7.7 (2.5) | 7.5 (2.8) | 4.5 (3.0) | 4.5 (3.2) | 10,377 (23%) |
| *35-44* | 8.6 (2.1) | 7.9 (2.5) | 8.6 (2.2) | 8.0 (2.4) | 6.5 (2.9) | 7.3 (2.7) | 7.7 (2.5) | 7.5 (2.8) | 4.3 (3.0) | 4.4 (3.2) | 9,245 (20%) |
| *45-54* | 8.6 (2.1) | 7.9 (2.5) | 8.7 (2.2) | 8.0 (2.4) | 6.6 (2.9) | 7.3 (2.7) | 7.7 (2.5) | 7.5 (2.8) | 4.1 (3.0) | 4.2 (3.2) | 7,679 (17%) |
| *55-64* | 8.7 (2.1) | 8.0 (2.4) | 8.8 (2.1) | 8.0 (2.4) | 6.6 (2.9) | 7.4 (2.6) | 7.7 (2.5) | 7.5 (2.8) | 3.9 (3.0) | 4.0 (3.2) | 5,382 (12%) |
| *65-74* | 8.7 (2.1) | 8.0 (2.4) | 8.7 (2.1) | 8.1 (2.4) | 6.7 (2.9) | 7.6 (2.5) | 7.7 (2.5) | 7.7 (2.7) | 3.8 (2.9) | 4.0 (3.2) | 3,416 (8%) |
| *75+* | 8.6 (2.0) | 8.0 (2.3) | 8.9 (1.9) | 8.0 (2.3) | 6.7 (2.8) | 7.7 (2.4) | 7.7 (2.4) | 7.6 (2.7) | 3.7 (2.8) | 3.8 (3.1) | 1,496 (3%) |
| **Education** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Lower* | 8.3 (2.3) | 7.8 (2.6) | 8.3 (2.4) | 7.6 (2.6) | 6.7 (3.0) | 7.5 (2.7) | 7.7 (2.5) | 7.6 (2.8) | 4.8 (3.1) | 4.8 (3.2) | 11,812 (26%) |
| *Middle* | 8.5 (2.2) | 7.8 (2.5) | 8.6 (2.2) | 7.9 (2.4) | 6.5 (2.9) | 7.3 (2.7) | 7.8 (2.4) | 7.6 (2.7) | 4.3 (3.0) | 4.5 (3.2) | 23,190 (51%) |
| *Higher* | 8.8 (1.9) | 8.0 (2.4) | 8.9 (2.0) | 8.3 (2.3) | 6.4 (2.8) | 7.1 (2.7) | 7.6 (2.6) | 7.2 (2.8) | 3.4 (2.8) | 3.6 (3.0) | 10,545 (23%) |
| **Group member** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *None* | 8.5 (2.1) | 7.9 (2.4) | 8.5 (2.2) | 8.0 (2.4) | 6.6 (2.9) | 7.4 (2.6) | 7.9 (2.4) | 7.7 (2.7) | 4.4 (3.0) | 4.5 (3.2) | 25,610 (56%) |
| *One* | 8.5 (2.2) | 7.7 (2.6) | 8.6 (2.2) | 7.9 (2.5) | 6.4 (2.9) | 7.2 (2.7) | 7.6 (2.5) | 7.4 (2.8) | 4.2 (3.0) | 4.2 (3.2) | 10,661 (23%) |
| *Two+* | 8.6 (2.2) | 7.7 (2.6) | 8.7 (2.2) | 7.8 (2.7) | 6.3 (3.0) | 7.0 (2.8) | 7.5 (2.6) | 7.3 (2.9) | 4.1 (3.0) | 4.1 (3.2) | 9,274 (20%) |
| **Media Use** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *None* | 7.9 (2.6) | 7.6 (2.7) | 7.9 (2.6) | 7.3 (2.8) | 6.7 (3.0) | 7.0 (2.9) | 7.5 (2.6) | 7.5 (2.8) | 5.4 (3.1) | 5.3 (3.2) | 1,250 (3%) |
| *1-4* | 8.4 (2.2) | 7.8 (2.5) | 8.4 (2.3) | 7.8 (2.5) | 6.6 (3.0) | 7.4 (2.7) | 7.8 (2.4) | 7.7 (2.7) | 4.6 (3.0) | 4.7 (3.2) | 27,068 (59%) |
| *5+* | 8.7 (2.1) | 7.9 (2.4) | 8.9 (2.0) | 8.1 (2.4) | 6.4 (2.8) | 7.2 (2.6) | 7.6 (2.5) | 7.3 (2.8) | 3.6 (2.8) | 3.8 (3.1) | 17,227 (38%) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | **Total *n* = 45,545** | |

**Figure 3:6 Sociodemographic variables and essentialness of democratic characteristics: mean out of 10 & standard deviation in brackets**

Considering activity in associational organisations, when it comes to the procedural issues we see limited differences between those who active and those who are not. This could reflect the fact that liberal democratic conceptualisations often fact struggle with the notion of associational and group-led civil society (see discussion in Chapter 2, Section 2.2). Therefore, engagement in civil society space may not necessarily offer respondents more opportunities to come to see the importance of these procedures to democracy. There is a slightly wider gap however for the instrumental variables, with those in more groups seeing them as less essential. This perhaps reflects values of those involved in such organisations who may see less requirement in a democracy for the more material and monetary aspect of these variables, and be more interested in post-material values of expression and voice (Inglehart, 2008). For the authoritarian characteristics we can see that those in more organisations score them both lower, although the gap is considerably smaller than the gap for education.

The final variable under consideration here is media use. Discussed in detail in Chapter 5, for now it will suffice to say that individuals who seek out more media sources and show interest in this sense are expected to be more *cognitively engaged* (Pattie, Seyd and Whiteley, 2004, pp. 138–140) and we might predict they are better informed about politics and so their understanding of democracy will more likely align with elite-driven theoretical expectations. The media variable is worded as follows: “*People use different sources to learn what is going on in their country and the world. For each of the following sources, please indicate whether you used it last week or did not use it last week to obtain information*”. The respondents are then offered the choices of daily newspaper, news broadcasts on radio or TV, printed magazines, in depth reports on radio or TV, books, internet/email or talk with friends/colleagues. The table splits these into users with no media engagement, 1-4 sources and 5+. We can see from the table that those using more media sources score the procedural characteristics higher than those who use less sources, with the gap being the widest for gender equality. This suggests that more sources could expose respondents to information concerning liberal procedural characteristics of democracy. The effect of media use seems inconsistent when it comes to the instrumental characteristics however. The gaps between the mean scores are smaller, and in fact seem to show in general that those reading some media, but not the widest range, actually score higher in general. Therefore the information environment and link to policy-related concerns is not clear, and this is explored in more detail in Chapter 5. However, the relationship is clear for the authoritarian characteristics; the more media types consulted, the lower on average the results with a very similar pattern across both.

In sum, this discussion shows limited influence of gender, but some generational effects, with the older generations more likely on average to choose procedural characteristics as essential and authoritarian characteristics as non-essential. However, this pattern breaks down across the instrumental characteristics. It is suggested that education and media use have an important influence on increasing the score of procedural characteristics and lowering the score on authoritarian ones, although again, the instrumental characteristics are less clear. Membership has a similar effect, yet seems at this stage to be weaker in comaprison.

The results suggest that there are varying understandings of democracy amongst the citizenry, particularly when it comes to the populist, social and authoritarian understandings of the idea. As a result, this questions the conclusion of Dalton et al (2008) that relatively few people equate democracy with social benefits such as a higher standard of living, secure employment, or personal security. Consequently, the conclusion from Dalton et al. (2008) that understandings generally conform to liberal democratic models of democracy requires further examination. The analyses undertaken in Chapter 5 more clearly place these socio-demographic variables in their theoretical context and, using multilevel regression analysis, starts to unpack their influence when taking into account all other variables. Before this however, the remainder of this chapter examines the importance of national-level context.

### Characteristics of Democracy at the National Level

These initial individual-level findings suggest that procedural characteristics are seen by citizens as essential to democracy, which matches the theoretical expectations of liberal democracy. However, the populist ideals are seen as essential to almost the same degree, whilst social ideals are mixed. The authoritarian options are generally rejected, but with a considerable amount of country level variance. This section now examines patterns at the national level, across the 46 countries in the WVS2008 dataset.

Figure 3:7 Boxplot for Democracy Characteristics



The boxplots in Figure 3.7 show, for national-level averages, the median country score line cutting across the box, the interquartile range between the edges of the box, and each end of the whiskers show the highest or lowest score still within 1.5 times the interquartile range. Anything outside this range is classed as an outlier result, and is plotted individually.

Boxplots are useful for presenting distributional patterns across these characteristics, and they also provide strict criteria for identifying outlier countries which stray considerably from the general results.

The difference in ranges across the procedural characteristics is noticeable. For elections, Sweden is actually classed as an outlier in the sense that Swedish citizens score this element significantly *higher* than citizens in other countries, even taking into account the average for this element is already very high. The range is narrow for this element, which highlights the considerably different score given to the element by citizens from Malaysia and Thailand, who score it considerably less highly as an essential criterion for democracy compared to citizens in other countries.

In comparison, there are no outliers for the referendum characteristic. However, the range is much wider, from 6 through to 9.2. There is also a considerable range of results when it comes to civil rights. Once again, Thailand is an outlier. Thai citizens score two of the most fundamental elements of liberal democratic theory, elections and civil rights, significantly lower than do people in the vast majority of countries in the survey.

Malaysia too, is also in this position as it makes a second appearance as an outlier for the equality characteristic, scoring 6.7 compared to the median of almost 8.8. The other outlier for this element is Iraq, which scores 6.4. This tells us that Malaysian and Iraq respondents are less likely to see this as an essential for democracy than are people in general. Overall, the gender characteristic range shows that it has the highest country average across all characteristics; 9.8. This extraordinarily high score is the average result from Sweden. In every country the entire range of 1 to 10 is used by citizens across all these characteristics, except in Sweden. No one in the Swedish sample scored the gender equality characteristic less than 9. In Sweden the characteristics of liberal democracy are scored very highly and in a highly homogenous fashion unlike in any other country in the dataset.

The tax redistribution shows a considerable range of 4.3 through to 8.6 with a median of 6.5 and no outliers. This suggests there are a wide variety of responses across the country averages and so there is likely to be less consensus on exactly what is the nature of tax redistribution for democracy. In contrast, the range for unemployment benefit is narrower and so there is more agreement on how essential unemployment benefits are seen. However, Indonesia is classed as an outlier here, with a lower average score of 4.5, compared to a median of 7.5

The high-scoring nature of the populist elements is evident, with the high end of the economy element higher than the civil rights and referendum elements, and matching that of elections. The criminal punishment option shows a similar result but not as high, with Norway’s significantly lower average making it an outlier. This suggests that a clear ‘liberal’ or ‘informed’ understanding of democracy may be questionable, as these populist characteristics are indeed popular, and it was clear that in some scholarly tests of democratic knowledge (Norris, 2011; Welzel, 2013), high scores on these items were seen as impairing a citizen’s understanding of democracy.

Finally, the authoritarian results demonstrate why the country-level variance is so high for these options. The average result ranges from a very low 1.5-2.2 up to a very high 7.4 for the two characteristics. These are significantly different averages across the countries, and for the religious authorities characteristics Vietnamese and Egyptian citizens score much higher than the median of just of 4, with outlier averages of 7.8 and 8.1 respectively. The Egyptian result for religious authorities in fact matches the median result for civil rights across all the countries. Therefore, there is some initial evidence that these anti-democratic characteristics are seen as democratic in certain countries, and even seen in some cases to be as essential as a liberal characteristic.

#### National Averages by Political Regimes

Figure 3.8 shows the patterns of national-level averages by regime characteristics, examining the differences between Freedom House categories, communist and Islamic regimes.

Freedom House score was chosen as a useful proxy for the level of democratization in a country. The three-band categorisation of “Free” (35 countries), “Not Free” (10 countries), and “Partly Free” (7 countries) is used here. This scoring system provides a quick overview of the regime context for citizens, and the measure focuses squarely on judging theoretically relevant attributes of liberal democracy (Munk 2009, p.17).

The communist grouping classes eight countries in the dataset as being currently communist, or included in the former sphere of influence of the Soviet Union. This allows for a comparison to see whether citizens socialized under non-democratic regimes differ in their outlooks on democracy.

Figure 3:8 Table showing country level averages by Freedom House, Islamic and Communist classifications

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Elections** | **Referendum** | **Civil Rights** | **Gender Equality** | **Tax Redistribution** | **Unemployment Benefit** | **Prospering**  **Economy** | **Criminal Punishment** | **Army Takeover** | **Religious Authorities** |  |  |
| ***Freedom House*** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Free** | 8.6 | 7.8 | 8.0 | 8.8 | 6.4 | 7.2 | 7.6 | 7.5 | 3.8 | 3.6 |  |  |
| **Partly Free** | 8.3 | 8.0 | 7.8 | 8.2 | 6.5 | 7.3 | 7.9 | 7.7 | 5.1 | 5.2 |  |  |
| **Not Free** | 8.8 | 8.3 | 8.4 | 8.0 | 7.4 | 7.7 | 8.6 | 8.4 | 6.1 | 5.8 |  |  |
| **[Range]** | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.6 | 0.8 | 1.0 | 0.5 | 1.0 | 0.9 | 2.3 | 2.2 |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Islam** | 8.6 | 8.2 | 8.0 | 7.6 | 7.2 | 7.5 | 8.3 | 8.2 | 6.0 | 6.0 |  |  |
| **Non-Islamic** | 8.6 | 7.9 | 8.0 | 8.8 | 6.5 | 7.3 | 7.8 | 7.7 | 4.1 | 3.9 |  |  |
| **[Range]** | 0.0 | 0.3 | 0.0 | 1.2 | 0.7 | 0.2 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 1.9 | 2.1 |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Communist** | 8.9 | 8.6 | 8.8 | 9.1 | 7.1 | 8.3 | 8.8 | 8.6 | 4.9 | 4.6 |  |  |
| **Non-Communist** | 8.5 | 7.8 | 7.9 | 8.4 | 6.5 | 7.1 | 7.7 | 7.5 | 4.4 | 4.3 |  |  |
| **[Range]** | 0.4 | 0.8 | 0.9 | 0.7 | 0.6 | 1.2 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 0.5 | 0.3 |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

The Islamic grouping also classes eight countries in the dataset as having Islamic regimes or predominantly Islamic populations, according to Huntington‘s *Clash of Civilizations* thesis. Huntington (1996) argued that Islam is an obstacle to democratization, and so this is a simple test to see if there any differences from citizens living in Islamic countries on their understanding of democracy.

In terms of Freedom House categories, the Not Free countries score all characteristics the highest except for gender equality. The Not Free countries score the importance of a prospering economy and severe criminal punishment equal to, or higher, than civil rights. At 6.1, army takeover scores considerably high too. For the citizens in these countries, there is not a strict adherence to the expectations of liberal democratic theory. Again, we can see here that there is the potential for these characteristics to be combined in a significantly different way to the ideal liberal democratic understanding.

The difference between countries classified as Islamic and Non-Islamic across elections, referendums, civil rights and unemployment benefit is minor, and not more than 0.3. By 0.5 the Islamic countries see criminal punishment and a prospering economy as more essential to democracy than non-Islamic countries. So far, there is limited difference between the countries, matching previous studies which found that citizens in Islamic countries desire and understand liberal democracy in much the same fashion as those in non-Islamic countries (Norris and Inglehart, 2002; Rowley and Smith, 2009). However, this is not a consistent finding across all the characteristics. Although the average for equal gender rights is still relatively high at 7.6 for Islamic countries, it is considerably less than the average of 8.8 for non-Islamic countries. Similarly, the authoritarian characteristics have almost the same average for Islamic countries as they do for Not Free countries, at 6.

When countries are split into Communist and non-Communist categories, citizens in Communist countries score every characteristic on average higher. It is a little difficult to unpack why this might be as the communist category contains countries which are currently experiencing a regime described as communist (such as China), and one which was previously a communist regime (such as Poland). However, China is the largest currently communist country in this category and also categorised as the most authoritarian, yet Chinese citizens score referendums an average of 8 and civil rights and elections both higher than 8.5 (see below Figures 3.9-3.10). It is clear that living under these regimes has not impacted upon citizens’ judgement of the importance of procedural characteristics, but there is a difference when it comes to the social and populist characteristics: those living in these regimes appear to believe that severe criminal punishment, a prospering economy,y and the provision of unemployment benefit are more essential to the idea of democracy than do those people who do not live under these regimes.

In summary there are notable differences across these different classifications. It is clear that national context has an impact upon the opinions of citizens when it comes to ideas of democracy. The final analytical section of this chapter examines all the nation level averages against the country’s level of development.

#### Democracy and Development

This section provides details of each of the 46 country averages for each question, alongside their HDI score. The detail of this is important in presenting how citizen averages group certain countries, which may be similar for some characteristics, but very different for others. Each characteristic is shown with its own scatterplot against HDI. A correlation analysis was also run on this pairing, with the Pearson’s *r* result shown on each graph. For this final discussion, the characteristics are again grouped into three categories: procedural, instrumental and authoritarian.

#### Procedural

The correlation between the procedural characteristics and level of development is strongest for the gender equality characteristic (see Figure 3.12), with a Pearson’s r of 0.45. As HDI goes up, so too in general does the score on gender equality. Without other controls, HDI explains a fifth of the variance in the gender equality characteristic at the national level. The outlier results from Iraqis and Malaysians can be seen in comparison to other scores, as well as the high scoring Swedes.

In Figure 3.12 is notable that other countries with lower than expected averages (according to the line of best fit) include Middle Eastern and North Africa countries such as Morroco, Egypt, Jordan and Iran. In these countries gender inequality is seen as less essential to democracy than their HDI score might predict. These are all classed as Islamic, matching the lower score this characteristic received in Figure 3.9. In comparison, there is a wide range of results across other African nations. For instance, Ethiopia scores over 9, compared to the much lower Rwanda, Zambia and South Africa, even though they all have higher HDI values. Also notable is the lower scoring east Asian nations of Japan and South Korea, which although highly developed, score less than all the European countries with similar development scores.

Figure 3:9 Elections and HDI scatterplot



Figure 3:10 Referendum and HDI scatterplot



Figure 3:11 Civil Rights and HDI Scatterplot



The Islamic grouping also classes eight countries in the dataset as having Islamic regimes or predominantly Islamic populations, according to Huntington‘s *Clash of Civilizations* thesis. Huntington (1996) argued that Islam is an obstacle to democratization, and so this is a simple test to see if there any differences from citizens living in Islamic countries on their understanding of democracy.

Figure 3:12 Equality and HDI Scatterplot



The higher score for Communist or former communist countries is also clear, with a high-scoring cluster of China, Georgia, Romania, Russia, Vietnam and Poland, whose citizens score this characteristic an average of higher than 9.

The elections characteristic in Figure 3.9 has a Pearson’s r correlation of 0.23 with HDI and shows the tight bunching together of most results between scores of 8 and 9, as would we expect from the results in the box-plot. The other outliers are those picked up on the box plots; on average Malaysian and Thai citizens score this result much lower than other citizens, and much lower than citizens in other states with similar levels of HDI.

The remaining procedural characteristics had much weaker correlations with HDI. The civil rights correlation result is only 0.05, suggesting that HDI has limited explanatory power. Indeed, it can be seen that citizens living in countries with HDI scores around 0.6 (China, Indonesia, Vietnam and Egypt) have the same understanding of how essential civil rights are in a democracy as citizens in countries with an HDI score of 0.9 (Sweden, Germany, Netherlands and Switzerland). In fact, those in less developed countries often score this characteristic *higher*. An interesting comparison is that Chinese citizens score civil rights on average at 8.7, whereas British, Australian, Japanese and South Korean citizens score it an average of 7.5 or less. This could suggest that having experience of democracy is not necessarily a precursor for believing that civil rights are an essential element of democracy.

Finally, the referendum characteristic shows no pattern with HDI, although there is a wide scatter of results. For the most developed countries there is a range of averages from over 9 for Swiss respondents down to 7.1 for British respondents. This could reflect the voting system in Switzerland which runs regular referendums at the Canton level.

#### Instrumental Characteristics

For the instrumental characteristics the HDI relationship is strong and negative for economy and punishment (populist ideals) but not for taxation or state aid (social democratic ideals).

For the prospering economy ideal (Figure 3.13), the Pearson’s r with HDI is -0.36; citizens in more developed countries score this lower, suggesting a “purer” understanding of liberal democratic theory which does not require populist policies. The Scandinavian countries score this the lowest; both Swedish and Norwegian citizens score this an average of less than 6. Other European countries score round 7, with former or currently communist countries producing a higher scoring group of 8 or more, and Romanians and Russians scoring as highs as 9.5. Respondents in Indonesia, Egypt, Jordan and Vietnam all score this characteristic high: we can start to see that these particular countries score a number of characteristics quite differently to the overall average results.

Figure 3:13 Economy and HDI Scatterplot



Figure 3:14 Punishment and HDI Scatterplot



Figure 3:15 State Aid and HDI Scatterplot



Figure 3:16 Tax and HDI Scatterplot



The relationship between punishment and HDI is also negative (Figure 3.14), and of similar strength to the economy characteristic. In terms of aligning with the theoretical expectations of liberal democratic theory, it is again the Scandinavian countries which are closest, although also amongst the low scorers are citizens from Brazil and Mexico. In authoritarian regimes it can clearly be seen that this characteristic is understood as central to democracy by citizens in Vietnam, China, Jordan, Iraq and Russia, who score it highly.

As the relationship with HDI appears almost non-existent for the state aid characteristic, what is perhaps the strongest pattern here (Figure 3.15) is the clustering of communist and former communist countries at the higher end of the scale, and a combination of Latin American, African and some English-speaking democracies at the lower end of the scale. The placement of UK, USA and Australia here this could mirror welfare retrenchment policies in these countries since the 1980s. They also share the ‘liberal’ classification of welfare according to Esping-Anderson’s famous schema (1990) which focuses on means-tested, as opposed to universalist, welfare provision. For tax redistribution (Figure 3.16), a number of former or currently communist countries come high again, with some authoritarian states too. The mature and established democracies tend to score between 6 and 7. Both these characteristics show a very weak relationship with HDI.

#### Authoritarian

Finally, the authoritarian characteristics show the strongest relationship with HDI. Both characteristics have the same Pearson’s r of -0.64, telling us that the higher a country’s HDI the lower the score these characteristics were given on whether they were essential to democracy. There is a clear group of countries that score both these characteristics higher than we might expect based on their HDI score: Jordan, Egypt, Iraq and Vietnam.

Figure 3:17 Religious Authorities and HDI Scatterplot



Figure 3:18 Army and HDI Scatterplot



There is wide range of averages in the religious authority variable (Figure 3.17), from Egyptian citizens’ 8.1 to Swedish citizens’ 1.8. For army takeover the lowest averages, just over 2, are in Switzerland, Norway, Japan and Germany. This is quite a distinct collection of countries, as the first two have a history of neutrality, while the second two were both defeated in the Second World War. Other mature western democracies score this characteristic almost twice as high, with Britain, Canada and USA scoring it 4.

When it comes to the military intervention characteristic (Figure 3.18) the same large range of results can be seen. The figure also displays a similar pattern of outliers.

## 3.4: Conclusion

This chapter first demonstrated the way these ten characteristics sit within ideas of liberal democracy: there are four essential procedural elements, two social democratic elements of debatable importance, two populist elements which are not at all essential, and two authoritarian, anti-democratic elements.

From the findings of Dalton et al. (2008), it was expected that the responses citizens give to these elements will align with liberal democratic theory. For the procedural elements, the descriptive statistics suggest this is the case. Very large majorities score these elements highly. There is also evidence that those with more media use score the gender equality characteristic higher in comparison to those who use the media less often.

At the national level, these procedural characteristics score very high averages across all countries. There are some under-scoring outliers however: Thailand and Malaysia for elections, Thailand for civil rights, and Iraq and Malaysia for equal gender rights. Indeed, the most contested of these issues is that of equal gender rights. But overall these characteristics are scored higher by citizens of countries which are not free, and have had or recently had a communist government. This suggests that not having access to these procedures sharpens an individual’s belief in their role in a democratic system.

The social democratic characteristics do not show very strong or clear patterns, a scenario which mimics the lack of consensus in the literature about whether they should be considered essential to democracy or not. Both have much more evenly distributed results across the scale, and demographic examinations of patterns according to education and media use did little to illuminate the picture much further. At the national level, these results also had the weakest correlations with HDI. These are then perhaps characteristics more strongly influenced by political attitudes then by a demographic or country-specific measurement.

The populist characteristics present results that deviate most from the findings of Dalton et al. (2008) and so from the expectations outlined by liberal democratic theory. These results score very high averages that are almost comparable with the procedural elements. There is a widespread understanding that a prospering economy and severe punishment of criminals are essential democratic characteristics. There is a lot of variance in this finding however. The more media you use the lower you score these elements. Countries classed as not free or communist have higher average scores. At the national level, HDI makes a difference to the populist results and there is a strong negative result for both: in more developed countries, citizens score them as less central to democracy, on average, than do citizens in less developed countries.

Finally, the authoritarian characteristics match the theory by scoring the lowest of all elements, but perhaps not as low as could be expected; they are not rejected with the same strength that say, elections, are accepted. These results vary considerably between media users in the same way as the populist characteristics. There are very strong differences between free and unfree countries, as citizens in unfree countries score much higher on average (suggesting they tend to see this as a more central feature of democracy than do people in freer regimes) and when it comes to HDI the pattern is negative and much stronger than with other characteristics (showing that the more developed the society, the less central people think this dimension is to democracy).

This chapter has demonstrated that there is some alignment between theory and citizen understandings of democracy when it comes to procedural elements. However, there is variance when it comes to issues of gender equality and there is considerable disjuncture between theory and citizen understandings when it comes to populist ideals. Further, there were substantial differences between countries in how central people though the authoritarian concepts were for democracy.

These issues have been looked at individually in this chapter to examine the shape and patterns or results across individuals and across countries. In doing so, I have addressed aims 1.4 and 1.5 as outlined in Chapter 1, that is to build from the literature review to identify the most appropriate data and examine what theoretical expectations are borne out in the descriptive results.

In the next step of the analysis, these disparate elements need bringing together in a dimensional approach. We may know how each element is answered separately, but how are they answered together? Are there clear combinations of answers that set out distinct understandings of democracy? This is the focus of aim 1.6, and the next chapter.

# Dimensions of Democratic Understanding

**“What we have then is a composition, a compound.” (Satori 1987b, p.386)**

The previous chapter outlined what characteristics were thought of by individuals as essential to democracy, and how these characteristics linked to theories of democracy and democratization. It examined the patterns for each of these characteristics separately, looking at their relationship with some sociodemographic traits, and also how these results played out across different countries. At the national level it looked at results across countries classed by their level of freedom, as Islamic or not, as currently or formerly communist, and by their level of development.

These initial results demonstrated that a wide diversity of opinions exists on what characteristics are essential to a democracy, and that national context appears to play a part in shaping these opinions. Procedural and institutional characteristics, central to the liberal model of democracy, were generally also central to citizens’ understandings; elections, equal gender rights, the protection of civil rights and law-making via referendum were regarded by most citizens as highly essential, wherever the survey response was from.

In contrast, opinions on the desirability of the army to take over in times of government incompetence, and the role of religious authorities in interpreting the law, were far more place-specific. While the majority of survey respondents rejected these as characteristics of democracy, not everyone did, and those who saw these characteristics as essential tended to be clustered by country; these characteristics scored, on average, significantly higher in countries such as Egypt, Vietnam and Jordan, compared to Sweden, Switzerland and Norway. These characteristics are argued to be authoritarian in terms in democratic theory.

Aid to the unemployed was generally considered more essential to democracy than state redistribution of wealth, but attitudes to these characteristics were much more varied both within and across countries. The role that these social-security characteristics are expected to play within the liberal model of democracy is by no means settled in the literature, either. Finally, the remaining two characteristics scored highly, and these tapped into populist sentiments more concerned with desirable policy outcomes than the inherent values of democracy. Having a prospering economy and having criminals severely punished were considered essential characteristics of democracy by large swathes of citizenry across many countries.

From this initial exploration of the survey results, it is clear the procedural characteristics most aligned with liberal theory – voting, referendums, civil rights and gender rights – are indeed understood by most citizens as essential to democracy. However, from this alone we cannot say that citizens understand democracy in a purely liberal manner. Other elements score highly too, and at this stage we do not know how citizens combine these different views of what matters for democracy in their thinking about the nature of democracy.

Moving forward from here, I take an exploratory approach towards these characteristics and in this chapter I look at their dimensional qualities. In taking this kind of approach, I assign to an analytical approach similar to that outlined by Almond and Verba in their classic work on civic culture. In their discussion in the role of the citizen in a democracy, and the gap between theory and reality, they outline the following:

“The fact that ordinary man does not live up to the ideal set by the normative theory of democracy has led to much criticism of passivity and indifference. Our goal is describe and analyse, however, and not to assign praise or blame. “ (Almond & Verba 1963, p.162)

In this chapter I focus on identifying and exploring different understandings of democracy, as opposed to testing and critiquing them. The focus then is on the *underlying dimensions* of democratic understanding, with an aim to assess the global picture of how individuals think about democracy. This dimensional analysis then is not formed from aggregated country averages, but from individual respondents’ views. It asks, do these procedural characteristics hold together, forming a latent *liberal* dimension of democratic understanding? Are they mixed in with the other characteristics, particularly the high-scoring populist ones? Or are citizens’ understandings less clear-cut, and a messy or ad-hoc combination of characteristics?

In order to address these questions this chapter is structured as follows. Section 4.1 introduces and elaborates on a dimensional approach to examining how people understand democracy. It focuses on the work undertaken by Welzel (2013), outlining his approach (confirmatory factor analysis) and his designing of a ‘test’ of democratic understanding. I also draw on the similar approach taken by Norris (2011): the details of these studies were previously outlined in Chapter 2, Section 2.4 and Figure 2.3 and 2.4. However, in this section I critique this approach, and argue for a different approach: principal components analysis (PCA). In Section 4.2 I outline how PCA works, and why it is the most appropriate technique to use in this study. Section 4.3 presents the results of PCA on the ten questions on democratic analysis which were discussed and described in detail in Chapter 3.

Next, Section 4.4 discusses the results in detail. It outlines the two components derived from the PCA. After this, Section 4.5 discusses how these dimensions can be combined and how combinations of them can be understood, with a focus on the advantages that this provides us with for our understanding of democracy, compared to the other techniques which have been discussed here, and in the Literature Review (Chapter 2). Finally, Section 4.6 concludes, drawing together the findings of this chapter, and shows how they inform and are moved forward into the next stage of analysis.

## 4.1 Exploring Underlying Dimensions of Understanding – confirmatory and exploratory approaches

Researchers interested in the opinions and values of people rarely want just one answer to one specific question. Large questionnaires such as the WVS and the Barometer series, as well as more frequently collected polls such as those conducted by YouGov, often feature groups of questions designed to address numerous facets within a particular topic, say, crime, the economy or health. These are not simple topics in which a single question and answer could accurately paint a picture of what a respondent thinks. Not only that, but combining indicators from multiple questions is useful when examining complex issues because it lessens the considerable measurement error found in individual questions (Ansolabehere, Rodden and Snyder, 2008).

This means researchers are often interested in *underlying dimensions*, that is, whether any latent attitudinal structures can be identified from the inter-correlation of results across the range of respondents. This is of interest to political scientists particularly when it comes to exploring the extent of ideological thinking among citizens; as a well-known example, how frequently do politicians or media commentators discuss policy ideas in terms of the ‘Left’ or the ‘Right’? What are ‘Left’ and ‘Right’ presumed to be, if not attitudes towards a number of topics that hang together in a predictable fashion, however loosely?

There are a number of statistical techniques available to undertake the exploration of underlying dimensions of opinion and attitudes. Often the umbrella term used for these techniques is *factor analysis* (FA), which can be summed up as, “a variety of statistical techniques whose common objective is to represent a set of variables in terms of a smaller number of hypothetical variables” (Kim & Mueller 1978, p.9). Confusingly, however, terms in this field are not always used consistently. Factor Analysis (FA) is often used in the same breath as Principal Components Analysis (PCA), yet PCA is not strictly a true method of FA, whilst FA itself comes in many different variations (Costello & Osborne 2005, p.1-2). There are also two broad approaches within FA, the confirmatory approach (CFA), and the exploratory (EFA). This discussion first focuses on CFA, before dismissing it and then outlining the choice taken of PCA over EFA.

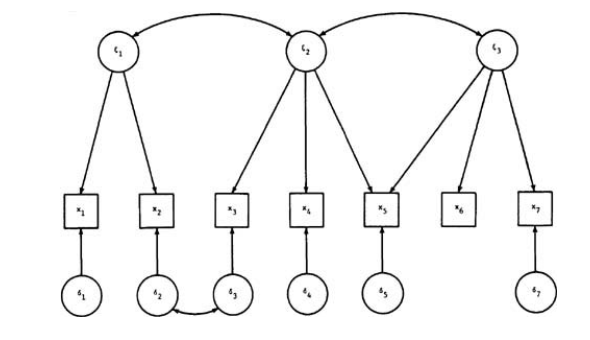
### Confirmatory Factor Analysis

CFA is an approach carried out with theoretical expectations of the data (the expected shared variance). In its confirmatory form:

*“ …the researcher imposes substantively motivated constraints. These constraints determine (1) which pairs of common factors are correlated, (2) which observed variables are affected by which common factors, (3) which observed variables are affected by a unique factor, and (4) which pairs of unique factors are correlated. (Scott Long 1983, p.12)*

Therefore, confirmatory looks to *confirm* whether the data fits the model imposed upon it by the researcher. As such the researcher assumes that certain variables within the set are uncorrelated and so there is an expectant existing structure presupposed of the data. Following Scott Long (1983, pp.12-16) this is shown in a diagrammatic form in Figure 4.1, whereas the three expected latent variables, or common factors, are demonstrated by ᶓ1- ᶓ3 in the circles at the top, x1 to x7 in squares represent the observed variables, and δ1- δ7 at the bottom are unique factor, or errors in the variables.

Figure 4:1 Hypothetical Expected Structural Relations in a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (Scott Long 1983, p.15)



To consider an example of a CFA approach we can turn to Welzel (2011; 2013), who uses it on the same data that is the focus of this thesis. Using the ten democratic characteristics explored in Chapter 3, Welzel (2011; 2013) undertakes two studies, one examining Asian values of democracy, and the other looking more broadly at a global level. In both analyses he takes the CFA approach. His reasons for this are as follows:

“…I abstain from dimensional logic and follow instead the logic of compository index construction…That is, I measure people’s notions of democracy against a theoretically predefined norm. If some people’s notions differ from what the norm prescribes, these people’s notions will score low when measured against the norm. If other people’s notions are in accordance with the norm, their notions will score high when measured against the norm. Should the world be like this, then this is exactly what I want to measure.” (Welzel 2013, p.313)

Welzel (2013, pp.313-315) then uses CFA to confirm three notions of democracy: 1) a liberal definition with an anti-authoritarian element; 2) a populist definition; and 3) a social definition (see Figure 4.2). Guided by liberal democratic theory, he generates an index of liberal understanding by subtracting each individual’s score on the two authoritarian and two populist variables from the four liberal variables (see Figure 2.4). The two social variables are argued to constitute a type of liberal democracy (social-liberal, as opposed to market-liberal), and are not included in the scale.

Figure 4:2 Factor Analysis on Democratic Characteristics (adapted from Welzel 2013, p.313)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Dimensions** | | |
|  | **Liberal vs Authoritarian** | **Populist** | **Social** |
| *Free Elections* | 0.63 |  |  |
| *Equal Rights* | 0.60 |  |  |
| *Civil Liberties* | 0.53 |  |  |
| *Referendum* | 0.50 |  |  |
| *Army Takeover* | -0.70 |  |  |
| *Religious Authority* | -0.73 |  |  |
| *Prospering Economy* |  | 0.76 |  |
| *Criminal Punishment* |  | 0.73 |  |
| *Tax* |  |  | 0.68 |
| *Unemployment Aid* |  |  | 0.62 |
| Explained variance | 24% | 14% | 12% |
| *N* | 58, 524 respondents from 50 societies | | |

Without using any kind of factor analysis, Norris (2011, p.159) takes a similar index approach by creating a scale of ‘enlightened understanding’, but her index is stricter; she classes the populist and social variables together as ‘instrumental’ understandings and subtracts scores from these and the authoritarian variables from the liberal ones.

Although using different calculations, Welzel and Norris share a similar aim in their research; to examine *how well* citizens understand liberal democracy. They both work on a confirmatory approach. In this sense they both produce scales of understanding which act as ‘civic tests’ in order to see how many people ‘get it right’. This is clear in Welzel’s (2013, p.313) description of a ‘theoretically predefined norm’ and in Norris’ (2011, p.159) subtraction of ‘incorrect’ authoritarian democracy answers from ‘correct’ liberal ones. My approach is different. This thesis explores potential underlying dimensions of understandings, without prescriptions from liberal democratic theory. For discussion purposes, I compare the results *to* theoretical expectations, to examine the disjuncture between the two, but this is a very different approach compared to building the dimensions up *from* theoretical expectations.

Essentially, when Welzel concludes in the quote above, ‘*should the world be like this*’, my thesis asks what is essentially the prior question: ‘*what is the world like?*’ And in fact, Welzel’s (2013, p.313) justification for *not* using an exploratory approach justifies nicely why I *do* want to use it:

“One way to group people’s notions of democracy into a smaller number of summary measures is to rely on the dimensional analysis. On this basis, one can assign each respondent a factor score on each extracted dimension, indicating this respondent’s position on the respective continuum. If we do so, we follow the dimensional logic and measure people’s notions of democracy as they are organized in people’s minds – regardless of theoretical definitions of democracy.”

Welzel (2013, p.313) argues this is not appropriate for his study as he is “not interested in how notions of democracy are organized in people’s minds without reference to a theoretical norm” because this approach is “inappropriate for a concept as inherently normative as democracy”. Regarding this justification, firstly and simply, I *am* interested in an initial examination of how people understand democracy without reference to theory. Secondly, there is no doubt that the concept of democracy is normative. However, the norms of the theory in Welzel’s approach stem from academic and elite interpretations and arguments. By taking a confirmatory approach and creating indices of how correctly citizens understand liberal democracy, or structuring the data analysis by theoretical expectations, we are still ‘putting the cart before the horse’ by setting up a theoretical benchmark to run a test, without allowing the trends in the data to first be identified in a more exploratory manner. This leaves me with examining the characteristics through an EFA or a PCA, but then able to use CFA as a way of confirming the results that are suggested by the exploratory approach.

## 4.2 Method: Principal Components Analysis and Exploratory Factor Analysis

It has been noted that “the steps followed when conducting a principal component analysis are virtually identical to those followed when conducting an exploratory factor analysis” (O’Rourke & Hatcher 2013, p.2). Further, the difference between them is subtle enough that often textbooks acknowledge the differences but then brush them aside to focus on the similarities (for instance, see Field 2011, p.638). Indeed, many journal articles do not identify what approach was specifically utilised and some software, such as SPSS, offer PCA as the default form of extraction under the factor procedure, despite it not being an FA approach (Harrington, 2008, pp.11-12). There is unresolved debate surrounded the use of FA versus PCA (*Ibid*, p.10) and it has also been suggested that “the practical difference between the methods is often negligible in terms of interpretation” (Thompson and Vidal-Brown 2001, p.3). For that reason, I outline the utility of both approaches. I also report the results of both approaches, and demonstrate that the difference between the two outcomes in my analysis are minor.

### How PCA and EFA Work

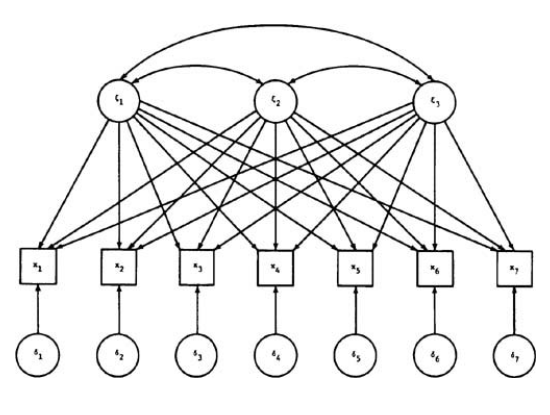
Following the same labelling logic as Figure 4.1, Figure 4.3 outlines the difference in mathematical approach between EFA and CFA. The EFA approach assumes correlation across all observed variables and the latent variables, with unique variance across all observed variables.

By examining all the shared variance, the technique is different to confirmatory factor analysis. The approach is however still built around the assumption of latent variables. In contrast, PCA examines all the variance – diagrammatically trickier to represent, it examines the variance between all xs (the square boxes) with *each other* in order to “reduce the dimensionality of a data set consisting of a large number of interrelated variables, while retaining as much as possible of the variation present in the data set” (Jolliffe 2002, p.1). This difference is broadly outlined by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007, p.609):

“Mathematically, the difference between FA and PCA is in the variance that is analysed. In PCA, all the variance in the observed variables is analysed. In FA, only shared variance is analysed; attempts are made to estimate and eliminate variance due to error and variance that is unique to each variable.”

PCA does not account for the unique errors (returning to Figure 4.1, that would mean there is no consideration of the error as symbolised by the circles at the bottom δ1- δ7). The objective of PCA is to “…take p variables X1, X2,…,Xp and find combinations of these to produce indices Z1, Z2,…,Zp that are uncorrelated, and that describe the variation in the data” (Manly 2005, p.75). The mathematical guts of the technique revolve around correlation matrixes.

Figure 4.3 Hypothetical Expected Structural Relations in an Exploratory Factor Analysis (Scott Long 1983, p.15)



To compare across different variable measurements, the variables are standardised to have a mean of 0 and then input into a correlation matrix. Within the matrix, PCA identifies combinations of eigenvectors; variables which correlate strongly with others in the same group, but not with variables in the other groups being produced. These groups are the components which pick up any underlying latent variables. For each component an eigenvalue is calculated, which provides us with a “single indicator of the substantive importance of each variant (or component)” (Field 2011, p.639).

The PCA process explains all the variance in the dataset by producing as many components as there are initial variables. This means that using all components would not reduce the complexity of the dataset. But not all the components are of equal value and the researcher needs to make a decision on how many components to retain. Indeed, in general, exploratory data techniques require a considerable amount of decisions to be made by the researcher, perhaps more than any other commonly used statistical technique (Fabrigar et al. 1999, p.273). When applied to a dataset of multiple, disparate variables as a manner purely attempting to reduce dimensionality, it might be noted that the components in a PCA are “uninterpretable” (Suhr, 1994, p.3). However, when using attitudinal data, the components are often perceived to potentially demonstrate an attitudinal structure. For instance, in Fieldhouse’s (1995) study of political attitudes, PCA was run on data from the British Electoral Study in order to examine underlining attitudinal structures from a range of questions on topics such as redistribution, schooling, immigration and welfare benefits. Fieldhouse (1995, p.7) further outlines the role of PCA in this kind of study:

“The selected variables were used to identify attitudinal structures by employing principal components analysis. The extracted components are composite variables (or issue dimensions) which are highly correlated with as many of the original variables as possible and unrelated to all the other new variables. If there is an underlying ideological structure in political attitudes then different individuals are likely to hold similar combinations of beliefs or groups of attitudes and it should therefore be possible to represent these attitudinal positions on a reduced number of dimensions, as represented by components.”

From 13 variables, the PCA generated four components representing four distinct dimensions of voter attitudes: economic ownership and distribution, social democratic issues, racial issues and a mix of popular concerns (Fieldhouse 1995, p.10).

In political science the use of PCA is widespread, for instance to explore dimensions of political attitudes (Fieldhouse 1995; Evans et al. 1996), human values (Devos, Spini and Schwartz, 2002), social capital (Bjørnskov, 2006), and protest activism (Norris 2002; Pattie & Johnston 2009). Its popularity can be demonstrated from a 2005 survey of behavioural science and mental health journals which reported that, over a two-year period, more than 1,700 published studies used some form of exploratory statistical analysis, and well over half of these were PCA (Costello & Osborne 2005, p.1).[[12]](#footnote-12)

Therefore the difference between PCA and EFA concerns the assumptions of latent variables underlying the data, with PCA not making any assumptions (Bollen and Lennox, 1991). It is difficult in this thesis to completely justify one method over another. For instance, the ten questions utilised in my analysis all ask the respondent about the how essential each one is to democracy, and so they are all linked (and presented together as a battery in the survey). My discussion so far has been to outline theoretically what the literature expects from these questions, and how they fit into procedural, instrumental and authoritarian categories. Yet this is not necessarily what I expect from respondents. We do not know if respondents think along the lines of these models or ideal types – for all we know citizens quite happily think elections are essential to democracy alongside a prospering economy, yet gender equality and civil rights and not. And so an assumption of underlying latent constructs should not necessarily be guided by the literature as existing studies have done. Therefore PCA, whilst mathematically only a dimension reduction technique, might be the ‘purest’ way to assess just how citizens are answering these questions. However, EFA does not presuppose what the factors might necessarily be either, but it does allow for the assessment of common variance which Suhr (1994, p.4) argues is better when it comes to interpreting a common conceptual meaning.

In this study I decided to present the results of both PCA and EFA. As demonstrated below in Section 4.3, the results are in fact substantively very similar. However, before this analysis is undertaken I talk through the remaining considerations required when undertaking this type of analysis.

### Key Considerations

Although there are no strict guidelines, a general consensus in the literature is that when using EFA or PCA researchers need to make and justify decisions in the following areas (Zwick and Velicer, 1986; Tinsley and Tinsley, 1987; Coovert and McNelis, 1988; Fabrigar *et al.*, 1999; O’Connor, 2000; Conway and Huffcutt, 2003; Costello and Osborne, 2005):

* How many components to retain?
* What rotation method to use?
* Is the sample size sufficient?

Furthermore, in this analysis I also draw attention to the following:

* Absolute vs priority values?
* Missing values
* Limitations – global versus national-level approaches

The following sections discuss these in order.

#### Retaining Components

The choice of which components to retain is a crucial part of the exploratory process since those we keep are then examined in much more detail, and the ones which we drop play no further part in the analysis. However, there is no right or wrong answer when undertaking this analysis since there are “no readily available criteria against which to test the solution” (Tabachnick & Fidell 2007, p.608). As O’Connor (2000, p.396), puts it:

“Under-extraction compresses variables into a small factor space, resulting in a loss of important information, a neglect of potentially important factors, a distorted fusing of two or more factors, and an increase in error in the loadings. Over-extraction diffuses variables across a large factor space, potentially resulting in factor splitting, in factors with few high loadings, and in researchers' attributing excessive substantive importance to trivial factors”

In other words, keep too many and it is possible to read too much into the importance and explanatory power of the smaller dimensions: keep too few and it is possible to overlook a valuable element of the story. The three most widely discussed methods for choosing are *Kaiser’s criterion, scree plots* and *Parallel Analysis (PA)*.

*Kaiser’s criterion* retains any components with an eigenvalue of one or higher and is the most widespread rule of thumb used in the literature. This cut off point means only components with more summary power than the original variables are kept. However, there is considerable debate in the literature about how appropriate it is. For almost three decades now authors carrying out systematic reviews of components analysis have in fact strongly warned against using Kaiser’s criterion, arguing it often overestimates the number of components to be retained (Zwick & Velicer 1986, p.439).

A *scree plot* simply plots the eigenvalues against the components, providing a visual aid to judge the cut-off point in terms of the explanatory power of the components. The point of a scree plot is to identify the point of inflexion where the variance between components drops considerably (the plot often resembles a cliff face, hence the name). The researcher then keeps the components *before* the point, and discards the component at the inflexion point and any after it. An issue with this method is that the shape of the plot may not be clear-cut, and so determining the point of inflexion becomes much more of a subjective decision. Despite this, it has been argued that the scree test is helpful for initial estimates, and with good judgement can be used as a complementary method alongside other tests (Costello & Osborne 2005, pp.2-3;Zwick & Velicer 1986, p.440-441).

The test most recommended from reviews of PCA is *Parallel Analysis* (PA, see Fabrigar et al. 1999). The idea behind PA is relatively simple. First, a random dataset is generated with the same sample size as the one being used by the researcher. Then, PCA is run on this replicated dataset using the same number of variables as in the researcher’s PCA. Parallel components and eigenvalues are produced. This process is repeated hundreds – sometimes thousands – of times and an average is produced. This can then be compared to the results for each component from the real dataset. If the real dataset eigenvalue is higher for the component, it is retained. If it is lower, then the PCA in this case is not finding anything different to results from random data, and so that component should be binned. Hayton et al. (2004, p.194) described this in statistical terms:

“…PA involves the construction of a number of correlation matrices of random variables based on the same sample size and number of variables in the real data set. The average eigenvalues from the random correlation matrices are then compared to the eigenvalues from the real data correlation matrix, such that the first observed eigenvalue is compared to the first random eigenvalue, the second observed eigenvalue is compared to the second random eigenvalue, and so on. Factors corresponding to actual eigenvalues that are greater than the parallel average random eigenvalues should be retained.”

The major drawback initially raised by the literature concerning the use of PA was that it requires a lot of computational power to run. However, this was a problem two decades ago, but it no longer provides a major difficulty – the test is now available in many popular software packages.

Since these tests are all available and straightforward to calculate or produce, the analysis in this chapter will use all three and compare them in order to make a robust and informed decision on what components to retain.

#### Rotation Method

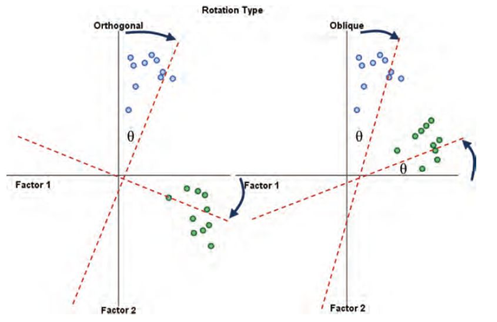
After the components have been chosen, the researcher can examine how much each variable loads upon them. This helps the interpretation of the underlying dimension which the component is picking up. By rotating the components the loading of each variable becomes easier to interpret whilst the underlying mathematical properties of the solution remain the same (Tabachnick & Fidell 2007, p.609).

There are two types of rotation that can be done: orthogonal and oblique. Orthogonal rotation retains the principle that the components produced should not correlate. This means that when the axes are turned to better align with the variable scores, the intersection of the axes remains perpendicular in a fixed cross-shape (in the case of a two component solution). With oblique rotation, this rule is relaxed and the components are allowed some correlation. The intersection of the axes can then move, like scissors. This is shown in Figure 4.4 (note in this diagram the components are referred to as factors).

Orthogonal rotation is frequently carried out on PCA results as this helps produce the variable loading scores, which can then generate individual regression loadings for each case in the analysis:

“If rotation is orthogonal (so that all factors are uncorrelated with each other), a loading matrix is produced. The loading matrix is a matrix of correlations between observed variables and factors. The sizes of the loadings reflect the extent of the relationship between each observed variable and each factor.” (Tabachnick & Fidell 2007, p.609)

Figure 4:4 Oblique and Orthogonal rotations (from Field 2011, p.643)



Oblique rotation is less common. In reality, whilst allowing components to correlate to some extent may paint a more nuanced and realistic picture, this rotation technique also makes interpretation of components much more difficult. By prioritising the notion of distinct, uncorrelated components, this is also an advantage later when they are used as explanatory variables in Chapter 6.

The orthogonal method of varimax rotation is used in this study. This allows for improved interpretation of factor loadings, and generating two distinct dimensions. This is useful when later using these dimensions themselves as explanatory variables for political participation.

#### Sample Size

There are numerous rules of thumb for what sample size is necessary to carry out a robust exploratory analysis. Comrey and Lee (1992) have suggested that over 500 cases in the dataset is good and over 1,000 is excellent for exploratory analysis of this kind. Another approach to calculating acceptable sample size focuses on the ratio of cases to variables. There are a considerable number of conclusions across the literature as to what the minimum ratio might be for reliable results. Using data from a study by Guadagnoli and Velicer (1988), Costello and Osborne (2005) examined whether it was more important to consider absolute sample size or the ratio of variable to cases. Their study compared sampled datasets taken from a population using a wide range of exploratory techniques. Their conclusion, ultimately, was very straightforward:

Thus, the most valid conclusion regarding sample size is that more is always better. Period. If subject to item ratios appeal intuitively to some researchers, and if it leads researchers to utilize samples of a more appropriate size, it is useful. Why not encourage this way of thinking? (Osborne & Costello 2004, no page [electronic journal])

With a total sample size of over 70,000 and a case-variable ratio of 1:7,000, the WVS dataset used in this thesis provides a more than adequate sample size.

#### Absolute versus Priority Values

As seen in the previous chapter, each of the ten questions allows the respondent to choose how essential that characteristic is for democracy on a scale of one to ten. The results of these choices can be examined using the *absolute* values or by looking at *priorities* (following Welzel 2011, 2013). The priority approach centres each respondent’s item score by their mean rating across all ten items. This then examines the *relative* priorities across the items. The idea behind this is that some respondents might score things relatively low in general (3 might be a low priority and 6 high), whereas others score high in general (6 might be low and 9 high). Here, the extent of prioritizing is the same – 3 scale points – and so mean-centring standardizes this away.[[13]](#footnote-13)

This priorities approach is useful when building an index of ‘enlightened knowledge’ of liberal democracy. However, there is a case to be made that for this research the absolute values are more important. By using the absolute values, I am placing trust in respondents to use, and be aware of, the whole scale that has been made available to them. Whilst the questions are presented in a group in the WVS, they invite respondents to give individual consideration to each variable, not to rank them. Compare the two scenarios:

1. A respondent scores all variables as six out of ten. They do this because they think that all the items are equal in how essential they are to democracy and the items provided are not highly essential but could be considered somewhere in the middle.
2. Another respondent scores all variables as ten out of ten. Their logic is that all items are equal in how essential they are to democracy and all the items are absolutely essential.

Mean-centring these two scenarios gives both respondents a score of zero. If I was to do this, I would run the risk of interpreting what could be two very different signals in the same way. In any case, there is little sign that respondents do not make use of the entire range of possible answers: the bar charts in Chapter 3 (Figure 3.5) demonstrate that respondents are not scared of using the extreme ends of the scales. For a PCA looking at underlying dimensionality without a theoretical reference I will use absolute values.

#### Missing Data

As with all surveys the WVS has respondents who do not necessarily answer all the questions. In this thesis this is a pertinent issue in particular when it comes to the ten democratic characteristics, as the analysis undertakes step-wise deletion and so requires respondents to have answered all ten characteristics to be included in the sample. The detailed results for this examination is in the Appendix Section B, and the key findings are outlined here. Firstly, there is a difference across countries concerning overall levels of missings in total, however, the patterns across the characteristics is similar – respondents were less likely to answer the questions on army intervention and religious authorities interpreting the law (see Appendix Section B, Figure B1). The country-level average for missing answers on these questions was around 8%. The next highest number of missings was for the questions on referendum and civil rights, which had 6.7% and 6.4% missing respectively. The remaining variables had less than 5%. This perhaps suggests that these characteristics were considered the trickiest to answer in general, and respondents were more likely to skip the question.

For each characteristic I carried out exploratory logistical regression analysis examining those who made it into the sample against those who did not, looking to see if age, gender or education was systematically making a difference to the missing cases (see Appendix Figure B2). None of the results were significant. However, there were two countries in the dataset with a high number of missings that were of concern; India and China (Appendix Figure B3 and B4). Once step-wise deletion of cases was carried out, for these countries only 64% and 54% of the sample remained, whereas other countries tended to be over 80% and closer to 95%. I therefore looked at this countries in more detail and carried out exploratory analysis for each country and all ten characteristics. For both countries, the results showed that women were less likely to answer then men, and the lower the respondents’ education, the less likely they were to answer (and so the more likely they were to be classed as missing). This limitation of the data needs to be highlighted, however it is important to point out that this relationship held across all characteristics. Furthermore, Appendix Figure B5 demonstrates that the PCA and FA carried out in the following section of this chapter is not substantively changed when India and China removed from the data: the conceptual mapping of democracy follows the same patterns, and so this pattern of missing data for these two countries does not skew the results overall.

#### Limitations – Global versus national-level approaches

At this stage it is important to reiterate that this analysis follows the work of Cho (2015), Dalton et al (2008), Norris (2011) and Welzel (2013) who similarly look to global-level understandings of democracy and attempt to explain them. This body of work, taking the ‘civics test’ approach, tests for an understanding of democracy from individuals across the world testing this understanding as emanating from a singular source: in many senses, humanity. My approach speaks to this but seeks to explore what understanding is generated from the data at this level, as opposed to testing it in some way. As shown in the Introduction, there is a globalist notion associated with the idea of democracy with arguments that it is a ‘universal value’ (Sen 1999) with near-universal support (Diamond 2008). Therefore, it is helpful to interrogate the idea from this angle. Regarding democracy and globalisation, Welzel (2013, p. 16) notes how the “global pooling of human experiences and knowledge offers our species the opportunity to liberate intercultural learning from the confines of geography”. I do not go quite this far as I remain interested in how, alongside personal characteristics, geography and context might limit or promote certain understandings of democracy, however, Welzel’s point is a useful one. This globalised approach allows for a broad analysis to take place that generates these understandings across contexts, but then also examines how context might influence adherence to such understandings in a comparative way. And so at base this exploration concerns how individuals think from a global perspective, but also considers such conceptualisations when aggregated to the country-level and compared.

There is arguably an analytical ‘elephant in the room’ here as a clear counter-argument to this approach would be that such exploratory analysis could be carried out at the country-level, to examine if PCA results are similar in each country, rather than taking the global-level approach. In this thesis I can demonstrate how closely respondents from particular country align with a ‘global’ understanding of democracy, and look at the explanatory factors behind this alignment, but I am not able to show if countries have in fact, at their national level, a different understanding of democracy completely. Different country conceptualisations are submerged within this framework. In this thesis then there is a – large – assumption that the component structure that is derived from the analysis is the same across countries. This is a limiting factor, especially if one takes the importance of the country-as-container as a far more influential space; an important alternative way of looking at this topic would conceptualise the exploratory approach from a different scale. A counter-argument to the approach I have taken would be that such exploratory analysis could be carried out at the *country-level*, to examine if PCA results are similar in each country, rather than taking the globalist approach.

I believe there is enormous value in looking at this issue on a country-by-country basis, but wish to make the case that the approach taken in this thesis is the most appropriate in this instance. Firstly, the key point is the body of literature this work is seeking to contribute to. It is demonstrated in the literature review that studies undertaken at the global level of analysis present an important area to reconsider how conceptualisations could be examined and impacts examined from an exploratory angle, compared to the civics test approaches (Norris, 2011; Welzel, 2013; Cho, 2015; Dalton et al 2008). These studies, finding in particular that very small percentages of people could be considered ‘enlightened’ about democracy, were not necessarily able to show where, or how, the large majority of people were ‘failing’ to get it right according to the theoretical expectations. Therefore it is deemed important to contribute to this literature by examining in much more detail the precursory step, that is, *how* are people understanding democracy, as opposed to *how well*? Following from this is an attempt to explain across broad contexts that this focus on how people understood democracy *matters*, in an attempt to considerably expand the conclusions made by Bengtsson & Christensen (2014) in what remains a much smaller research area into whether conceptualisations of democracy might have an influence on political participation. Therefore if results could demonstrate at the broadest possible scale that conceptualisations of democracy effected political behaviour (as they do, see Chapter 6), then this forms an important argument for taking this approach seriously, and this also justifies future research at the national level. Secondly, an extensive comparative-exploratory approach undertaken at the national is felt to be too cumbersome and unwieldly in the space of this thesis (for instance by running 46 PCAs and then forming a classification system). It was considered that being able to explain any potentially divergent patterns of understanding using the detail required of multiple comparative case-studies was beyond such a project. However, this thesis does go onto note country cases – Egypt, Malaysia, Thailand – which will certainly be of interest to more detailed analyses. A jump-off point from this thesis could be to explore the way democracy is conceptualized in one of these countries with a comparison to the global-level results outlined here.

## 4.3 Results

This section now addresses the core analytical question of this chapter: how do citizens combine these ten democratic characteristics together in their conceptualisations of democracy? PCA and EFA[[14]](#footnote-14) results are presented in Figure 4.5. Absolute values on the individual-level data are used with varimax rotation and Kaiser normalisation. Retention of components is discussed with reference to the Kaiser criterion (scree plots and PA are in Appendix, Section B, Figures B6-B9). It is worth noting that loadings when produced in this way are typically smaller for FA results compared to PCA (Thompson & Brown 2001, p7.)

Both approaches suggest the retention of two components/factors according to the eigenvalue test. Scree plots and PA also confirm this cut-off point and therefore two components are retained.[[15]](#footnote-15) In the following discussion I will focus on the PCA results, whilst reporting the FA results in brackets.

Figure 4:5 PCA and FA results for Absolute Values on Democratic Characteristics

|  | *Components* | | *Factors* | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *1* | *2* | *1* | *2* |
| Free Elections | .**716** | -.105 | **.617** | -.247 |
| Civil Rights | **.705** | .032 | **.622** | -.122 |
| Referendum | **.665** | -.024 | **.558** | -.143 |
| Equal Gender Rights | **.692** | -.201 | **.555** | -.289 |
| Prospering Economy | **.626** | .352 | **.650** | .168 |
| Unemployment Aid | .**562** | *.*209 | **.510** | .035 |
| Criminal Punishment | **.549** | .351 | **.590** | .197 |
| Religious Authorities | -.068 | .**784** | .121 | **.666** |
| Army Intervention | -.075 | .**716** | .091 | **.482** |
| Tax | .357 | .**479** | .394 | .254 |
| Eigenvalue | 3.18 | 1.60 | 3.18 | 1.6 |
| % of Variance | 31.8 | 16.0 | 31.8 | 16.0 |
| *N*  *Countries* | 45,545  46 | | | |

The retained components account for a total 48% of the variance from 45,545 individual responses. Component one accounts for almost a third of the variance in the dataset, with free elections and civil rights displaying the strongest loadings for both analytical approaches: 0.716 and 0.705 respectively (0.644 and 0.638 for FA). However, other characteristics are *also* important. In particular, the populist understanding that a democracy is characterised by a prospering economy loads strongly at 0.626 for PCA (and 0.587 for FA). Both state aid for the unemployed and severe criminal punishment also load here at over 0.5 for the PCA and very close to 0.5 for the FA. A second check for robustness is to check the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient, which is a respectable 0.77 across the seven items, and only just under the 0.8 mark which has been suggested for widely used scales (Carmines and Zellera, 1979, p. 51).

The second component accounts for a further 16% of the variance and is shaped by the two authoritarian characteristics: religious authorities loads at 0.784 (0.660) and army intervention loads at 0.716 (0.507). Individuals who see one of these authoritarian characteristics as an essential feature of democracy are also relatively likely to see the other as essential too. The notion of using tax to redistribute wealth in a society loads on this second component at 0.479, but it also loads on the first component at 0.357. For the FA the tax loading is indistinguishable between the components. Therefore this characteristic does not play a key role in shaping either understanding of democracy. As might be expected for a component that explains less variance, the alpha coefficient here is a less impressive 0.50, suggesting that whilst these two characteristics do ‘hang together’ to an extent, there may be some underlying differences between those supporting religious interventions in government and those supporting military ones.

Although there is the minor difference in the tax loading across the approaches, when the results are converted into regression scores for each individual in the data set, the correlations between the components and factors are very high, as shown in Figure 4.6. The correlations are also very high when an oblique Promax rotation is used on the PCA and EFA results (see Appendix Figure B12 for extended correlation results).

Figure 4:6 Correlation results comparing PCA and FA outputs

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **PCA 1** | **PCA 2** | **Factor 1** | **Factor 2** |
| **PCA 1** | 1 |  |  |  |
| **PCA 2** | 0.000 | 1 |  |  |
| **Factor 1** | 0.997\*\* | 0.051 | 1 |  |
| **Factor 2** | 0.003 | 0.990\*\* | 0.053 | 1 |

\*\* p<0.01

Due to this high level of similarity and minor difference between the overarching story told by the two approaches, only the PCA scores are taken forward in the rest of this discussion. These two components produced by the PCA suggest first a rather mixed, larger component which lacks a necessarily clear-cut theoretical grounding, plus a smaller second component with an authoritarian grounding. It is worth noting that these results are clearly different to those produced by Welzel using priority values and FA instead of absolute values and PCA (see above, Section 4.1). As a check, PCA was run on the priority values (details provided in the Appendix, Figure B13). Whilst it was not possible to exactly replicate the initial analysis, the overall pattern is very different to Welzel’s FA. Therefore, I believe my analysis is advantageous here as there are clear parallels between the PCA and EFA suggesting the results are robust. Furthermore, it is clear that the tax and the criminal punishment variable loadings are relatively low (and indeed the tax variable is indeterminate in the EFA). However, if the models are run without these variables the overall pattern remains unchanged – the procedural elements are mixed in with the populist and unemployment aid element in a single group, against a second component that mixes together the authoritarian elements (see Appendix B14 showing the similarity of results if these two variables are removed; as the pattern remains, the variables are left in the analysis moving forward).

The final check on this exploratory analysis was to conduct confirmatory factor analysis using the two component groups to see how well the groups are demonstrated in this approach.[[16]](#footnote-16) Figure B13 in the Appendix outlines the results in full, but the main finding from this analysis is that the CFA results for this particular structuring of the two components are in fact weak. The goodness of fit issue is driven primarily by the second component, as we might expect, since it explained a much lower amount of variance. This suggests further research is needed on the interactions between the two authoritarian characteristics in particular, and I examine this in the Section 7.3. However, overall the results suggest that this broad split between the two components is important, and is the closest we can actually get to determining how individuals are conceptually mapping out the mix of characteristics available in this set of questions.

Overall, in this thesis, the approach taken and justification for each step provides a transparent and more robust selection of two components, which, most importantly, are driven by the answers of the survey respondents at the global level. The following section now turns to interpreting these two components.

## 4.4 Discussion: What do the components mean?

The two components of democratic understanding form the basis of the analysis undertaken in later chapters which examine what individual and national factors help explain these groupings of democratic characteristics, and how these understandings affect participation. A detailed discussion about the meanings of these two components is needed.

The discussion is in three stages. Firstly, I look what it is the two components actually demonstrate. This is done through an assessment of the loadings. Secondly, the aggregated nation-level results are assessed to compare across the countries in the dataset for each component. Finally, I graph and discuss the component scores in relation to each other, as it is important to see how these two latent dimensions of understanding are combined in different countries.

In the summary of this section I also discuss how this work is examining the conceptual mapping of a global understanding, which places my approach amongst that of Cho (2015), Dalton et al (2008), Welzel (2013) and Norris (2011). This is an important consideration, and I talk through the value and also the limitations it presents.

Whilst informed by the loading results, it is important to remember that dimension analysis is a subjective exercise in which the researcher interprets what underlying dimensions the combination of variables might be reflecting (Fabrigar *et al.*, 1999).

### Component One: A Compound Understanding of Democracy

Component one has strong positive loadings on all the liberal characteristics, between 0.716 and 0.665, and significant showings for the two populist characteristics, in particular the need for a prospering economy (0.626), and also a showing for the notion of providing aid to those who are unemployed (0.562). In relative terms, someone scoring highly on this component will tend to score elections, civil rights, referendum, gender rights and a prospering economy as more central components of democracy than will someone scoring low on this characteristic. They are also relatively more inclined to score unemployment aid and severe criminal punishment (0.549) as more important attributes of democracy too. Low scorers are relatively less likely to see this combination of characteristics in this way. Of the important loadings on this component, none of them are negative, and so individuals tend to score the variables uniformly high or low, as opposed to a combination.

It is obvious that there is a liberal conception of democracy at the heart of this dimension of understanding, but it is not a ‘pure’ one: understandings of this nature have strong populist and social elements bolted on to them. The variables that load onto this component are purposely designed to try and tap into three underlying theoretical dimensions of democracy: we have discussed how they represent procedural (liberal), social *and* populist views. But while these different approaches might be clear-cut and distinct in the world of political theory, they appear conflated with each other in the public mind.

Both Welzel (2013; 2011) and Norris (2011) take the approach that the instrumental variables (all four for Norris, just the populist two for Welzel) have a negative effect on liberal understandings of democracy (as a reminder, see Figure 2.3 and Figure 2.4 in Chapter 2, Section 2.4). This negative impact is understood in a literal sense since respondents’ scores for these variables are *subtracted* from their scores on the liberal scale – so when a respondent scores the instrumental variables highly it is understood to damage the credibility of their reporting of any liberal understanding.

However, component one demonstrates that, for individuals, a third of all the variance in the dataset is explained by a component that *combines* liberal, social and populist understandings. In comparison, those who have a fully ‘enlightened’ understanding of democracy according to Norris’s criteria make up 0.07% of the dataset, or 0.3% according to Welzel’s. By setting up the data to identify these select few, we miss the important fact demonstrated by component one: that this particular combination of liberal, social and populist characteristics is by far the most common understanding of democracy for citizens at the global level. Citizens are actively picking and choosing *across* these characteristics and, compared to the theoretical delineations, have something of a ‘Frankenstein’s monster’ approach to their understanding of democracy. Democracy as a term is a broad and encompassing idea that includes the idea not just of liberal citizen rights, but also of material improvement in people’s lives, safety and social security. In less literary terms, this dimension of understanding is something of a hodgepodge.

At first glance, it would be easy to dismiss this mental mapping of democracy as unsophisticated in the sense that, unless something is considerably authoritarian, many citizens appear willing to throw it into their conception of democracy, in an ‘everything and the kitchen sink’ type approach. Indeed, the approach of previous research to the populist and social characteristics – stripping them away from the score of the liberal characteristics – suggests such an approach. However, this is unfair. Arguably such an understanding is, in fact, realistic. This finding is valuable in providing a picture of how citizens’ understand democracy, rather than a test score.

In this, my findings support a comment made by Lagos (2008) regarding the findings of Dalton et al*.* 2007 (and 2008) (a study I discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.4) which, as a reminder, used open-ended questions to examine meanings of democracy and concluded that there was a strong liberal dimension to understandings at a global level with little emphasis on economic characteristics. From a study in Latin American which showed that citizens understood the meaning of democracy to involve redistributive economic policies, Lagos contended (2008, p.118) that the argument of Dalton et al. provided a “flawed conclusion – that the economic component has little significance in people’s conception of democracy”. My dimensional analyses provides some support for this suggestion, however, at the global level, whilst redistribution via taxation appears to have a contested level of importance to citizen understandings of democracy, my study shows that more important is that there is a social security net for the unemployed and, trumping both considerations, is the idea that there is a prospering economy.

In naming this component, I have chosen the term ‘compound’ understanding of democracy, informed by the description Giovanni Satori uses when explaining how the liberal and democratic components of modern liberal democratic systems of government intertwine:

“…the interplay between the liberal and the democratic components of our systems can be portrayed thus: The first is especially concerned with political bondage, individual initiative, and the form of the state; the second is especially sensitive to welfare, equality and social cohesion. What we have then is a composition, a compound.” (Satori 1987b, p.386, emphasis added)

The term compound, then, captures the idea of this fusing together of different theoretical and philosophical approaches. As discussed in Chapter 2 (pg.46 footnote), this usage of the term is not the same as it is used by Fabbrini (2010; 2003). Fabbrini is inspired to use the term after James Madison, and his description in *Federalist 51* of the American Republic as having a fragmented sovereignty with multiple separation of powers, split vertically and horizontally, to produce a system of “multiple and concurrent communities of interest where no one community of interest need deny or dominate the rest” (Ostrom 1987 quoted in Fabbrini 2003, p.667). In my usage of the term I am more interested in how Sartori uses it in the above quote to try and grasp at the interplay of various different theoretical understandings, and as a compound being understood as something being composed of two or more parts, elements, or ingredients.

In many ways this component can is arguably a realistic understanding of what a democratic system in ‘the real world’ (as opposed to a theoretical one) is expected to entail. Liberal characteristics might be at the heart of democracy as a system, but it seems that citizen do not understand them in a vacuum. And why would they? After all, what regime around the world does not try and create growth or provide stability for its citizens? Indeed, rather than being a ‘kitchen-sink’ approach, this component can be understood as an accurate reflection of the complex roles played by liberal democratic systems in the real world, and what they are trying to achieve.

I will now discuss this component in detail using country-level averages. Once a PCA has been run, standardized component scores can be produced for where each individual in the dataset scores on the new component. It makes sense here to examine the country-level averages for two reasons:

1. For all characteristics the country level variance is significant (see Figure 3.4, Chapter 3). This means that across these components country populations are, on average, likely to score considerably differently to each other.
2. Furthermore, graphing the 45,000-plus individual mean scores would not be practical. Patterns at the individual level are easier to determine when controlling for other characteristics, and will be presented in the results of regression analyses in Chapter 5.

Since the scores are standardized, 0 is the mean score for the component and so a positive score suggests the country result is above average, whilst a negative score shows it to be below average. Those at or around 0 do not score differently to the global mean. This includes a considerable mix of countries including Norway, Bulgaria, Chile, South Korea, China and Zambia. This includes long-standing democracies, less-developed countries and states with Communist histories. Therefore it appears that this understanding transcends different types of regimes.

At the top left of Figure 4.7 are those citizen averages from countries which score below average. Malaysia is expected here, considering it was an outlier for a number of variables in the boxplots in the previous chapter (Figure 3.8). Mexico and Indonesia also score lower than average. These three countries score an exceptionally low -0.7 or more, suggested that in relative terms the citizens in these countries see the liberal characteristics in particular, but also the social and populist elements, as much lower in terms of how essential they are to their understanding of democracy.

At the bottom right of the figure are the above average country results for this compound understanding of democracy. People in these countries tend to score this group of characteristics higher than average: even though the averages are already high for most of them in the component. Again, there is a considerable mix of countries. It is rare to see Georgia, Vietnam, Switzerland and Egypt ranking together in any other list of societal attributes, but here it is clear – citizens from these four countries score this component of democratic understanding – and accordingly its configuration of characteristics – in practically the same way.

Considering the core liberal nature of this dimension of democratic understanding, we might expect that Western countries, and those with a long history of democracy, will score highest, yet from this initial look at the data, this does not appear to be the case. It is difficult to see at this stage what country-level variables and development theories might help explain this component as there are no clear patterns of countries producing the average, high-scoring or low-scoring countries. The following chapter examines this

Figure 4:7 National level scores for component one (compound understanding of democracy)



by using multi-level regression modelling. But in this initial look at the dimensions of democratic understanding, we now move onto the second component.

### Component Two: An Authoritarian Understanding of Democracy

Component two has half the explanatory power of component one, but is far more streamlined in the sense that only two variables load on it strongly: religious authorities and army intervention. Overall, this component lacks the ‘bagginess’ of component one: it is measuring the extent of adherence to an understanding of democracy that is authoritarian. High scores on this dimension would suggest a particular understanding of democracy that is difficult to reconcile with the bulk of democratic theory.

In terms of the two authoritarian variables, perhaps what is of most interest about this component is that they are loading *together*. As discussed, the alpha coefficient is a little lower here, however, the component still suggests for those with strong positive scores on component two, military and religious authorities are simultaneously understood as essential to democracy.

Chapter 3 outlined why the theory classifies these as anti-democratic – they both concern unaccountable and unrepresentative structures of authority. This presents an interesting puzzle as to who aligns with the component, which will be explored in the following chapter. Additionally, we know from Chapter 3 that these two variables are the most spatially defined of all the characteristics, and so we can expect national variables to play a stronger part in informing this particular understanding of democracy.

This importance of national context is demonstrated by the patterns present in Figure 4.8. As the component consists of only two strongly loading variables, there are also stronger degrees of agreement and disagreement with it.

All those countries to the right of the mean line score higher than average on the characteristics contributing to this component. This time, the country patterns are much clearer; there are no Western democracies present. The four the highest scorers – Jordan, Egypt, Iraq and Ethiopia – all have recent histories of dictatorship or authoritarian rule and military junta control.

Figure 4:8 National level scores for component two (authoritarian understanding of democracy)



In contrast, of the eight countries whose citizens on average scored lowest on this component, seven are European and the other is Japan. Other countries such as Ghana and Uruguay feature here: Uruguay has been considered as Free by Freedom House for almost thirty years, and Ghana has a contemporary democratic history stretching back to the early 1990s. Whilst a democratic history might not have helped explain the compound understanding of democracy, it does seem that, on average, it may draw people away from the authoritarian understanding.

### Summary

This analysis follows the work of Cho (2015), Dalton et al (2008), Norris (2011) and Welzel (2013) who similarly look to global-level understandings of democracy and attempt to explain them. This globalised approach allows for a broad analysis to take place that generates these understandings across contexts, but also examines how context shapes such them in a comparative way (see next chapter). This allows for showing how individuals think, but also how these understandings might be considered when aggregated to the country-level and compared. As shown in the Introduction, there is a globalist notion associated with the idea of democracy with arguments that it is a ‘universal value’ (Sen 1999) with near-universal support (Diamond 2008). Therefore, it makes sense to interrogate the idea from this angle. Regarding democracy and globalisation, Welzel (2013, p. 16) notes how the “global pooling of human experiences and knowledge offers our species the opportunity to liberate intercultural learning from the confines of geography”. I do not go quite this far as I am interested in how, alongside personal characteristics, geography and context might limit or promote certain understandings of democracy.

What, then, can we take overall from these results so far? Firstly, when it comes to understandings of democracy, the largest explanatory component, accounting for a full third of the variance in the data across these variables, is a mixed bag. It has liberal values at its core, but these are combined with populist and social understandings. I’ve called this a ‘compound’ understanding of democracy. There are no obvious patterns to the country-level scores, suggesting this understanding is widespread and has permeated across societies in many different countries with different contexts, from harsh authoritarian regimes to longstanding democracies.

Secondly however, there are patterns to the authoritarian understanding of democracy. Here, this component is clearly rejected by democracies. Citizens in democracies do appear to share an understanding of what democracy *isn’t*. In contrast, those living in authoritarian regimes share an understanding of democracy which is not democratic – this is obviously a very important sticking point should citizens from democracies and non-democracies want to communicate and share ideas on governance and democratization.

This is not where the story ends with these components, however. There is an additional element of a PCA analysis that gives it an extra dimension when compared to using a civics test approach (and also cluster analysis). The two components here are derived by PCA to have as little correlation with each other as possible – the point is that they are distinct dimensions of understanding. This means that each individual citizen has a score on each component, and the score on component one does not predict or determine the score on component two (and vice-versa). The final step in this discussion is to look at *combinations* of scores across the components.

## 4.5 Combining the Dimensions of Understanding

Theoretically, we might expect that support for the compound understanding would exclude support for the authoritarian component and vice-versa. However, that is not what we see in citizens’ answers when the PCA results are combined. Individuals who score highly on the compound component one can also score highly on the authoritarian component two: they are not mutually exclusive.

Figure 4.9 (formatted to match the axis of the country-level results shown in Figure 4.10) shows percentages of citizens when they are classed into groups who are above and below average for each conceptualisation of democracy. Overall, 27% of respondents score above average on both components; these are citizens drawing together *all* the characteristics and seeing them all essential to democracy, which entails a potentially considerable contradiction between for instance, the notion of civil rights and free elections and support for military interventions and religious authoritarianism. 20% score below on both, since this is not an open-question, what this could be picking up is that citizens have other ideas of what democracy means, and they do not think the options are available to them in these ten characteristics. Further, 31% score above average for the compound understanding but below average for the authoritarian one: this is the combination closest to the liberal understanding. Finally, 22% score below average on the compound understanding but above average on the second understanding, and so these citizens demonstrate the most authoritarian understanding of democracy.

Figure 4:9 Individual Percentages of Combinations of Democratic Definitions

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **+Compound** | 31% | 27% |
| **-Compound** | 20% | 22% |
|  | **- Authoritarian** | **+Authoritarian** |

Not only is there limited evidence for a clearly defined liberal definition of democracy from the PCA results, but, comparatively, 49% of respondents understand democracy as having some authoritarian characteristics (the total of the two right-hand columns). In terms of liberal democratic theory, the group having a below average score on the compound understanding plus an above average score on the authoritarian understanding are the most problematic. These individuals are relatively more likely to believe that religious and military leaders should have power within a democratic system, and are relatively less in interested in liberal democratic characteristics such as elections and civil rights. Remember, this group, making up a fifth of respondents, could be talking about the same term, ‘democracy’, with a group who rejects a military role in democracy completely. Or they could be reading a newspaper article discussing developments in post-revolution Egypt, again, all bandying around the term upon which they have quite fundamentally different conceptions.

Figure 4:10 Country Level Results for both PCA Components

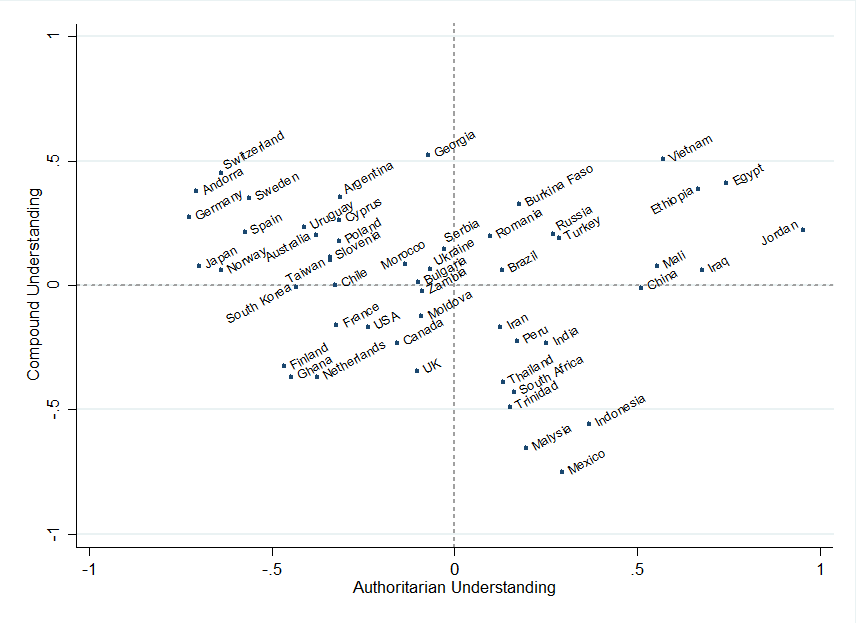


Figure 4.10 combines the results presented in Figures 4.7 and 4.8 for the country level averages, so we can better visualise the relationship across the compound and authoritarian understandings.

High scoring countries on the compound understanding, who also score low on the authoritarian understanding are found in the top-left quadrant, and these include Switzerland, Andorra, Germany and Sweden. This makes them the closest to demonstrating a pure liberal understanding of democracy. But this multi-dimensional analysis of democracy reveals something very important. What is striking about the PCA results is that we can now see, for example, that whilst Vietnamese citizens on average score the same as Swiss citizens on component one, they sit at completely different ends of the scale on component two. It is the same for those from Andorra compared to Egyptians or the Swedish compared to Ethiopians.

These combinations of understandings are unlikely to be picked up by open-ended survey questions which ask for just one or two characteristics. Here, if the Swiss and Vietnamese were asked to define democracy in two or three characteristics, we might expect them both to draw on elections or civil rights – something liberal and procedural first. And from this we might conclude that they share a core understanding of democracy. Which they do. Yet by digging and exploring deeper in this approach we can see here that beyond these initial understandings of the term, they also have utterly opposing ideas on the role of the military and religious authorities in democracy. These are crucial and hugely important institutions, and so by mapping out these understandings we can see where fundamental differences in opinion might arise when talking about the same thing. The ability to examine these combinations and predict these conflicts in understanding is also lost when generating a category of ‘enlightened’ understanding simply by subtracting some characteristics from others.

For instance, Bratton's studies (2001; 2007) of democracy across African noted generally widespread understandings of democracy in liberal terms, which my findings do not necessarily refute (although Ghana and South Africa score relatively lower than might be expected on the compound understanding). But what my findings add is that numerous Africa countries in the study - South Africa, Burkina Faso, Mali and Ethiopia – *also* have an authoritarian dimension as part of their understanding of democracy.

When it comes to the Asian region, Chang et al. 2007 outlined that democracy might be fragile there, as there is what they describe as an ‘authoritarian nostalgia’ in the region, which is boosted in times of weak economic growth. From my analysis we can see how in countries such as Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam and China, citizens there have an average or above average understanding of democracy in terms of the compound understanding. Therefore ideas of elections and civil rights are relatively widespread in a positive way. Yet China and Vietnam contrast sharply in that they score considerably above average on the authoritarian understanding, suggesting here is a fault-line between their understanding, compared to South Korean and Japan and Taiwan, which have comparatively far more stable democratic histories.

Combinations of understanding in the south-east Asian region, including Thailand, but more so Malaysia and Indonesia, highlight where these issues might be most problematic, as here the compound understanding of democracy scores considerably lower than the vast majority of countries, and so there is clear divergence for the citizens of these countries as to what democracy means, when compared to the global mean.

Although there is considerable mix towards the centre, the quadrants in Figure 4:8 do classify an almost equal amount of countries into four categories of positive and negative scores. As just discussed, in terms of liberal theoretical expectations, citizens of the countries in the top-left quadrant come ‘closest’ to the liberal ideal; they emphasize political and civil rights, and reject non-elected authority. Beyond this quadrant, however, the combinations are harder to place within a conventional theoretical framework.

The bottom-right corner is the most strongly authoritarian as countries there have the highest average scores on component two, and shy away from high results on component one. Of the 9 countries in this quadrant, only four – Mali, Indonesia, Peru and South Africa – feature in the global study of open-ended survey questions analysed by Dalton et al. (2008) (discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.4) which came to the quite positive conclusion that democracy had a shared, primarily liberal, meaning with global reach. Furthermore, of the 21 countries which have higher than average positive scores on component two, only seven featured in the analysis by Dalton et al. This could help explain their lack of emphasis on this authoritarian dimension.

In the top-right quadrant is another theoretically interesting group, made up of countries which score higher than average on *both* the compound dimension and the authoritarian one. It is not immediately obvious (from a theoretical perspective) how high scores on the anti-democratic characteristics can coincide with high scores in the compound democracy dimension. What makes this collection of countries especially interesting is that it includes large and important players in world politics such as Russia, Turkey and Brazil (and, almost, China). The unusual understanding of democracy from citizens in these countries is not shared by citizens in democracies. And Egypt is a country still undergoing a transition that has seen sites of power switch between mass protests and ‘the People’, the government in the shape of the Muslim Brotherhood, and the military.

Finally, the bottom-left quadrant comprises those countries with lower than average scores on both components. Interestingly, then, authoritarian characteristics are rejected here, but the liberal-mix of characteristics is not necessarily embraced. Here it could be that citizens in these countries understand democracy in a way that is not offered at all by the available survey questions, or it could be that their configuration of understanding is very different to the global one. The UK perhaps stands out here as a Western, long-standing democracy with a low score on the compound understanding, and only just below average score on the authoritarian one. The analysis in the following chapter will address these questions.

## 4.6 Conclusion

As outlined in the Introduction (Chapter 1) and Literature Review (Chapter 2), this chapter has taken its cue from the discussion in such studies as Schedler and Sarsfield (2007a), Carnaghan (2011b) and Canache (2012) that we should look not at support for democracy, but at substantive understandings of democracy amongst citizens. In contrast to existing studies which have used open-ended or ‘testing’ approaches, this chapter has utilised a dimensional approach to examine how citizens conceptualise democracy. The point of using this approach is that it allows the citizens’ answers to conceptually map the proffered characteristics for themselves, rather than prescriptively applying an expected theoretical framework onto the data. From a group of ten characteristics, two components of democratic understanding have been outlined: one explains a third of variance in the survey data and is a broad mixture of liberal, populist and social characteristics, while the other explains around 16% of the variance, and measures support for an authoritarian understanding of democracy.

These components are different to the factors drawn out by Welzel (2011, 2013), who used a different statistical technique, Factor Analysis, to look at these same questions. I was unable to exactly replicate his results, and instead, my analysis showed that there might be some unreliability in using FA on priority values. The clear-cut results of liberal (anti-authoritarian), populist and social definitions of democracy were muddier when I ran the test on the same dataset. The criteria for selecting the factors does not present as straight-forward a cut-off point as does the PCA results, leading me to believe that my approach is a more robust demonstration of how citizens are defining democracy.

The PCA approach also adds more depth by allowing me to demonstrate that these dimensions of democratic understanding, which are theoretically opposed, can both be understood as democratic by a respondent at the same time. This ability to hold ‘contradictory’ accounts of democracy simultaneously is an interesting finding and moves us beyond simply determining that certain people are answering the questions incorrectly according to liberal democratic theory.

This chapter has addressed the final aim (1.6) in the first section of analysis in this thesis, to examine understandings of democracy from the point of view of the people, and to produce a dimensional framework of how it is understood.

The next step in the research is to examine why citizens hold these different types understanding, using multilevel regression techniques (Aims 2.1 and 2.2).

# Explaining Different Understandings of Democracy

**“…little is known about the breadth, depth and distribution of democratic enlightenment among the mass citizenries of democratic and non-democratic countries in the world today or about major forces shaping their democratic enlightenment.” (Cho 2015, p.255)**

The previous chapter identified two prominent understandings of democracy: one, a compound of theoretical values that incorporates liberal, social and populist conceptions of democracy, and the other, a far clearer authoritarian understanding concerning theocratic and militaristic conceptions of democracy. This chapter examines *why* people might have these different understandings of democracy. As the dataset I am using contains citizens from multiple countries, the theoretical explanations I explore are from both the individual and national level.

At the individual level I test the explanatory power of three different theories of how citizens might understand their political system: modernization, political knowledge, and social capital. At this level, I also see if an individual’s religion, and their level of religiosity, has an effect on their understanding of democracy. At the national level the contextual factors examined are levels of development, freedom of the press, history of democracy, history of communism, openness of regime, and income inequality.

Sections 5.1 outlines the theoretical background. This section examines the individual and national level theories, and outlines the expected relationships they will have with the two conceptualisations of democracy, as well as how the theories will be operationalized using the relevant questions from the WVS2008 dataset. Throughout this section I draw attention to three puzzles in the literature and outline how cross-level interactions will be used in the statistical models to try and make sense of these issues where there is a clear lack of consensus in the literature.

After this, Section 5.2 discusses the importance of using multi-level modelling (MLM). In Section 5.3 the two conceptualisations are examined in turn. Afterwards, in Section 5.4 I discuss the results in detail and draw all the results together. Lastly, section 5.5 provides a brief conclusion and setting up of the final, following substantive chapter. Detailed information on the source of data and coding of variables are made available in the Appendix.

## 5.1: Theories of democratic understanding

The theories examined in this chapter are for the most part drawn from the theories of democratic development and understanding outlined in the literature review. For this reason, the discussion of theories will be shorter here. Standard controls for age and gender are included as they are basic variables present in models of political behaviour (Pattie & Johnston 2008, p.685).

### Modernization

The idea that an individual might develop political understanding with higher educational attainment, socioeconomic status (Bell 1973, pp.374-377) and by moving from agricultural to industrial occupations (Inkeles & Smith 1974) is central to the modernization thesis, which links economic and political development (see Inglehart 1997, pp.7-24 for an overview). Broadly, higher levels of both income and education are expected to produce more resources and opportunities for individuals to develop their political knowledge. Accordingly, citizen understandings will be closer to elite (i.e. theoretical) understandings of democracy, which we might expect to be closer to the liberal democratic theory that was discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.2 and Chapter 3, Section 3.2).

This leads to the expectation that higher education and income will lead to citizens being less likely to have an authoritarian understanding of democracy, as this does not align at all with democratic theory, liberal or otherwise. It is more difficult to predict what impact they will have on the first, mixed, understanding of democracy, but overall, since the liberal elements are at the core of this understanding, a higher socio-economic status (SES) is expected to have a positive relationship with this understanding.

There are important things to note about how both education and income are measured in the WVS2008. Educational qualifications vary considerably across countries and so rather than look into specific qualifications, the WVS provides the following broad categories of education: lower, middle and upper. These roughly align with primary or less for lower, secondary for middle (even it not completed) and degree/university level or higher for upper. Throughout the analyses, the lower category provides the reference group.

The income variable is interesting in that it asks respondents where, on a ten-point scale, they think they sit in terms of income in their country, with 10 being the most well-off decile. In general, individuals are expected to underreport their income in household surveys (Verme 2009, p.152). However, in a Latin American study comparing objective and subjective income data, Lora and Fajardo (2013) noted that whilst individuals who were relatively rich did self-classify themselves at lower income quintiles, the poor often considered themselves relatively less deprived. It should be borne in mind then that there could be a “centring” effect occurring in this variable, which underestimates the extreme values. Also worth pointing out is that this self-perception is asked by the WVS about a person within their country; someone in the highest decile in Burkina Faso may not even scrape onto the lowest decile in Norway. So it must be remembered that no raw or absolute comparisons are being made here.

But it should be noted, and as discussed in Section 2.2, modernization theory has been critiqued as being somewhat ‘abstract’ and ‘ahistorical’ in nature (Roxborough 1979, p.114-117), with the supposed linear development between economic development and democracy called into question as being overly structural (Grugel 2002, p.48-49) and somewhat deterministic. By studying aggregate level data both longitudinally and in a cross-sectional manner, Arat (1988, p.33-34) argued that in fact it “is clear that democracy is not a one-way ladder that countries climb as their economy and social structures develop” and we should remember the detail in the conclusions of early modernization theorists such as Lipset and Coleman who “identified economic development as a necessary but not a sufficient condition of democratic development”.

Looking at complications over modernization theory in more detail, Neundorf (2010, p.1097) points out that ‘Studies of the link between democratic regimes and economic development usually rely on macro data’. This neglects the complexities concerning individual-level micro processes. Taking the transition from communism to capitalism and democracy experienced by the Eastern European states as a case study, Neundorf (2010) addresses the micro issues occurring under the modernization rubric by focusing more on the socialization process, and in particular on the model of ‘life-long’ learning. Neundorf’s analysis notes that whilst age-cohort effects matter (those socialized under a socialist regime are less satisfied with democracy than those born afterwards), her results also overall confirm traditional modernization theory:

*“The better off people are, the more supportive they are of the political system... adding socialization processes in a new democracy to the discussion of ‘‘modernization’’ strengthens such arguments. We can take the socialization in authoritarian regimes as a suppressing factor in the development of a democratic political culture. However, prospering economies diminish this negative ‘’shadow of the past.’”*

What this study highlights then is that *context matters*. If socialization and regime support are linked, then those wealthier and more educated citizens examined in this thesis who live under non-democratic regimes may support that regime, and their understanding of democracy has the potential to be more closely aligned with the authoritarian understanding rather than the compound understanding. To test this contextual influence, five national level variables are examined.

At the national level, modernization theory is tested most directly using development indicators. A strict measure of the theory would address GDP only. However, the Human Development Index (HDI), produced by the United Nations Development Programme, is chosen for this study. The HDI is a composite index of income, education and life expectancy, which are all considerably interlinked, and all expected to increase with modernization. As a composite measure there is less measurement error than would be the case for a single indicator, with the index score of between 0 and 100 meaning that the higher the score the larger the degree of development. HDI is a commonly used measure of socioeconomic development as understood by modernization theory (see Gerschewski 2013; Kuru 2011; Seligson 2008; Norris & Inglehart 2002).[[17]](#footnote-17)

To consider the democratic socialisation context of the regime, its democratic history is examined. Arguably, a country with a longer democratic history is more likely to contain citizens informed about what democracy means, as they have had higher levels of exposure to it. Accordingly, the democratic history variable examines the socialization idea that living in a democracy will be associated with stronger support for liberal democratic understandings, and weaker support for more authoritarian definitions. It is calculated from totalled FH scores since 1972: the longer a country’s experience of democracy the higher it scores on a scale recoded to 0-100 (see Norris 2011, p.247). A categorical variable also accounts for whether the country is currently Free, Partly Free or Not Free according to Freedom House and for further analysis of the historical context, a dummy variable controls for whether the country currently is, or has been, communist.

A final angle on the modernization thesis examines inequality. Recently, a wealth of literature has examined the impact of inequality on a wide range of social issues. Whilst political equality is a core tenet of democratic theory, there is a considerable lack of clarity as to what relationship there might be between democracy and economic equality, and also the effect that economic (in)equality might have on democracy and democratization between democracy and income inequality (see Fukuyama 2011). When it comes to the linkages between inequality and democratization three arguments have recently been staked out, all stemming from cross-national and cross-temporal studies.

Firstly, Ansell and Samuels (2014) have argued that there is essentially a linear relationship between democracy and inequality (particularly when it comes to land ownership) in that higher levels of inequality heighten the chances of democratization. Here it is competition within the upper echelons of the bourgeoisie which brings about political change: ‘what matters is not fear of the downtrodden masses, but competition between economic elites for control of expropriative authority of the State’ (Ansell & Samuels 2014, p.209). In other words, the battle for what can be seen as legitimate control over the levers of taxation ultimately helps to induce democratic development in highly unequal countries.

In contrast, Boix (2003) argued that the reverse relationship is more likely. Excessive differences in wealth lead the rich to ‘restrict the franchise to avoid the redistributive consequences of a fully democratic system’ (ibid 2003, p.236). He concluded that revolts and civil wars occur at high levels of inequality, but the chances of democratization are weaker: “successful democratic transitions take place whenever inequality is *low* or wealth is not country specific” (ibid, p.237 emphasis added). The country specific caveat here refers to the potentially corrupting influence of a natural resource, such as oil, when appropriated to sustain authoritarian regimes.

Finally, Acemoglu & Robinson (2006, p.244) agree with Boix that high inequality actually increases the likelihood of coups, revolutions and repression, but suggest the interaction between democracy and inequality is better understood as an inverted-U-shaped relationship: “Highly equal or highly unequal societies are unlikely to democratize. Rather, it is societies at intermediate levels of inequality in which we observe democratization”. Here, a strong middle class is seen as important to provide a stabilising role in a newly developing democracy, acting as a ‘critical buffer’ between rich and poor and allowing political transitions to occur which are not perceived as too costly by either end of the spectrum (ibid, p.285).

So there is no consensus on the effect which inequality has upon democratization. When it comes to inequality within an already democratic society, there are also divergent viewpoints. In broad terms there are two main positions. Firstly, some see income inequality as corrosive for democracy because it undermines social cohesion (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009) and unfairly and detrimentally shifts policy towards the interests of the wealthy at the expense of others (Bartels, 2008). However, others argue that income segregation can in fact prompt civic participation as interest groups are required to compete for public goods (Oliver, 1999), or, drawing from a more liberal argument, it can be seen in more structural and macroeconomic terms as an acceptable by-product which occurs when preventing the state from redistributing and interfering with individuals’ assets (Hayek, 1944).

When it comes to voting more specifically, of interest is whether people vote with redistribution in mind, such that poorer people should vote for more redistributive policies. But evidence for this is sketchy (Borck, 2007; Gelman, Kenworthy and Su, 2010; Höchtl, Sausgruber and Tyran, 2012). The results from studies in the US have pointed to the potential that high levels of inequality increase the ideological polarization of political parties (McCarty, Poole and Rosenthal, 2006; Garand, 2010). From this we might expect that higher inequality will lead to more political interest and engagement amongst citizens as party politics begin to matter more when it comes to elections. Yet in contrast, Solt (2008) has argued that inequality *depresses* political interest amongst all but the most affluent citizens by restricting resources for the less well-off.

And so the expected relationship between inequality and the two understandings of democracy is not clear. To test the relationship in this data, the OECD Gini measure of income distribution is added to the model at the national level. The Gini measure runs from 0-100, with higher scores indicating greater income inequality. This is also a puzzle I examine with a cross-level interaction. To do so I look at two interactions. Firstly, the individual-level income variable and how interacts it with the gini coefficient, and secondly, how individual income interacts with HDI.

### Cognitive Engagement

Political socialization theory would expect people to gain political knowledge from the world around them, in particular friends and family but also through various media channels (Attar-Schwartz and Ben-Arieh, 2012). As Guo and Moy (1998, p.27) suggested, ‘a keen interest in politics may lead a person to think more critically about political information…and actively participate in political activities’ (see also Verba et al. 1995; Petty & Cacioppo 1979). Since democracy is such a global term, particularly ‘liberal democracy’, and is promoted by the United Nations (Newman and Rich, 2004), it might be expected that by being interested in politics, and searching out political information through sources such as the media, citizens might be expected to be more informed about democracy. This might also be expected to form attitudes more in-line with the elite, theoretical approaches that shape liberal democracy.

This is also related to elements of the cognitive engagement theory – this is usually related to participation (see Nie et al. 1996, and further discussion of this in Chapter 6, Section 2) and has also been developed as a theory of citizenship (Pattie et al. 2004). Growth of education alongside the wider available of information is central to cognitive mobilisation, and as Pattie et al. (2004, p.139) outline in more detail (regarding the context in Britain, a mature democracy):

Media consumption is a key factor in this process, since the cognitively engaged are likely to follow politics and public affairs in the media. Similarly, political knowledge is also important since the engaged are quite likely to be knowledgeable about how the system works…Cognitive mobilisation produces individuals who have an interest in politics and civic affairs, are politically knowledgeable and have a clear understanding of the norms and principles of democracy.”

However, this theoretical expectation is premised on the UK context, a mature Western democracy with high levels of press freedom. When it comes to the media, it could be that the ‘information environment’ (Jerit, Barabas and Bolsen, 2006) available to citizens is skewed and that free and unbiased political information is not easily accessible. A clear example here would be when the press is not free and is controlled by the state under an authoritarian regime, but it would not even have to be that dramatic; for instance, returning to the UK, a recent report of the 2015 general election by the Electoral Integrity Project highlighted a problematic lack of balance in the popular media (Norris *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, there is a puzzle concerning the interaction between theories of cognitive engagement and wider context, and this will be tested in my MLM analysis with an interaction effect with the use of media sources at the individual level and freedom of the press at the national level (this variable is discussed below).

Overall however, considering the impact of political knowledge in broader terms, the theoretical expectation is that those who are interested enough in politics to inform themselves about news events and politics through the media are more likely to have a liberal understanding of democracy and so score higher on the compound understanding. The prediction is in the same direction as the SES measurements; higher levels of interest and engagement will be positively related to the mixed understanding of democracy, and negatively related to the authoritarian one.

Two variables are used to examine this issue. Firstly, following Welzel (2011, p.22), political interest is measured in an index built from two questions. The first asks ‘*How interested would you say you are in politics?*’ and provides the following options: Very interested, Somewhat interested, Not very interested and Not at all interested (plus Don’t know). The second question asks ‘*For each of the following aspects, indicate how important it is in your life: Politics’* with the following options: Very important, Rather important, Not very important and Not at all important (plus Don’t know). The two variables were combined into an index (alpha coefficient 0.74, with the ‘Don’t know’ answers dropped) and converted to a scale from 10 were the respondent thought politics was very important and they were very interested, to 1, where the respondent is somewhat apathetic, thinks politics is not all important and is not at all interested in it.

The second aspect of political knowledge it tapped into by looking at media use of citizens. Media use is measured with the question: ‘*People use different sources to learn what is going on in their country and the world. For each of the following sources, please indicate whether you used it last week or did not use it last week to obtain information.*’ The list of sources includes TV broadcasts, newspapers, magazines, reports, books, internet and colleagues. The variable is coded into categories: those who do not report using any (0), those who use 1-4 sources (1), and those who use 5 or more (2). These groupings are informed by the descriptive statistics in Chapter 3. Results here showed that a binary variable (use some vs use none) would not capture the distinctive pattern in the data between general and heavy users of media.

As the tests of individual cognitive engagement are heavily dependent on the use of media, it is important to check how free the media is in a country, and make sure that the media is not simply a state-controlled entity, a situation more likely in authoritarian regimes that use the media as an outlet for propaganda. Compiled by Reporters Without Borders, the Press Freedom Index is used to tap into this idea[[18]](#footnote-18) The index is based on expert opinions and surveys with journalists, human rights organizations, researchers and jurists. The index is recoded to run from 0-100, with 100 being the most free, and 0 being the most repressed.

The Press Freedom Index has been utilised in democracy studies, often to examine the impact of a free press and levels of democracy on corruption (Khrapavitski *et al.*, 2011; Kalenborn and Lessman, 2012) and sometimes used with democratic indexes to form more substantial measures of democracy (Sallie, 2001). However, to my knowledge, this is one of the first usages of the Press Freedom Index to examine whether the quality of press that a citizen has access to affects their conceptualisation of democracy.

This variable also allows us to test, when it comes to understandings of democracy, if whether the effect of using media in your country is mediated by the freedom of the press in the country. For instance, we might expect that those living in a country with a repressed media might not have access to media sources that will allow them to gain knowledge about liberal democracy, and may in fact come across understandings of democracy more in line with an authoritarian idea of democracy (although not a country in the dataset, an extreme example of this might be the available media in a country such as North Korea, which has the official title ‘The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’).

### Social Capital

The idea of social capital as a positive force for democratic good can be traced at least back to Tocqueville, and the term itself was popularized by Putnam (1995) in particular. Drawing from numerous summaries of social capital, Van Deth (2003, p.80) outlines how two main aspects of social capital are usually identified: “social capital comprises both structural aspects (that is, connections or networks) as well as cultural aspects (that is, obligations, or social norms and values, and particularly trust).” In his study using principal components analysis on a large battery of social capital-related items, Bjørnskov (2006) suggests that of the cultural dimensions, social trust and social norms constitute two empirically distinct facets. However, he notes that the social trust element alone helps explain effective governance and measures of life satisfaction.

In this thesis I examine the influence of the structural element by examining the associational activity of individuals, whilst cultural facets are examined by looking at social trust from two angles: trust in society more generally, and confidence and trust in institutions (the details of the variables are discussed below).

The expectation is that increased levels of social trust will lead people to the compound understanding of democracy, or, at least, away from the authoritarian understanding. Increased levels of social capital are generally seen as beneficial for democracy (Dalton & Ong 2005: 13), particularly as increased social capital is seen as generating trust and reciprocity which lowers the transaction costs of collective action, which are central to democracy (van Deth & Zmerli 2010; Zmerli 2010). Social trust in general is argued to be a “key social resource that seems to oil the wheels of the market economy and democratic politics” (Stolle 2003, p.19).

However, recent studies of social capital have argued that there could be a ‘dark side’ to the concept (Callahan, 2005; van Deth and Zmerli, 2010; Zmerli, 2010). Putnam noted the difference between ‘bridging’ and ‘bonding’ forms of social capital. Bridging social capital builds ties across different groups in society, whereas bonding strengthens ties within groups. The latter in particular has the potential to be problematic if it promotes a form of ‘group-think’, leading to intolerance of ‘outsiders’. Should citizens be more exposed to anti-democratic civil society groups this could lead to skewed understanding of democracy, and in this study, potentially lead to individuals scoring high on the authoritarian dimension, and low on the compound dimension.

Indeed, Rossteutscher (2010, p.752) has argued that social capital stabilizes *authoritarian* regimes and in these contexts it actually ‘throws a spanner in the works of democratization’. Indeed, in an authoritarian context, she suggested that, ‘Trust increases the stability of nondemocratic leaderships by generating popular support, by suppressing regime-threatening forms of protest activity, and by nourishing undemocratic ideals concerning governance’ (ibid, p.752). Furthermore, social capital as measured by involvement in the associational sector does not fare much better in her analysis when it comes to authoritarian regimes.

My examination of social capital looks at both trust and membership of associations. When it comes to trust I examine social and institutional conceptualisations. Social trust is measured with a binary variable that asks people to say which of the following statements they most agree with: whether ‘*most people can be trusted*’ (1) or ‘*you can't be too careful*’ (0). Acknowledging the complexities presented by different types of social capital and their potential adverse as well as positive effects, the prediction for these variables is still expected to be a positive one, in that those who trust people will score higher on the compound understanding of democracy. Should a significant result show up with the relationship in a negative direction, this would give credence to the notion that there is a dark, bonding element to social capital that might actually inhibit ideas of liberal democracy. With the authoritarian understanding, there is expected to be a negative relationship as this understanding puts more faith in authorities than in people.

Following the argument of Newton (1999), confidence in institutions is examined as distinct from social trust and not seen as the other side of the same coin. Newton’s analysis using World Values Survey and British Social Attitudes data demonstrates only very weak relationships between the two types of trust, and concludes that ‘political trust cannot be reduced to, or explained in terms of, social factors, such as membership of voluntary organisations, community involvement or social trust (*ibid*, p.183). Yet political trust is still an important category of trust, more generally as it links to political support for the institutions of government, and the importance of this for responsive governance and a loyal citizenry (see Section 3.2). From this perspective, institutional trust is a positive in democracy and higher trust would be expected to align with the compound understanding. However, in an age of falling levels of institutional trust, arguments that question this assumption have grown in popularity.

Norris’s (2011) idea of the ‘critical citizen’ suggests that falling trust and confidence in institutions, particularly in democracies, can be seen in a positive light, in that citizens have the critical capacity to judge these institutions and do not follow them in a blind fashion. Indeed, Citrin (1974, p.988) outlined the principle behind this approach over forty years ago, drawing from ideas from 150 years ago:

“It is worth recalling John Stuart Mill's belief that a democratic political culture is characterized by a vigilant scepticism (or realistic cynicism) rather than an unquestioning faith in the motives and abilities of political authority.”

In this sense there is some cross-over with the ideas of post-material/post-modern values and its concern with the expression of emancipative values, as opposed to acceptance of authority and submission (Welzel, 2006, 2013; Welzel and Deutsch, 2013).

As the authoritarian understanding is rooted in the idea of there being power given to authority figures and institutions, it is expected to have a positive relationship with institutional trust. However, as the above conversation suggests, the relationship between institutional trust and the compound understanding of democracy is unclear.

To test the effect of institutional trust, I create an index variable created from the following question group: *‘I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them?’* Respondents were given the following numerical scores: A great deal, Quite a lot, Not very much and None at all (plus Don’t Know). The five institutions in the index were the justice system, government, parties, parliament, and civil service. The alpha coefficient for this index is a high 0.87 (with the Don’t Know option dropped). As before, the index in the model is converted into a 1-10 scale, with 10 being given to people who have a great deal of trust in all institutions, and 1 to people with no trust at all in any of the five institutions.

When it comes to the structural, associational element of social capital, this is measured with a question which asks whether respondents are an *active member*, an *inactive member* or *not a member* of seven civil society-type organisations including sports, religious, arts/music, trade unions, environmental groups, charitable organisation and professional organisations. I take a strict approach to this category and only look at those who consider themselves to be ‘active’ members, with the justification that an inactive membership will not do enough to significant increase citizen engagement with other people and improve any awareness of democratic practices. The variable is then split into three – respondents who do not report being an active member of any group are coded as 0. Those who are active members of just one of these groups are classed as 1, and those who claim to be members of two or more are coded as 2.

Considering its role in political participation and in ideas of a vibrant civil society, it is predicted that group membership has a positive relationship with the compound understanding of democracy, and negative with the authoritarian one. Again the prediction sides with the positive interpretation of social capital that group interaction boosts democratic knowledge, as opposed to it being an insulating activity. Yet a puzzle has been raised throughout this section as to whether social capital may also operate differently under different contexts, and in particular whether it may actually support for strengthen authoritarian regimes (Rossteutscher, 2010). Therefore, a cross-level interaction will be used, between group membership at the individual level, and Freedom House at the national level.

### Religiosity

Finally, religiosity is examined. The discussion in Chapter 3 noted that the idea of democracy as a secular system of governance is overstated. However, studies have linked Protestantism to democratic development due to the general separation of church and state in such systems (Bollen & Jackman 1985, p.42). When it comes to Catholicism it has been argued that “both in doctrine and in organisation, the Catholic Church has been the historical antagonist to liberal democracy for much of Western modernity” (Minkenberg 2007). However more recently it has been repositioned as one agent of change against dictatorships in the ‘third wave’ of democracy, particularly in Spain, Portugal, Latin America and Poland (Philpott, 2004).

In contrast, Muslim, Orthodox and Confucian religions have all been described as blocks to democratic development, most famously by Huntington (1993, 1996). Arguments have been made that perhaps the most problematic religion when it comes to its relationship with democracy is Islam, with the negative correlation between Islam and liberal democracy across the Middle East frequently cited as an example of this (Midlarksy, 1998; Barro, 1999). However, recent research has questioned Huntington’s reductionist arguments and conclusions. For instance, Ben-Num Bloom and colleagues (Ben-Nun Bloom & Arikan 2013; Ben-Num Bloom & Arikan 2012; Ben-Nun Bloom et al. 2011) suggest that although some characteristics of religious individuals can increase ambivalence towards democracy, at the group level religious communities can be beneficial for democratic support. The overall impacts of religious attitudes are also potentially negligible when the mediating effects of distinct authoritarian values are considered (Canetti-Nisim, 2004) and numerous surveys suggest Muslims do not hold different political values to non-Muslims (Norris and Inglehart, 2002; Rowley and Smith, 2009). Arguments have also been made that the non-democratic nature of the Middle East is best understood as a legacy of patriarchal, geopolitical and regional developments, rather than a distaste for democracy (Minkenberg, 2007).

Accordingly the jury is out on how religious beliefs affect understandings of democracy. I test for people’s religious faith using a categorical variable that groups people into those who associate themselves as Protestant, Catholic, Muslim, Hindu, Orthodox, Buddhist and Other, with those who are Non-Affiliated as a reference group. The number of Confucians in the sample was unfortunately not high enough to examine separately and so followers of this faith are included in the ‘Other’ category.

Furthermore, it has been argued that it is not simply which religion an individual follows that matters for this kind of test, but also religiosity, i.e. how strictly someone adheres to their religious beliefs, or how strong a believer they are (see Bloom & Arikan 2011). This study also tests a religiosity variable which is conceptualised as the opposite measurement to Welzel’s ‘Secularist’ variable (Welzel 2013).[[19]](#footnote-19) This variable is coded from two variables. The first is a measure of how important the respondent thinks religion is in their life, which is part of the battery which also includes how important ‘politics’ is (see above). The second variable asks, independent of church attendance, how religious the respondent thinks they are (A religious person, not a religious person or a convinced atheist). The index has an alpha coefficient of 0.62 and is converted into a 1-10 scale, where somewhere scoring 10 considered themselves to be a religious person and thought it was very important in their life, and someone scoring 1 were atheist (or not religious), and thought religion as not at all important to them.

As outlined here and in Chapter 3, Section 3.2, the expected relationship of religion and religiosity with understandings of democracy is not clear. Since higher levels of religiosity are linked to greater faith in non-accountable institutions and higher powers, I predict a positive relationship with the authoritarian understanding of democracy, but expect it to be negatively related with the compound understanding. However, since the effects of belonging to different religions are not consistently argued within the literature, I am not able to make a prediction.

### Summary

Figure 5.1 summarizes the predicted relationship between the individual-level theories, as well as the variables being used in regression models whilst Figure 5.2 outlines the interaction examinations that will be examined. All the variable measures are outlined in the Appendix, Section D.

Figure 5:1 Theoretical Predictions and Variables for individual and national level variables

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Individual level* | *Variable* | | ***Compound*** | ***Authoritarian*** |
| **Modernization** | Education  Perceived Income | | Positive  Positive | Negative  Negative |
| **Cognitive Engagement** | Political Interest  Media Use | | Positive  Positive | Negative  Negative |
| **Social Capital** | Institutional Trust  Social Trust  Group Membership | | Unclear  Positive  Positive | Positive  Negative  Negative |
| **Religion** | Religiosity  Religion | | Negative  Unclear | Positive  Unclear |
| *Country level* | *Variable* | ***Compound*** | | ***Authoritarian*** |
| **Modernization/** | HDI | Positive | | Negative |
| **Socialization** | Democratic History | Positive | | Negative |
|  | Freedom House | Positive | | Negative |
|  | Communist | Negative | | Positive |
| **Inequality** | Gini | Unclear | | Unclear |
| **Access to Information** | Press Freedom | Positive | | Negative |

Figure 5:3 Theoretical puzzles and interaction tests

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Puzzle:** | Interaction (individual *x* national) |
| **Do individual perceptions of income have different effects in different contexts of development and inequality?** | Income\*Gini  Income\*HDI |
| **Will the effect of media use vary when the press is not free?** | Media use\*Press Freedom |
| **Might social capital operate differently under an authoritarian regime?** | Group Member\*Freedom House |
|  |  |

## 5.2: Method – Multilevel Regression Modelling

As I am interested in how people might behave differently across numerous different countries, I need a type of regression analysis which takes into account group-level contextual effects. For this I turn to multilevel regression modelling.

### Using Multilevel Regression Modelling

Social science research that explores responses at the individual level is often also interested (even if just implicitly) in the effect of contextual variables associated with another level of analysis (e.g. households, schools, neighbourhoods, regions, countries etc.) or longitudinal data with the same individuals surveyed at different times (Hox and Kreft, 1994).

The dimensions of democratic understanding produced in Chapter 4 are generated from the WVS2008 survey data, which is collected from many thousands of respondents. However, it is a cross-national survey and so it is also a collection of representative samples from numerous countries. This is a hugely important characteristic of the data. The issue with conventional regression modelling is that a primary assumption of the technique requires all the data points to be independent. However, nation states are extremely influential spatial ‘containers’ of people. That ‘place’ can have an impact upon people is an underlying principle of geographical analysis, but less so in political science. However, it undoubtedly plays a huge part in any kind of cross-sectional comparative analysis across countries and in a sense, is encapsulated neatly in the research field of ‘geopolitics’. A huge amount of data is collected at the national level, from economic growth to press freedom to life expectancy.

By ignoring this issue and using a single-level regression analysis on multilevel data, “the parameter estimates are unbiased but ineﬃcient, and the standard errors are negatively biased, which results in spuriously ‘signiﬁcant’ effects” (Maas & Hox 2004, p.128).

My statistical approach to analysing the characteristics of individuals and their understanding of democracy cannot assume that, across the entire dataset, these individuals are a completely randomised selection. There is an important grouping within the data that must be accounted for. Not only should this be accounted for in principle, but by accounting for it I am then able to test what characteristics at this level are also having an effect. This is where multilevel modelling (MLM) steps in. Also called hierarchical modelling, MLM is becoming the standard in research that uses such data structures with multiple levels (some social science examples include Grasso 2016; Grasso 2014; Keller 2013; Semyonov et al. 2013; Dahl & van der Wel 2013; Persson 2012; Ariely 2012; Quintelier et al. 2011; Huijts et al. 2011; Marien et al. 2010; Wells & Krieckhaus 2006; Steenbergen & Jones 2002; Canche et al. 2001).

### How Multilevel Regression Modelling Works

MLM is a way of extending ordinary regression (Goldstein & Paterson 1991, p.387); it differs from single level regression as it fully incorporates the group clusters and their errors into the analysis. Instead of treating these groups of variance as a “nuisance”, they become interesting in their own right. Some of its earliest uses were in educational studies, where it is particularly useful to separate out the impact of the individual and the impact of the school on attainment (ibid*.*).

Figure 5:3 Single-Level and Multi-Level data

ST 1

ST 2

ST 3

ST 4

ST 5

ST 6

ST 7

ST 8

ST 1

ST 2

ST 3

ST 4

ST 5

ST 6

ST 7

ST 8

SCH 1

SCH 2

SCH 3

Students in Single-Level Data Set

Students Nested Within Schools in Two-Level Data Set

Figure 5.3 provides a simple way of visualising the difference between a single level model and a multilevel model. In the top half of the diagram, the eight students are simply independent of each other, and we assume they have no connections. In this scenario they might well be affected by their school environment, but since we only have one school in the dataset, we cannot analyse this context to see if it has an impact on the students.

In the bottom half of the figure, we can see eight students again, but this time they are from three different schools. Now if the students are representative of their school (or alternatively we have access to the whole population of the school), we can begin to look at the characteristics of the students *and* the characteristics of the school as having some explanatory power. It is easy to see the implications of this for developing studies to examine, for instance, pupil attainment that takes into account gender, ethnicity and socioeconomic class at the individual level, and then *also* considers teacher-pupil ratio and private/public school status at the school level.

Consequently, in mathematical terms, we can compare a simple single level regression equation with a multilevel one to see where the important differences lie:

|  |
| --- |
| ***Single Level Regression Equation*** |
| *yi = b0 + b1xi + ei* |
| ***Multilevel Regression Equation*** |
| *yij = b0 + b1xij + uj + eij* |

For the single level regression equation the notation is standard: **y** is the dependent variable, ***b0*** is the constant, ***b1xi*** is the coefficient for each explanatory variable, and *ei* refers to the remaining error in the model. The subscripted i refers to each individual case in the dataset.

The multilevel regression equation has the same basic format but it is expanded. The subscript j is added, which refers to each group in the dataset, whether it is a country, school, etc. Now explanatory variables operate at both levels. Further, the error term ***u*** is added, which accounts for the second level of error. When the regression analysis is run in this way, the variance is partitioned between levels, and we can account for the impact of individual and group characteristics.

As with the Principal Components Analysis undertaken in Chapter 4, there are a number of considerations when using regression modelling and MLM in particular, which include:

* The number of levels and the amount of data
* Variance within and between groups: the intraclass correlation coefficient
* Centring variables
* Survey weights
* Testing the model fit
* Random slopes
* Limitations of MLM

The following sections address these issues.

#### The Number of Levels and the Amount of Data

So far this discussion has described the difference between single and ‘multilevel’ models. In reality, the focus has been on single and two level models. Technically, here is no reason why more levels cannot be added to the model. The extension of levels continues the logic when just adding one level: splitting the variance across observations. For instance, regional geography below the nation state could be tested for differences.

An important consideration of levels, however, is the data quality at each level. For instance, what is the minimum number of data points needed in the second level? In general there is a complex relationship between the power of the model and sample size (Field 2011, p.740). However, if there are too few data points at the second level, the error will be too high and the data points will struggle to provide additional insight into the relationships between the variables.

So the more the better in this sense, but there is no consensus in the literature as to how many data points are necessary. Kreft and de Leeuw (1998) argue that overall there are too many factors to consider in a MLM to generalise and produce any rules of thumb; however, they do note that if the researcher is interested in cross-level interactions then 20 or more groups in the higher level, with good sized groups, is helpful. There are some who suggest the number of units in the second level should be at least 30, which is also the general rule of thumb for how many observations are required for a correlation analysis. Using simulation analysis a recent study on the robustness of multilevel estimations came to the conclusion that “users require 25 countries for linear models and 30 countries for logit models at the very minimum and most likely more for models with a specification other than a relatively basic one” (Bryan & Jenkins 2015, p.17). Some studies have suggested as many as 50 are required (Maas and Hox, 2004).

Looking at published studies in the social sciences in 2013[[20]](#footnote-20), some studies used as many as 8,048 data points in the second level (Merlo *et al.*, 2013); this particular study was done using regional data from Sweden, where large datasets are often available and linkable. Cross-national and cross-sectional studies are often limited to far less data points (indeed, there are only a set number of countries in the world at one time) such as the 16 data points used by Semyonov et al. (2013), the 18 data points used by Dahl and van der Wel (2013) or 24 used by Huijts et al. (2011).

In this study 51 countries are available. However, due to data availability, the MLM analysis I use here and in Chapter 6 uses 46. This meets the suggestions of Kreft and de Leeuw (1998) and Bryan and Jenkins (2015), as well as the >30 requirement test. It also comes very close to the 50 units suggested by Hox and Maas (2004), and is considerably more than the other examples discussed above. Further, in each country a representative sample is available, which makes for an acceptable number of observations per second-level group and I can have some confidence that the results are robust.

When it comes to the number of levels in the model, there is an unavoidable practical argue in that a robust third level of analysis in the WVS is not possible. The coding of respondents into country regions is patchy across the data set, and further, not representative. This makes it impossible to provide any reliable estimates at the regional level. Accordingly, it is a straightforward decision that there will be two levels of analysis: individual and national.

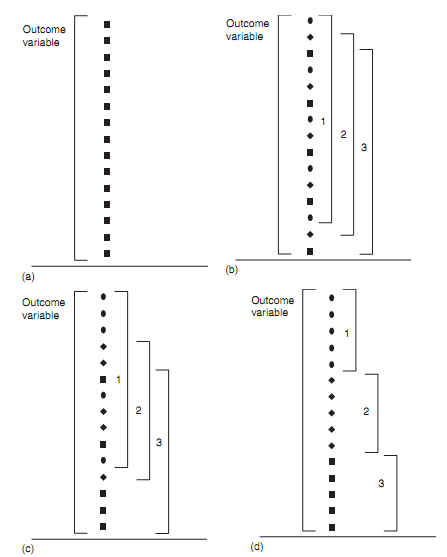
#### Variance Within and Between Groups: The Intraclass Correlation Coefficient

One important element of MLM is the amount of variance at each level, which can be a test in itself as to whether an MLM will be able to account for the group differences the analyst is interested in. To do this the Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (ICC) needs to be calculated. The following discussion draws on Twisk 's (2006) practical guide to MLM for medical practitioners. His example discusses patients as level one, and doctors as level two. However, the principle is exactly the same here, where we have respondents at level one and nations at level two. Twisk (2006, p.14-15) explains:

“Based on the variance of intercepts and the remaining error variance, the so-called intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) can be estimated. This ICC is an indication of the correlation of the observations of the patients belonging to the same medical doctor, i.e. it is an indication of the dependency of the patient observations within the medical doctors. The ICC is defined as the variance between medical doctors divided by the total variance, where the total variance is defined as the summation of the variance between medical doctors and the variance within medical doctors. Although some people find it counter-intuitive, the smaller the variance within the medical doctors, the greater the ICC.”

Figure 5.4, taken from Twisk (2006, p.16), explains this in more detail. Panel *a* shows the distribution of an outcome variable. In panels *b-d*, the outcome variable is split by three groups (we can adapt Twisk’s original example here from doctors to countries). The ICC in panel *b* is low – the variance *within* groups is quite high, but *between* the groups it is quite low. In contrast, in panel *c* the groups are more spread out and so the between group variance is higher, but the variance within groups is lower. Finally, in panel *d*, the difference between the groups is at its maximum, so the difference within the groups is at its minimum – in this panel the ICC is the greatest (see Twisk 2006, pp.14-16 for full details).

Figure 5:4 A Diagrammatical Representation of Intraclass Correlation Coefficient (from Twisk 2006, p.14)



The ICC allows the analyst to get a ‘good gauge on whether a contextual variable has an effect on an outcome’ (Field 2011, p.729). In fact, for this study, the ICC has already been worked out and demonstrated for the individual democratic characteristics using models without any explanatory variables (it was used to provide the percentage of variance at the national level in Figure 3.4, Chapter 3).

As a reminder, the national level variance for the free elections variable was 5.9% of the total variance, the lowest of all the democratic characteristics. In contrast, the highest percentage for these characteristics was 23.2% for the characteristic concerning religious leaders. Twisk (2006, p.16) notes that, “In most ‘real life’ cross-sectional studies the ICC will not be higher than 0.20”. The variance in my study of falls almost exactly into the expected range. The ICC will be reported and discussed for the analysis of the democratic dimensions, to further demonstrate both the importance of using MLM, as well as the impact of contextual variables on each dimension.

#### Centring Variables

A general reason for mean-centring variables – that is subtracting the mean score of the variable from each from each individual score – is that it can lessen multicollinearity issues, and is also useful when a 0 score on a continuous variable does not make sense. For instance the WVS2008 only asks respondents aged over the age of 15 their opinions. If I do not mean-centre the age variable, the intercept I gain for this variable is essentially useless as it is estimating the opinion of someone who has just been born. By centring the variable, I am instead interpreting the parameter around the average age of the respondent, not a 0 score.

As Field (2011, p.741) points out, if every variable in a model is centred around its own specific mean (that is ‘grand-mean’ centred), then this model will be equivalent to a model which is not mean-centred at all. The interpretation will change across the models because the centred scores are no longer the raw scores, but there will be a ‘direct relationship’ between the models, as all the variables have been transformed in the same way.

However, things are more complicated if ‘group-mean’ centring is used. This method centres the respondent’s scores on the mean of the *group*, instead of the grand mean of the entire population. Theoretically, in my models, the variable of self-perceived income score would be centred around where the other respondents *within their* *country* think they are on this scale, as opposed to where other people *across* *all the countries* think they are.

Again, there is no consensus on whether to centre variables on the grand or group mean. Frequently studies using MLM do not even specify if they have centred the variables, or how. There is no right or wrong approach to centring, but it depends on what the researcher is interested in. In this thesis I take the following approach:

* Single level regression modelling at the individual level does not mean-centre the variables, as the interest here is in comparing a ‘global’ sample to see what variables effect democratic understand.
* MLM models *do* use mean-centred variables, to further account for country level effects. They are centred by group (i.e. country).

#### Survey Weights

Survey data made available to analysts usually contains one or more weighting variables. As Pfeffermann (1993, p.317) explained:

“Sampling weights weigh sample data to correct for the disproportionality of the sample with respect to the target population of interest. The weights reflect unequal sample inclusion probabilities and compensate for differential nonresponse and frame under-coverage.”

There is a general acceptance that weighting survey data when producing descriptive statistics is a useful approach that can produce more accurate calculations. However, there is much less agreement on the role that weights play when used in more complicated analysis, such as regression modelling, and particularly with multi-level regression modelling (Kreft and de Leeuw, 1988; Pfeffermann, 1993; Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal, 2006; Gelman, 2007). In fact, this lack of consensus runs through from conclusions that the use of weights are crucial, through to the argument that the use of weights are unnecessary.

Without having access to the detailed sampling design, when using the WVS the analyst is left to choose between the options that are provided for them. The first option is to weight the sample to account for any differences between the sample and country percentages of age and gender. However, the WVS guide suggests using this weight with caution, particularly if the weight is below 0.5 or above 2. These extreme ranges of weighting are trying to accommodate considerable under or over representation in the sample. Particularly with the higher weightings this suggests that a group (for instance, older females) has been under-sampled in the survey, and so their answers are extrapolated and given more weight in the final result. The more extreme the weighting the riskier this is.

In this data set, around 1,900 people are below the 0.5 weighting and 1,000 are above 2 (around 2.7% of the full dataset). A couple of examples help outline what these sort of cases tend to be. From examining the data it is quite clear that large weightings above 2.0 are related to cases such as Korean housewives with low levels of educational attainment – clearly these were missed by the WVS sampling method and under-represented. In contrast, in Cyprus small weighting is given to married, well-educated individuals with children – these must have been easier to sample.

The other weighting procedure in the WVS is based not on socio-demographics but on the fact that there are considerable differences in WVS sample size between countries such as South Africa (*n=*2,893) or Egypt (*n=*3,038) compared to Trinidad and Tobago (*n*=981) or Sweden (*n*=971). In this case the country samples can be equilibrated to either 1,000 or 1,500.[[21]](#footnote-21) This is useful if the analyst wants to make the distinction between ‘global’ averages that allow for the differences in size of countries, or averages that take each country average as an equal unit, not allowing the data to be skewed by the larger populations.

Level 2 samples can also be weighted. However, this is dependent on the study. For instance, in educational studies where the level 2 units are schools, there might be strong sampling procedures used to generate the data. However, when it comes to countries in the WVS this isn’t the case. Countries provide a very small overall sampling universe in which it is very difficult to use any random sampling methods; too many other issues are at play (funding, access to country, research links, etc.). Instead, at this level the variables themselves can provide some control for country-level differences and effects (i.e. level of development), and the size of each country sample remains useful for different sizes of standard errors.

Technically then, when the results are discussed, it is not ‘poorer countries score higher/lower on Y’, but ‘poorer countries *within this sample* score higher/lower on Y’. This distinction should be borne in mind throughout this analysis.

In conclusion, in line with the advice from the WVS team, the gender and age weighting will not be used. Further, due to the problems surrounding weights, which is only complicated further when the researcher wants to use cross-level interactions, the models examined in this thesis will be un-weighted.[[22]](#footnote-22)

#### Testing the Model Fit

There is no agreed convention on how to calculate the model fit for a multilevel model. One way is to treat the proportional reductions in the estimated variance components as analogues of R-squared values (Raudenbusch and Bryk, 1986; Bryk and Raudenbush, 1992). However, as Snijders and Bosker (1999) have noted, this method is sometimes prone to problems, with added variables resulting in a decrease in R-squared values, or even negative R-square values, which do not make intuitive sense. Instead, Snijders and Bosker (1999) suggest a straightforward approach, which is to calculate and report the R-square value for both levels of the model, using the decrease in variance compared to an empty model (“the proportional reduction in mean squared prediction error”). This approach has the much more appealing properties in that it can never be negative and added variables always increase the variance explained, and cannot decrease it (Recchia 2010, p.3-4).

Accordingly, I use the Snijders and Bosker approach to calculating model fit for the multi-level models. In STATA this can be calculated by hand by comparing the model variance between the final model and the empty model, and, as of 2013 can be calculated with the ‘mltrsq’ package.

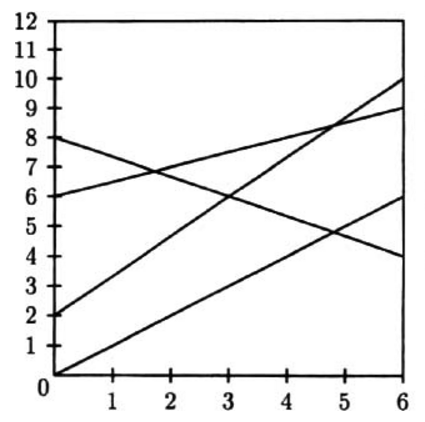
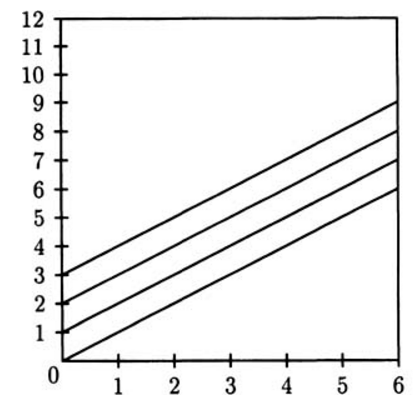
#### Random Slopes

Random effects within a MLM estimate separate parameters for the second level variables, allowing ‘each context to have its own micro model’ (Kreft and de Leeuw 1998, p36). This is the model shown in Figure 5.5 b) which visualises how a variable might have a rather different relationship with 4 cases; this is often called a random slope model. This is clearly quite different to a) in which the modelling approach assumes that the relationship changes at the same rate (in the same direction), but starts at different points.

This would mean for instance that a random intercept MLM examining the relationship between age and the compound understanding of democracy would estimate the effect to be the same across all countries; i.e. the older you get, the higher you are expected to score on the compound variable. In contrast, a random slope model such as b) would allow the covariance to be unstructured at the second level, and so some countries may have the opposite relationship; the older you get, the lower you are expected to score. Hence the idea of a micro model.

Figure 5:5 How slopes and intercepts of regression lines can vary in MLM analysis (adapted from Kreft & De Leeuw 1998, p.38)

a) Random intercept b) Random slope and intercept



Problematically, as Gelman and Hill (2007, p.245) note, the ‘statistical literature is full of confusing and contradictory advice’ when it comes to the question of when to use random effects. There may be theoretical reasons to start allowing for random effects, however this requires detailed consideration of the interaction between theories and context. As my approach is on outlining broad trends and influences on conceptualisations of democracy, this is for the most part beyond the scale of this thesis, however, as Snijders (2005, p.665) outlines:

When there are no theoretical or other prior guidelines about which variables should have a random effect, the researcher can be led by the substantive focus of the investigation, the empirical findings, and parsimony of modelling. This implies that those explanatory variables that are especially important or have especially strong effects could be modelled with random effects, if the variances of these effects are important enough as evidenced by their significance and size…

My own discussion combines this approach alongside the theoretical ‘puzzles’ as outlined in Section 5.3. Therefore, rather than running numerous random effects, which can lead to ‘unwieldly’ models (*Ibid*), I focus in on cross-level interactions where there is a theoretical reason, and follow the empirical findings when they can be considered important or having large and/or unexpected effects.

#### Limitations of MLM

Finally, although MLM’s popularity is increasing, there is still occasional debate as to whether the additional calculation and increased complexity of interpretation renders it more useful overall than standard regression. Bickel (2007, p.2) has stated:

“When comparing OLS and multilevel regression results, we may find that differences among coefficient values are inconsequential, and tests of significance may lead to the same decisions. A great deal of effort seems to have yielded precious little gain.”

A second complaint, from Gorard (2003, p.60) is that:

“Autocorrelation anyway only leads to the loss of power…, and this could be righted more simply by increasing sample size rather than changing methods of analysis.”

These two issues will be dealt with in order. Firstly, the ‘great deal of effort’ required to build a multilevel model is not really an issue with modern software packages such as Stata and R. In fact, the opposite is arguably more accurate, in that nowadays using MLM is *more efficient.* Twisk (2006, p.9) notes that, “in general, multilevel analysis is a very efficient way of correcting for a categorical variable with many categories.” In my study, *not* using an MLM model would require coding for 45 dummy variables to be entered for the national level variables, and seriously limit the ability to test the contextual differences between these countries.

The second issues concerns autocorrelation, noting that this leads to loss of power – when this autocorrelation is a feature of the data, it should be accounted for and examined, as multilevel regression does. Yet rarely in secondary analysis of survey data (and in general data collection) can the survey size be increased in the manner outlined in the quote above from Gorard (2003, p.60). Therefore, we can dismiss this suggestion as unrealistic.

## 5.3: Results

This section discusses the results of the MLM[[23]](#footnote-23) on the two conceptualisations of democracy, which have been converted into 1-10 scales. On this scale, the compound understanding has a mean of 7.9 (standard deviation=1.6), whilst the authoritarian understanding has a mean of 4.6 (standard deviation=2.4).[[24]](#footnote-24)

Correlations between the chosen variables must be checked for any potential multicollinearity issues (see Appendix Figure C1 for results for the scalar variables). For the individual variables most of the correlations are very low, with the majority below 0.1. In the single-level models the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is checked, and it is notably high for the media variable at around 9: a rule of thumb suggests worrying VIF scores are above 10. The diagnostic checks suggest the media variable shares some explanatory power with the education variable. However, the models were all run with education removed, and it does not have a large enough effect to change the significance of the media variable, and so both variables are left in all models. At the national level (Appendix, Figure C2) there is a much higher correlation between the democratic history variable, with both the press freedom index (0.68) and HDI (0.65). There are also potential confounding influences between the categorical variables such as Freedom House and the press freedom index. For this reason the models test each national level variable in independent models.

For both variables a model building approach is taken. The individual-level theories are tested in OLS regression models that all control for gender and age (model 1) before separately examining modernization theory (2), cognitive engagement (3), social capital (4), religiosity and denomination (5), and finally a composite model (6). The MLM model then builds from this first by controlling for the country-level variance in a multi-level model with no second-level variables (7). This is followed by a model examining HDI (8), press freedom (9), communist history (10), democratic history (11), income inequality (12) and measure of freedom according to Freedom House (13). These models are outlined in Figure 5.7 for the Compound understanding and Figure 5.8 for the Authoritarian understanding. For comparison, the null models are initially presented in Figure 5.6 as C0 and A0. Therefore, when referring to the Compound models I will refer to C1, C2 etc. and A1 A1 etc for the Authoritarian models. As there is some skew to the two variables, robust standard errors are used in all models. To ease interpretation, predictive margins are provided for the full individual level model and each country model (Figure 5.9 and 5.10).

**Figure 5:6 MLM Null Model for Compound and Authoritarian Conceptualisations**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **(C0)** | **A(0)** |
| **Compound** | 7.99 (0.08) | . |
| **Authoritarian** | . | 4.45 (0.18) |
| ***N individual/ country*** | 45,454 / 46 | 45,454 / 46 |
| ***Log-Likelihood*** | -83141 | -96447 |
| **ICC** | .109957 | .260100 |

Figure 5:7 OLS and MLM Results for Authoritarian understanding of Democracy

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **OLS Regression Model** | | | | | | **Multilevel Mixed-Effects Model** | | | | | | |
| ***Individual Level*** | **(C1)** | **(C2)** | **(C3)** | **(C4)** | **(C5)** | **(C6)** | **(C7)** | **(C8)** | **(C9)** | **(C10)** | **(C11)** | **(C12)** | **(C13)** |
| Age | 0.02\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.02\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.02\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.02\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.02\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.02\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) |
| Age-squared | -0.00\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.00\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.00\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.00\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.00\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.00\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.00\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.00\*\*  (0.00) | -0.00\*\*  (0.00) | -0.00\*\*  (0.00) | -0.00\*\*  (0.00) | -0.00\*\*  (0.00) | -0.00\*\*  (0.00) |
| Gender (Ref=*Female*) | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.01  (0.01) | 0.01  (0.01) |
| **Modernization** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Education (Ref=*Lower*) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Middle* |  | 0.21\*\*\*  (0.02) |  |  |  | 0.12\*\*\* (0.02) | 0.10\*\*\* (0.03) | 0.10\*\*\* (0.03) | 0.10\*\*\* (0.03) | 0.10\*\*\* (0.03) | 0.10\*\*\* (0.03) | 0.10\*\*\* (0.03) | 0.10\*\*\* (0.03) |
| *Higher* |  | 0.36\*\*\*  (0.01) |  |  |  | 0.23\*\*\*  (0.02) | 0.22\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.22\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.22\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.22\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.22\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.22\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.22\*\*\*  (0.04) |
| Income (1-10) |  | -0.02\*\*\*  (0.00) |  |  |  | -0.02\*\*\* (0.00) | -0.02 (0.00) | -0.02 (0.00) | -0.02 (0.00) | -0.02 (0.00) | -0.02 (0.00) | -0.02 (0.00) | -0.02 (0.00) |
| **Cog. Engagement** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Political Interest (1-10) |  |  | 0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) |  |  | 0.03\*\*\* (0.00) | 0.02\* (0.01) | 0.02\* (0.01) | 0.02\* (0.01) | 0.02\* (0.01) | 0.02\* (0.01) | 0.02\* (0.01) | 0.02\* (0.01) |
| Media Use (Ref=*None*) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *1-4 Sources* |  |  | 0.39\*\*\*  (0.05) |  |  | 0.37\*\*\*  (0.05) | 0.44\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.44\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.44\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.44\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.44\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.44\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.44\*\*\*  (0.08) |
| *5+ Sources* |  |  | 0.47\*\*\*  (0.05) |  |  | 0.45\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.55\*\*\*  (0.09) | 0.55\*\*\*  (0.09) | 0.55\*\*\*  (0.09) | 0.55\*\*\*  (0.09) | 0.55\*\*\*  (0.09) | 0.55\*\*\*  (0.09) | 0.55\*\*\*  (0.09) |
| **Social Capital** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Trust (Ref = *can’t be trusted*) |  |  |  | 0.09\*\*\*  (0.01) |  | 0.08\*\*\* (0.01) | 0.02 (0.03) | 0.02 (0.03) | 0.02 (0.03) | 0.02 (0.03) | 0.02 (0.03) | 0.02 (0.03) | 0.02 (0.03) |
| Institutional Trust (1-10) |  |  |  | 0.02\*\*  (0.01) |  | 0.02\*\*  (0.01) | 0.02\*\*  (0.01) | 0.02\*\*  (0.01) | 0.02\*\*  (0.01) | 0.02\*\*  (0.01) | 0.02\*\*  (0.01) | 0.02\*\*  (0.01) | 0.02\*\*  (0.01) |
| Group Membership (ref = *None*) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *One* |  |  |  | -0.13\*\*\*  (0.02) |  | -0.09\*\*\*  (0.02) | 0.02  (0.02) | 0.02  (0.02) | 0.02  (0.02) | 0.02  (0.02) | 0.02  (0.02) | 0.02  (0.02) | 0.02  (0.02) |
| *Two or more* |  |  |  | -0.18\*\*\*  (0.02) |  | -0.18\*\*\*  (0.02) | 0.00  (0.02) | 0.00  (0.02) | 0.00  (0.02) | 0.00  (0.02) | 0.00  (0.02) | 0.00  (0.02) | 0.00  (0.02) |
| **Religion** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Religiosity (1-10) |  |  |  |  | 0.02\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.00  (0.01) | 0.02\*  (0.01) | 0.02\*  (0.01) | 0.02\*  (0.01) | 0.02\*  (0.01) | 0.02\*  (0.01) | 0.02\*  (0.01) | 0.02\*  (0.01) |
| Religion (Ref = *None*) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Catholic* |  |  |  |  | -0.12\*\*\*  (0.03) | -0.10\*\*\*  (0.03) | -0.08  (0.06) | -0.08  (0.06) | -0.08  (0.06) | -0.08  (0.06) | -0.08  (0.06) | -0.08  (0.06) | -0.08  (0.06) |
| *Protestant* |  |  |  |  | -0.10\*\*\*  (0.03) | -0.09\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.00  (0.06) | 0.00  (0.06) | 0.00  (0.06) | 0.00  (0.06) | 0.00  (0.06) | 0.00  (0.06) | 0.00  (0.06) |
| *Muslim* |  |  |  |  | 0.14\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.17\*\*\*  (0.02) | -0.04  (0.08) | -0.04  (0.08) | -0.04  (0.08) | -0.04  (0.08) | -0.04  (0.08) | -0.04  (0.08) | -0.04  (0.08) |
| *Orthodox* |  |  |  |  | 0.62\*\*\*  (0.02) | 0.61\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.08  (0.08) | 0.08  (0.08) | 0.08  (0.08) | 0.08  (0.08) | 0.08  (0.08) | 0.08  (0.08) | 0.08  (0.08) |
| *Buddhist* |  |  |  |  | -0.88\*\*\*  (0.04) | -0.88\*\*\*  (0.04) | -0.16  (0.09) | -0.16  (0.09) | -0.16  (0.09) | -0.16  (0.09) | -0.16  (0.09) | -0.16  (0.09) | -0.16  (0.09) |
| *Hindu* |  |  |  |  | -0.08  (0.04) | -0.08  (0.04) | -0.05  (0.09) | -0.05  (0.09) | -0.05  (0.09) | -0.05  (0.09) | -0.05  (0.09) | -0.05  (0.09) | -0.05  (0.09) |
| *Other* |  |  |  |  | 0.08 (0.03) | 0.08\*\* (0.03) | -0.11\* (0.05) | -0.11\* (0.05) | -0.11\* (0.05) | -0.11\* (0.05) | -0.11\* (0.05) | -0.11\* (0.05) | -0.11\* (0.05) |
| ***Country Level*** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| HDI (0-100) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.00  (0.00) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Press Freedom (0-100) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.00  (0.00) |  |  |  |  |
| Communist (Ref = *not*) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.75\*\*\*  (0.19) |  |  |  |
| Democratic History (0-100) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.00  (0.00) |  |  |
| Inequality (GINI) (0-100) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.01  (0.01) |  |
| Freedom House (Ref = *Free*) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Partly Free* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.08  (0.24) |
| *Not Free* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.68\*\*  (0.17) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *N individual* | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 |
| *N country* |  |  |  |  |  |  | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 |
| *R*2 | 0.00 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.04 | 0.05 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *S&B R2 (Individual)* |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.01 | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.05 | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.03 |
| *(country)* |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.07 | 0.32 | 0.06 | 0.09 | 0.21 |
| *Log-Likelihood* | -85974 | -85843 | -85895 | -85912 | -85114 | -84889 | -82857 | -82856 | -82856 | -82849 | -82856 | -82855 | -82852 |
| ICC |  |  |  |  |  |  | .107679 | .107533 | .104080 | .078346 | .100504 | .102584 | .089508 |

*Standard errors in brackets \* p < 0.05, \*\* p < 0.01, \*\*\* p < 0.001*

Figure 5:8 OLS and MLM Results for Authoritarian understanding of Democracy

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **OLS Regression Model** | | | | | | **Multilevel Mixed-Effects Model** | | | | | | |
| ***Individual Level*** | **(A1)** | **(A2)** | **(A3)** | **(A4)** | **(A5)** | **(A6)** | **(A7)** | **(A8)** | **(A9)** | **(A10)** | **(A11)** | **(A12)** | **(A13)** |
| Age | -0.02\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.02\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.02\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.02\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01  (0.00) | -0.01  (0.00) | -0.01  (0.00) | -0.01  (0.00) | -0.01  (0.00) | -0.01  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*  (0.00) |
| Age-squared | 0.00\*  (0.00) | 0.00  (0.00) | 0.00  (0.00) | 0.00  (0.00) | 0.00  (0.00) | 0.00  (0.00) | 0.00  (0.00) | 0.00  (0.00) | 0.00  (0.00) | 0.00  (0.00) | 0.00  (0.00) | 0.00  (0.00) | 0.00  (0.00) |
| Gender (Ref=*Female*) | -0.10\*\*\*  (0.01) | -0.06\*\*  (0.01) | -0.09\*\*\*  (0.01) | -0.10\*\*\*  (0.01) | -0.00  (0.01) | -0.00  (0.01) | -0.02  (0.02) | -0.02  (0.02) | -0.02  (0.02) | -0.02  (0.02) | -0.02  (0.02) | -0.02  (0.02) | -0.00  (0.01) |
| **Modernization** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Education (Ref=*Lower*) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Middle* |  | -0.59\*\*\*  (0.02) |  |  |  | -0.17\*\*\*  (0.03) | -0.25\*\*\*  (0.04) | -0.25\*\*\*  (0.03) | -0.25\*\*\*  (0.03) | -0.25\*\*\*  (0.03) | -0.25\*\*\*  (0.03) | -0.25\*\*\*  (0.03) | -0.25\*\*\*  (0.03) |
| *Higher* |  | -1.34\*\*\*  (0.02) |  |  |  | -0.67\*\*\*  (0.02) | -0.61\*\*\*  (0.07) | -0.61\*\*\*  (0.03) | -0.61\*\*\*  (0.03) | -0.61\*\*\*  (0.03) | -0.61\*\*\*  (0.03) | -0.61\*\*\*  (0.03) | -0.61\*\*\*  (0.03) |
| Income (1-10) |  | -0.00  (0.00) |  |  |  | 0.01\*  (0.00) | -0.01  (0.00) | -0.01  (0.00) | -0.01  (0.00) | -0.01  (0.00) | -0.01  (0.00) | -0.01  (0.00) | -0.01  (0.00) |
| **Cog. Engagement** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Political Interest (1-10) |  |  | -0.02\*\*\*  (0.00) |  |  | 0.00  (0.00) | -0.02\*  (0.00) | -0.02\*  (0.00) | -0.02\*  (0.00) | -0.02\*  (0.00) | -0.02\*  (0.00) | -0.02\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) |
| Media Use (Ref=*None*) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *1-4 Sources* |  |  | -0.61\*\*\*  (0.04) |  |  | -0.28\*\*\*  (0.04) | -0.17  (0.04) | -0.17  (0.04) | -0.17  (0.04) | -0.17  (0.04) | -0.17  (0.04) | -0.17  (0.04) | -0.17  (0.06) |
| *5+ Sources* |  |  | -1.51\*\*\*  (0.07) |  |  | -0.68\*\*\*  (0.04) | -0.25  (0.03) | -0.25  (0.03) | -0.25  (0.03) | -0.25  (0.03) | -0.25  (0.03) | -0.25  (0.03) | -0.25  (0.06) |
| **Social Capital** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Trust (Ref = *can’t be trusted*) |  |  |  | -0.57\*\*\*  (0.01) |  | -0.17\*\*\*  (0.02) | -0.14\*\*\*  (0.04) | -0.14\*\*\*  (0.04) | -0.14\*\*\*  (0.04) | -0.14\*\*\*  (0.04) | -0.14\*\*\*  (0.04) | -0.14\*\*\*  (0.04) | -0.14\*\*\*  (0.02) |
| Institutional Trust (1-10) |  |  |  | 0.09\*\*\*  (0.01) |  | 0.08\*\*  (0.01) | 0.09\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.09\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.09\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.09\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.09\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.09\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.09\*\*\*  (0.01) |
| Group Membership (ref = *None*) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *One* |  |  |  | -0.24\*\*\*  (0.01) |  | -0.10\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.05  (0.01) | 0.05  (0.01) | 0.05  (0.01) | 0.05  (0.01) | 0.05  (0.01) | 0.05  (0.01) | 0.05  (0.01) |
| *Two or more* |  |  |  | -0.33\*\*\*  (0.01) |  | -0.15\*\*\*  (0.03) | -0.04  (0.01) | -0.03  (0.01) | -0.03  (0.01) | -0.03  (0.01) | -0.03  (0.01) | -0.03  (0.01) | -0.04  (0.01) |
| **Religion** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Religiosity (1-10) |  |  |  |  | 0.19\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.17\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.10\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.10\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.10\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.10\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.10\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.10\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.10\*\*\*  (0.00) |
| Religion (Ref = *None*) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Catholic* |  |  |  |  | -0.20\*\*\*  (0.04) | -0.19\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.03  (0.04) | 0.03  (0.04) | 0.03  (0.04) | 0.03  (0.04) | 0.03  (0.04) | 0.03  (0.04) | 0.04  (0.04) |
| *Protestant* |  |  |  |  | -0.21\*\*\*  (0.04) | -0.16\*\*\*  (0.04) | -0.04  (0.04) | -0.04  (0.04) | -0.04  (0.04) | -0.04  (0.04) | -0.04  (0.04) | -0.04  (0.04) | -0.04  (0.02) |
| *Muslim* |  |  |  |  | 1.07\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.92\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.26  (0.02) | 0.26  (0.02) | 0.26  (0.02) | 0.26  (0.02) | 0.26  (0.02) | 0.26  (0.02) | 0.27  (0.06) |
| *Orthodox* |  |  |  |  | 0.31\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.34\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.13  (0.06) | 0.13  (0.06) | 0.13  (0.06) | 0.13  (0.06) | 0.13  (0.06) | 0.13  (0.06) | 0.13  (0.06) |
| *Buddhist* |  |  |  |  | 0.62\*\*\*  (0.05) | 0.45\*\*\*  (0.05) | -0.06  (0.07) | -0.06  (0.07) | -0.06  (0.07) | -0.06  (0.07) | -0.06  (0.07) | -0.06  (0.07) | -0.06  (0.07) |
| *Hindu* |  |  |  |  | 0.37\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.23\*\*  (0.08) | -0.09  (0.10) | -0.09  (0.10) | -0.09  (0.10) | -0.09  (0.10) | -0.09  (0.10) | -0.09  (0.10) | -0.08  (0.10) |
| *Other* |  |  |  |  | 0.22\*\*\* (0.08) | 0.20\*\*\* (0.04) | -0.02 (0.04) | -0.02 (0.04) | -0.02 (0.04) | -0.02 (0.04) | -0.02 (0.04) | -0.02 (0.04) | -0.02 (0.04) |
| ***Country Level*** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| HDI (0-100) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.04\*\*\*  (0.00) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Press Freedom (0-100) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.03\*\*\*  (0.00) |  |  |  |  |
| Communist (Ref = *not*) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.40  (0.22) |  |  |  |
| Democratic History (0-100) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.03\*\*\*  (0.00) |  |  |
| Inequality (GINI) (0-100) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.03\*\*  (0.01) |  |
| Freedom House (Ref = *Free*) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Partly Free* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.96\*\*  (0.26) |
| *Not Free* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 1.88\*\*  (0.65) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *N individual* | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 |
| *N country* |  |  |  |  |  |  | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 |
| *R*2 | 0.01 | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.03 | 0.13 | 0.16 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *S&B R2 (Individual)* |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.06 | 0.16 | 0.16 | 0.08 | 0.15 | 0.08 | 0.14 |
| *(country)* |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.13 | 0.51 | 0.52 | 0.19 | 0.45 | 0.21 | 0.42 |
| *Log-Likelihood* | -103705 | -102815 | -102846 | -103260 | -100793 | -99976 | -95558 | -95545 | -95545 | -95557 | -95548 | -95556 | -95549 |
| ICC |  |  |  |  |  |  | .153013 | .149634 | .228472 | .167148 | .223712 | .175339 | .103315 |

*Standard errors in brackets \* p < 0.05, \*\* p < 0.01, \*\*\* p < 0.001*

**Figure 5:9 Predictive Margins for Individual Level-Variables (Models C7 and A7)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | ***Predicted Marginsa (1-10)*** | |
|  | ***Compound (Model C7)*** | ***Authoritarian (Model A7)*** |
| Age 18 | 8.20 | n.s |
| Age 80 | 8.95 | n.s |
| Gender | n.s | n.s |
| **Modernization** |  |  |
| Low Education (ref) | 7.88 | 4.72 |
| Middle Education | 7.98 | 4.48 |
| Higher Education | 8.10 | 4.11 |
| Income | n.s | n.s |
| **Cog. Engagement** |  |  |
| High Political Interest (10) | 8.14 | 4.23 |
| Low Political Interest (1) | 8.00 | 4.44 |
| No Media Use (ref) | 7.52 | n.s. |
| 1-4 Media Sources | 7.95 | n.s. |
| 5+ Media Sources | 8.07 | n.s. |
| **Social Capital** |  |  |
| People can’t be trusted (ref) | n.s | 4.49 |
| People can be trusted | n.s | 4.35 |
| High Institutional Trust (10) | 8.23 | 5.37 |
| Low Institutional Trust (1) | 8.01 | 4.54 |
| Not a Group Member (ref) | n.s | n.s |
| Member of one group | n.s | n.s |
| Member of 2+ groups | n.s | n.s |
| **Religion** |  |  |
| High Religiosity (10) | 8.21 | 5.43 |
| Low Religiosity (1) | 8.01 | 4.56 |
| No religion (ref) | 8.02 | n.s |
| Catholic | n.s | n.s |
| Protestant | n.s | n.s |
| Muslim | n.s | n.s |
| Orthodox | n.s | n.s |
| Buddhist | n.s | n.s |
| Hindu | n.s | n.s |
| Other | 7.90 | n.s |

a Linear prediction, fixed portion, other variables held at means

**Figure 5:10 Predictive Margins for Country Level Variables (Models C8-C13 and A8-A13)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | ***Predicted Marginsa (1-10)*** | |
| ***Country Level*** | **Compound Understanding**  **(various models)** | **Authoritarian Understanding**  **(various models)** |
| High HDI (Norway) | n.s | 3.78 |
| Low HDI (Burkina Faso) | n.s | 5.89 |
| High Press Freedom (Finland) | n.s | 4.06 |
| Low Press Freedom (Iran) | n.s | 5.83 |
| Never Communist | 7.85 | n.s |
| Previously Communist | 8.58 | n.s |
| Long Democratic History (e.g. US)b | n.s | 4.44 |
| Short/No Democratic History (China) | n.s | 4.59 |
| High GINI income inequality (South Africa) | n.s | 4.76 |
| Low GINI income inequality (Slovenia) | n.s | 4.41 |
| Free (ref) | 7.83 | 4.07 |
| Partly Free | n.s | 5.02 |
| Not Free | 8.83 | 5.94 |

a Linear prediction, other variables held at means

### Modernization Theory

In terms of modernization theory, education has the expected positive relationship with the compound understanding of democracy. This result holds in the composite and MLM models. Compared to those who have low levels of education, those with middle levels of education are more likely to score higher on the compound understanding of democracy, and those with higher levels of educational attainment more likely to score higher still. We can see this in Figure 5.9 which shows the predictive margins of Model C7: holding all other variables at their mean, those with lower education levels are predicted to score 7.85 compared to 8.10 for those with higher levels of education. In contrast, presented in Model A7 of Figure 5.9, the relationship is reversed for the authoritarian understanding. The authoritarian result also suggests something of a wider gap between those with low (4.72) and middle education (4.48) compared to those with higher education (4.11). This strong and consistent result suggests that education plays a role in turning people away from authoritarian understanding of democracy, higher levels of education especially so.

Perceived income has a weak and negative relationship with the compound understanding of democracy in the modernization (C2) and composite OLS models (C6) but it is notable that in C7, when country level errors are taken into account, the relationship no longer holds. It also fails to reach significance in the MLM models for the authoritarian understanding of democracy.

At the national level the development variable (as measured by HDI) has no significant relationship with the compound understanding of democracy (C8) but a significant negative relationship with the authoritarian understanding (A8). To demonstrate the difference we might expect across this scale, predictive margins were generated for an example of a low HDI country, Burkina Faso and a high HDI country, Finland. The predicted margins demonstrate a large difference, with Burkina Faso scoring 5.89 whilst Finland scores 4.06. Therefore whilst the influence of development and grand theories of modernization have possibly plateaued when it comes to the compound understanding of democracy (i.e. it does not matter what level of development a country is at, citizens are expected to have democratic conceptualisations of this mixed kind), these processes however have either not led citizens away from authoritarian understandings, or they bolster authoritarian understandings in less developed contexts. This provides us with an important research consideration – studies may generate more insight if they focus less on the degree to which people align with liberal and instrumental notions of democracy, and focus more on how characteristics that may clash entirely with the ethos of democracy (coups and theocracy) come to be understood as democratic.

Continuing to look at the country context, whilst HDI demonstrates no statistically significant relationship with the compound measure of democracy, neither does press freedom, democratic history, or inequality. Only the communist and Not Free classification from the Freedom House Index have a statistically significant relationship with the compound understanding, and they are both an unexpected result as they are positive. Individuals living in countries with an experience of communism – whether currently or historically communist – and individuals living in countries with closed and repressive regimes score, on average, higher on the compound measure of democracy compared to those without communist regimes or those in Free or Partly Free countries. On one hand, it could be suggested that the mixed, messy, compound understanding of democracy is truly something shared across much of the globe, as the insignificant results attest to. It could also be that those countries with no or limited experience of democracy play an important role in shaping this global understanding of democracy, potentially by blurring the conceptualisation to include the more populist and instrumental elements. Another alternative to consider is that the effect of modernization in informing this understanding of democracy works at very low levels, and then levels off (see Arat 1988, p.29 for a discussion on this potential relationship). This curvilinear effect might not be present in this data with its smaller number of very low HDI countries. Further analysis to examine this in detail would require longitudinal data.

The national level picture is different for the authoritarian understanding. For the authoritarian understanding there is a significant and negative relationship with HDI (as discussed) and also Press Freedom, and democratic history. There is also a significant and positive relationship with inequality and the Partly Free and Not Free categories compared to the Free category. The communism variable does not reach significance. Taken together these various results paint an intuitive picture. Citizens might adhere to a compound understanding of democracy across much of the world, but the conceptualisation of democracy that has authoritarian characteristics is more likely in countries that are less developed, less free, and have a less open media. Here, a closed and potentially repressive context helps promote a conceptualisation of democracy that does not align with the liberal theory espoused by elites in the West.

To further the modernization discussion, Figure 5.11 presents results of analysis which brings another angle to the unresolved conclusions found in the literature when examining democracy, democratization, and income inequality. The section Figure 5.11 titled ‘Original Results’ summarises the results from Figure 5.7 and Figure 5.8, omitting all variables except the one under discussion. For both the compound and authoritarian understanding it reports the results of income in the MLM model 7 with no contextual variables, followed by the country-level result for HDI from model 8 and inequality from model 12. Next it presents the coefficient when income is interacted with HDI and then, in a separate model, when income is interacted with inequality. Finally, it presents a three-way interaction between income, HDI and inequality. For reasons of space the full results for the interaction models are provided in the Appendix, Figure C3, and only the coefficient is presented here. This parsimonious way of presenting interaction results is repeated in Figures 5.18 and 5.21.

Figure 5:11 Truncated Interaction Results for Income \*HDI/GINI for Compound and Authoritarian Understandings of Democracy

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Compound Democracy** | **Authoritarian Democracy** |
| ***Original Results*** |  |  |
| Income (C7/A7) | -0.02 | -0.00 |
|  | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| HDI (C8/A8) | -0.00 | -0.04\*\* |
|  | (0.00) | (0.01) |
| Inequality (GINI) (C12/A12) | -0.01 | -0.01 |
|  | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| ***Interaction Model 1: Income\*HDI*** |  |  |
| *Income* | -0.10\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.06\*\*  (0.02) |
| *HDI* | -0.00  (0.00) | -0.04\*\*\*  (0.00) |
| *Income\*HDI* | 0.00\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.00\*\*\*  (0.00) |
| ***Interaction Model 2: Income\*GINI*** |  |  |
| *Income* | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.04\*\*  (0.02) |
| *Inequality (GINI)* | -0.01  (0.01) | 0.03\*\*  (0.01) |
| *Income\*Inequality (GINI)* | -0.00\* | 0.00\*\* |
|  | (0.00) | (0.00) |
| ***Interaction Model 3: 3-way Interaction Model (HDI = Developed vs Developing*** | | |
| *Income* | 0.05\*\*  (0.02) | -0.05  (0.03) |
| *HDI (ref = developing)* | -0.81  (0.67) | -4.29\*\*\*  (1.05) |
| *Income\*GINI* | -0.00\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.00\*\*  (0.00) |
| *Income\*HDI (ref = developing)* | -0.12\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.04  (0.00) |
| *HDI(ref= developing)\*Inequality(GINI)* | 0.02  (0.02) | 0.07\*\*  (0.03) |
| *Income\*Inequality(GINI)\*HDI* | 0.00\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.00\*  (0.00) |

*Standard errors in brackets \* p < 0.05, \*\* p < 0.01, \*\*\* p < 0.001*

As a summary of the discussion in Section 5.1, whilst some have argued that democratization is likely to occur at higher levels of inequality (Ansell & Samuels 2014), others say that have levels of equality are a better spur for democratization (Boix 2003). A third line of argument is that democratization will more likely occur at middling levels of inequality, and at extreme ends of the scale, the process is stifled (Acemoglu & Robinson 2006). Furthermore, for some higher levels of inequality are corrosive for a society (Wilkinson & Pickett 2009; Bartels 2008) yet the opposing argument is that they might be neccesary to spur competition and innovation (Oliver 1999).

To try and unpack these different lines of thinking, and bring a different angle to the debate by looking at understandings of democracy as opposed to degrees of democratization, I interacted the income variable at the individual level with the gini and HDI variables. I did this separately, and then also looked at a three-way interaction. For the more complicated three-way interaction, I simplified the HDI variable from a continuous measure of 0-100 to a binary measure which compares developed vs. developing countries. Following the United Nations Development Programme, I use the cut-off point of 70; above 70 are countries classed as ‘High’ and ‘Very High’, and below are ‘Middle’ and ‘Low’ development (UNDP 2015a, p.56 Figure 2.1; UNDP 2015b, p.3).

The interaction between HDI and income for the compound and authoritarian understanding of democracy were both significant. The results show a positive interaction with the compound understand and a negative interaction with the authoritarian one, although for both the coefficients are rather small so that at 2 decimal places they round to (-/+) 0.00. However, plotting the interaction allows us to make better sense of this. For comparison, in the following figures the margins are predicted for someone who considers themselves at the very bottom of the income pile (1) in contrast to someone who considers themselves to be at the top (10).

For the compound understanding in Figure 5.12, the predictive margins demonstrate that for those who see themselves at the bottom of the income piles, there is limited mediation by developmental context. However, for those at the top, it does matter; in low development contexts those at the top of the income pile score lower on the compound understanding, however, in the more highly developed contexts, this gap between rich and poor disappears.

Figure 5:12 Predictive Margins: Income \*HDI for Compound Understanding



Figure 5:13 Predictive Margins: Income\*HDI for Authoritarian Understanding



With the authoritarian understanding of democracy, in Figure 5.11 we can see that in this model controlling for the interaction, income has a positive effect – those who are richer are scoring higher on the authoritarian understanding. However the interaction shows us that this relationship is in low developmental contexts and in Figure 5.13 we can see at both ends of the income spectrum the authoritarian understanding score drops as HDI increases.

The interaction between inequality and income was also significant for both understandings of democracy. For the compounding understanding (Figure 5.14), in the countries with lowest levels of income inequality, both the two ends of the perceived income scale score highly. However, as inequality increases, the score drops for the compound understanding, and it drops quicker for those who perceive themselves at the top of the income pile. This alignment with the compound understanding of democracy may fall more steeply for those who consider themselves on the top of the income pile as in more unequal countries they will have more to lose by the redistributive elements of this understanding of democracy. For the authoritarian understanding (Figure 5.15), both ends of the income spectrum have a similar positive relationship. In the less equal countries, individuals score more highly on the authoritarian understanding, regardless of their place on the income spectrum.

Figure 5:14 Predictive Margins: Income \*GINI for Compound Understanding



Figure 5:15 Predictive Margins: Income \*GINI for Authoritarian Understanding



Finally, the three-way interaction test was significant for both understandings: a positive relationship for the compound understanding and a negative one for the authoritarian understanding. Figure 5.16 and Figure 5.17 help to outline the interactions between these three variables.

Figure 5:16 Predictive Margins: Income\*GINI\*HDI for Compound Understanding



Figure 5:17 Predictive Margins: Income\*GINI\*HDI for Authoritarian Understanding



Overall, when it comes to the compound understanding of democracy, there is little change for respondents from developed countries when it comes to the influence of increasing income inequality. However, the relationship between the different incomes in developing countries is more pronounced; in highly equal developing countries, both income groups, at the top and the bottom, score highly on the compound understanding. At higher levels of inequality their score drops, however, it drops more precipitously for those who see themselves as the wealthiest in their society. Arguably, in more unequal developing societies, those at the top of the income have more to lose from any redistributive policies which may be supported by democratization. And so we can speculate that elites in highly unequal countries are not conducive to democratization, a conclusion which aligns closest to Boix’s (2003) theory, and contradicts the arguments made by Ansell and Samuels (2014).

However, for the authoritarian understanding the stronger interaction effect is for income in developed countries: here, the relationship is positive, suggesting that in more unequal developed countries respondents scored higher on the authoritarian understanding, with minimal difference between the end of the income spectrum. In developing countries the relationship is weaker and in fact negative, so that the relationship converges. In light of the results for the compound understanding, the fact that in the more equal developing countries respondents at either end of the income spectrum are predicted to score highly on the authoritarian understanding lends some tentative support to Acemoglu & Robinson’s (2006) thesis regading democratization that there may be something of an n-shaped curvilinear relationship with understandings of democracy, and that at the extreme ends of the equality spectrum there are important effects at work. At the highly equal end, those in developing countries align more strongly with the authoritarian understanding than their counterparts in developed countries. However, in a highly unequal context, those in developed countries score lower on the compound understanding than their counterparts in developing countries, most especially so for those who consider themselves at the top of the income pile.

In sum, the interactions suggest an important confounding factor for the modernization approach: income equality also plays a part. Whilst education has a straightforward influence on understandings of democracy, the simple linear modernization approach should bear in mind differential effects of income distribution in developing and developed contexts.

### Cognitive Engagement

In the OLS Models C3 and C6 there is a positive and statistically significant relationship between interest in politics and the compound understanding of democracy. At a lower level of significance this relationship holds across the multilevel models (C7-C13). Controlling for all other variables, someone who scores the highest on the political interest variable is expected to score 8.14 on the compound understanding of democracy compared to 8 for someone at the bottom of the political interest scale. As predicted, with an increased interest in politics an individual is expected to score more highly on the compound understanding. When it comes media use the relationship is consistent across the OLS and MLM analysis. All things being equal, those respondents using more types of media to find out about what is going on in the world score higher on the compound understanding. Therefore, as outlined in Figures 5.1 and 5.2, the predictions for the cognitive engagement approach are borne out for the most part, however, the Press Freedom variable is insignificant at the national level, and so there appears to be no evidence of an information environment effect for this understanding.

For the authoritarian understanding of democracy political interest has a negative significant result yet this falls out of significance in the composite model (A6), and is only weakly significant in the MLM models. When it comes to media use, higher user of media results in a lower score on the authoritarian understanding in the OLS model, however it drops out of significance in the MLM models. Finally, the Press Freedom Index variable at the national level suggests that respondents in countries with higher levels of press freedom score lower on the authoritarian understanding of democracy. Therefore, there is evidence supporting the cognitive engagement approach for authoritarian model – that more engagement lowers the authoritarian understanding – however, it is relatively weak and not consistent across models.

There remains the issue of looking in more detail as to whether the environment information makes a difference to these results. As suggested in in the discussion in Section 5.1, the impact of media-use might vary across contexts. To examine these results in more depth I undertook some explanatory analysis examining interaction effects between media use at the individual and press freedom at the country level.

The results suggest that there is an interaction effect for the compound understanding and that press freedom actually has a negative relationship with this understanding, but that this relationship is off-set when respondents read more media (Figure 5.18, full model in Appendix, Figure C4). However, we can see from narrow Y-axis in the graph in Figure 5.18 that this overall relationship is a weak one. When it comes to the Authoritarian understanding however we can see in the interaction model that the media usage variable is positive, but the press freedom and interaction between the two are negative (Figure 5.20). Therefore in a context of low press freedom, more media usage results in a higher authoritarian score. This is as suggested by the discussion in Section 5.1: when controlled by an oppressive state, the press could feed citizens information regarding what democracy is that is skewed in comparison to understandings in freer places. In this instance, it suggests it can skew conceptions of democracy towards understandings that place an emphasis on military and religious actors.

Figure 5:18 Truncated Interaction Results for Press Freedom \* Media Use for Compound and Authoritarian Understandings of Democracy

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Compound Democracy** | **Authoritarian Democracy** |
| *Original Results* |  |  |
| Media (C7/A7)  *1-4 sources*  *5+ sources* | 0.44\*\*\*  (0.08)  0.55\*\*\* | -0.17  (0.04)  -0.25 |
|  | (0.09) | (0.03) |
| Press Freedom (0-100) (C9/A9) | -0.00 | -0.03\*\*\* |
|  | (0.00) | (0.00) |
| ***Interaction Model: Press Freedom\* Media*** | | |
| Media  *1-4 sources*  *5+ sources* | 0.19  (0.13)  0.13 | 0.38\*  (0.06)  0.48\*\*\* |
|  | (0.14) | (0.06) |
| Press Freedom (0-100) | -0.01\*\*  (0.00) | -0.03\*\*\*  (0.00) |
| Press Freedom\* Media  *1-4 sources*  *5+ sources* | 0.00\*  (0.00)  0.01\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00)  -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) |
|  |  |  |

*Standard errors in brackets \* p < 0.05, \*\* p < 0.01, \*\*\* p < 0.001*

Therefore we do find some evidence of an information environment effect (Jerit, Barabas and Bolsen, 2006). Whilst reading lots of media, in any context, seems to inform respondents about the compound (liberal-centred) notions of democracy, reading lots of media in a country where the media is under heavy influence of the state might lead individuals towards an authoritarian understanding of democracy.

Taken together it would suggest that media use and interest in politics are important factors in accounting for a compound understanding of democracy. This is in line with the expectations from cognitive engagement theory that those who are actively seeking out news about the world, and who claim to be more interested in politics, are more likely to have an understanding of democracy that contains the defining liberal elements, as this compound understanding does.

**Figure 5:19 Predictive Margins for Compound understanding of democracy and Media use\*Press Freedom Interaction**

***Freedom***

Media Sources

**Figure 5:20 Predictive Margins for Authoritarian understanding of democracy and Media use\*Press Freedom Interaction**



Media Sources

### Social Capital

For the compound understanding of democracy the dummy variable questioning whether people in general can be trusted or not is significant and positive for the OLS models but falls from significance in the MLM. Therefore, in the global dataset whilst individuals with trust in those around them score higher on the compound understanding compared to those who do not, when country-level effects are controlled for, this relationship no longer holds. When it comes to institutional trust however, this relationship is positive across all the models. This is not what was predicted and it might suggest that institutions can play a trusted role in building up this compound understanding of democracy. For the authoritarian the result is expected – those who are not trusting in society see authoritarian institutions as being part of democracy, and those who trust institutions more widely also see a place for these authorities. Interestingly then, institutional trust has a positive relationship with both understandings of democracy.

For both understandings of democracy and group membership the single level results are relatively strong at high levels of significance: those with increased levels of group membership score *lower* on the compound understanding and *lower* on the authoritarian understanding. This is an unexpected result for the compound understanding, as it was expected that increased social interaction in such organisations would boost such an understanding. However, both results are no longer significant when the country-level effects are controlled for. It seems then that there are global-level relationships here that are disrupted when the context is taken into account. An issue raised during Section 5.1 was whether the relationship between civil society organisation membership and democracy is mediated by the openness of the regime, and I examine this issue through an interaction model (Figure 5.21, full model details in Appendix, Figure C4).

One aspect of this idea is that rather than bridging people and bringing people together at a societal level, being a member of a group or groups might be an insular, bonding process that ‘others’ people outside the group (Callahan, 2005; van Deth and Zmerli, 2010; Zmerli, 2010). Furthermore, in totalitarian regimes where civil society is heavily regulated by the state, being in groups might leave people open to more state-influence and actually stabilize support for the authorities (Rossteutscher 2010).

Figure 5:21 Membership\*Freedom House Interaction results for Compound and Authoritarian Understandings of Democracy

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Compound Democracy** | **Authoritarian Democracy** |
| *Original Results* |  |  |
| Membership (ref: None) (C7/A7)  *One*  *Two or more* | 0.02  (0.02)  0.00 | 0.05  (0.01)  -0.04 |
|  | (0.02) | (0.01) |
| Freedom House (ref: Free) (C13/A13)  *Partly Free*  *Not Free* | -0.08  (0.24)  0.68\*\*  (0.17) | 0.96\*\*  (0.26)  1.88\*\*  (0.65) |
| ***Interaction Model: Membership\*Freedom House*** | | |
| Membership (ref: None)  *One*  *Two or more* | 0.01  (0.02)  -0.01 | 0.08\*  (0.03)  -0.00 |
|  | (0.02) | (0.03) |
| Freedom House (ref: Free)  *Partly Free*  *Not Free* | -0.16  (0.26)  0.72\*\*  (0.22) | 1.04\*\*  (0.35)  1.89\*\*  (0.44) |
| Member\*Freedom House  *One x Partly Free*  *One x Not Free*  *Two or More \* Partly Free*  *Two or More \* Not Free* | 0.15\*\*\*  (0.04)  -0.06  (0.04)  0.28\*\*\*  (0.19)  -0.30\*\*\*  (0.12) | -0.18\*  (0.06)  -0.04  (0.07)  -0.30\*\*\*  (0.07)  0.06  (0.08) |
|  | *Standard errors in brackets \* p < 0.05, \*\* p < 0.01, \*\*\* p < 0.001* | |

**Figure 5:22 Predictive Margins for Compound understanding of democracy and Group Membership\* Freedom House**



For the compound understanding we can see there is no group membership effects in a Free context (Figure 5.22). However, when it comes to a Partly Free context, being an active member in one or more groups does lead to a higher score on this understanding. In a Not Free context being in two or more groups leads to a relatively lower score. There is some evidence then to suggest that more civil group membership is related to a lower compound understanding, but this is within a higher scoring setting overall.

For the authoritarian understanding (Figure 5.23), the interaction suggests that in a Partly Free setting being a member of two of more groups is related with a lower score. Therefore it appears that if there is *some* degree of civil society operation (i.e. in a Partly Free setting) then respondents are more likely to be aligned with the compound understanding however in a closed setting there is evidence to suggest that active membership may led citizen’s to a slightly lower score relative to those who are not as active.

**Figure 5:23 Predictive Margins for Authoritarian understanding of democracy and Group Membership\* Freedom House**



Overall then the social capital theory has mixed results. Institutional trust has a consistent and positive relationship with both understandings, whereas trust in society has a negative relationship with the authoritarian understanding but no significant relationship with the compound understanding. Group membership effects are mediated by certain degrees of regime openness, suggesting that civil society engagement and institutional trust is important, particularly in Partly Free settings.

### Religiosity

It was noted in the discussion in Section 5.1 that there is no consensus in the literature on the expected relationship between understandings of democracy and denomination and degrees of religiosity. For both the compound and the authoritarian understanding we can see a consistent relationship with religiosity; across all models the relationship is positive however it is stronger and at a higher level of statistical significance for the authoritarian understanding. As with institutional trust then, the relationship is in the same direction for both conceptualisations of democracy. This relationship therefore suggests that those with stronger beliefs in religious structures, and more attendance to places of worship simultaneously score higher on both liberal/mixed and theocratic conceptualisations of democracy. This follows Ben-Nun Bloom and colleagues (Ben-Nun Bloom & Arikan 2013; Ben-Num Bloom & Arikan 2012; Ben-Nun Bloom et al. 2011) that religious values can in fact support democracy, but also that there may be authoritarian elements to high levels of religiosity that mediate understandings of democracy (Canetti-Nisim, 2004). Future research then needs to continue to tease apart the complex causality between religious values and authority. The model however does not demonstrate a difference by faith: once the MLM country errors are taken into account, the different types of religious faith fail to reach significance for the compound understanding and the authoritarian understanding. The only exception to this is that the Other category for the compound understanding: those classed as other score lower on the compound understanding in comparison to those classed as secular. Although the result is at a low level of significance, it could suggest that alternative religious practices are less compatible with the compound understanding, however the category contains a large mix of different religions, and so it is difficult to speculate further on what might be driving this result. Overall, whilst religiosity has an effect, denomination does not, and this theoretical approach influenced in particular by Huntington’s arguments (1993, 1996), does not show that different types of religious believes influence these two conceptualisations of democracy.

## 5.4: Discussion

Overall, it is clear from these results that all four theories have a part to play in explaining the two conceptualisations of democracy. Many results match the theoretical expectations, and further in-depth analysis studying interaction effects helps draw out some of the more nuanced processes that might be occurring.

When it comes to look at the socio-economic elements of modernization, education plays an expected role (Bell 1973). Those with higher education score higher on the compound understanding, and lower on the authoritarian one, pointing towards the idea that more education leads people towards a more liberal interpretation of democracy, but also more strongly away from one that invests power in non-accountable authorities. The robust and consistent effect of education across the models suggests this plays an important role in our understanding of these conceptualisations of democracy.

The notion that modernization brings with it increased income, and therefore there should be a link here with increasing individuals’ scores on the compound understanding of democracy, is tempered by context; in a developing country, those who see themselves as better-off score lower on the compound understanding and higher on the authoritarian one, possibly due to the threat that democracy may have on their status. In contrast, in developed countries, income has limited effect on the compound understanding, and a negative relationship with the authoritarian one.

Therefore it can be argued that increased education universally undermines authoritarian understandings of democracy, but the acquisition of wealth – or the social perception of one’s economic status – has a context-specific effect. In places with less wealth it can lead better-off individuals to cling to understandings of democracy that empower non-accountable structures of authority; this could lead to support for a non-democratic status-quo, and potentially impede democratization.

Increased political interest and the consumptions of news from a wide variety of media has, in general, a positive relationship with the compound understanding of democracy but an insignificant relationship with the authoritarian one. However, for the authoritarian understanding, when an interaction is added with press freedom, we can see that actually those who read more media sources in a regime with an unfree press score higher on this understanding of democracy. This suggests that consuming lots of media where the information environment (Jerit, Barabas and Bolsen, 2006) contains a high risk of propaganda and state-controlled output might boost your authoritarian understanding; however, it does not necessarily have a negative effect on the compound understanding. It is not just education, but also access to news and an engaged citizenry which are helpful to boost a compound understanding of democracy, and, possibly more importantly, steer respondents away from an authoritarian vision – in the right context.

When it comes to social capital theory, the group membership variable struggles. It fails to gain significance in the MLM for either type of conceptualisation. There is some evidence that membership varies by context, however it is relatively weak: the interaction analysis for the compound understanding suggests that those in two or more groups score lower than other respondents in a Not Free context, however those in this context overall score higher than counterparts in the Partly Free and Free countries. The results for the authoritarian understanding suggest that in a Partly Free context, those in 2 or more groups score lower. This is an interesting finding, and alongside the information environment finding suggests that more research is needed on countries in semi-democratic contexts, especially when it comes to political understanding and its relationship with media and civil society (see Rossteutscher 2010).

Trust, in its social and institutional conceptualisations, plays a part, although not necessarily as expected. Institutional trust is positively related to both understandings of democracy. This may suggest that people who trust their institutions receive cues from them on how to understand democracy. However, the authorities in question are quite different – the institutional variable looks at the state apparatus of the justice system, government, parties, parliament and civil service, whereas the authoritarian understanding of democracy focuses on the army and religious leaders. Institutional trust appears then to have a broad, overlapping effect across institutions. Social trust has no significant relationship with the compound understanding of democracy in the MLM, however it has a consistently negative relationship with the authoritarian understanding of democracy. It could be that the positive effect of social trust as espoused by the likes of Putnam (1995), Stolle (2003, p.19) and Dalton & Ong (2005: 13) move people away from authoritarian understandings that place limited emphasis on ‘people’ more broadly and rather focus on theocratic or military elites.

Finally, the effects of religiosity and religion appear quite limited. At the individual level, increased religiosity has a positive relationship with the authoritarian understanding of democracy. This is likely driven by the religious characteristic of this component. There does appear then, to be a link between religiosity and faith in authorities (Canetti-Nisim, 2004). However, there are no strong links to particular religions in these results. It is clear that for those promoting democracy, focus should be not necessarily on any faith in particular, but on how religious groups in general are acting in civil society and what effects they have on those who are members. When Huntington (1996) argues that certain civilizations are obstacles to democracy, I find no strong evidence to suggest that they are obstacles to ways of *thinking* *about* democracy.

### Model Fit

Worth noting here is that the model fit statistics are relatively low in certain models, especially for the compound understanding where the r-squared only reaches 0.05 at the individual level and 0.32 for the national level. The largest increase in model fit then comes from the communist variables and Freedom House variables, which are blunt attempts to pick up large differences in regime freedom across the world. One possible reason for this low explanatory power is the lower level of variance in this variable, and the consequent issue that this understanding of democracy has permeated across much of the world, regardless of demographic characteristics or societal context. It takes considerable contextual categorisation (for instance between Free and Not Free countries, non-communist and communist) to account for any difference, and even then it is the Not Free countries that in fact score higher on this understanding, and those who have a recent communist history.

Overall, this lack of explanatory power is perhaps not that surprising. We know from Chapter 3 that in general most individuals score highly on all the characteristics associated with this component, with low standard deviations. In other words, this understanding is relatively widespread, with less explainable variation. This means that this understanding of democracy has permeated across much of the world and there is relatively little difference to be accounted for at the individual or national level. What does help explain higher scores on this understanding, however, are theories concerning cognitive engagement and modernization. Those with high educational attainment and who seek out news and political knowledge are more likely to have this understanding. This is improved by living in a free country with a free press. Further, citizens in the least democratic regimes adhere to this understanding the strongest.

Therefore we might speculate that this mish-mash approach to democracy across the liberal, social and populist characteristics is one generally ascribed to around the world. However, it is also not a stream-lined and clear-cut liberal interpretation. It should be reiterated that it is something of a Frankenstein’s monster of liberal, social and populist elements of democratic theory, and, so democracy has the potential to mean multiple things to many people. There is always the alternative that important theoretical approaches concerning what might drive democratic understanding have not been tested (omitted variables basis). A wide range of key theories was purposely examined to try and look broadly at explanatory factors, however there is always the potential for an important angle to be missed. Further research is called for to examine this.

The models explain much better the authoritarian understanding, and it is this understanding that perhaps is most important here: not necessarily where people argue over the liberal design and policy outputs of a regime, but where citizens understanding characteristics to be democratic that for all intents and purposes are in fact anti-democratic in nature. The full individual model (A6) has an r-squared of 0.16, and this higher individual explanation holds for the models examining HDI, Press Freedom, democratic history and Freedom House scores. These models at the national level reach r-squares of around 0.4-0.5. Therefore we can see that context matters when it comes to this understanding – the geographical spatial containers that are countries can shape authoritarian conceptualisations of democracy, especially in terms of regime openness and development. What needs to be understand further is how this important conceptualisation of democracy influences political participation, and that is the theme of the following chapter.

## 5.5: Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has completed Objectives 2.1 and 2.2, as set out in the Introduction:

2.1 With reference to theoretical expectations, analyse the individual variables that explain different understanding of democracy

2.2 With references to theoretical expectations, analyse the contextual variables that explain different understandings of democracy

It has further demonstrated the importance of examining these individual and contextual issues together, in order to better understand what individual and contextual traits help explain the compound and authoritarian understanding of democracy.

Now that parts 1 and 2 of thesis are complete, I have outlined in detail the theories pertaining to democracy, and how they might affect understandings of the term. I have then produced two conceptualisations of democracy though my approach to data analysis which emphasized the importance of allowing exploration of citizen configurations of these listed characteristics, as opposed to dictating the structure through our theoretical expectations. Once these two conceptualisations of democracy were identified, *then* the theory was utilised to make sense of them. Finally, this chapter has analysed where individuals are likely to score on these conceptualisations, and how who they are and where they live affects this.

The next analytical step is to test these conceptualisations in terms of whether they themselves can help explain political participation. This is the third and final phase of the analysis, and relates to aims 3.1 and 3.2. If the terms have no impact upon people’s political participation, they we can argue that other theoretical and political issues (such as resources, grievances, education and cognitive engagement) are what counts when it comes to engaging with the political system. However, if the conceptualisations do have an effect, we can make the argument that the mental mapping that a citizen has of democracy has an effect on their involvement in political action and therefore, this should become an important focus for studies of political participation. The next chapter looks at this issue.

# Understandings of Democracy and Informal Political Participation

**“What is not clear… is whether citizens’ different conceptions of democracy have repercussions for how they engage in politics.” (Bengtsson & Christensen 2014, p.234)**

The final substantive chapter in this thesis deals with the ‘so what?’ element of the analysis by asking what impact do these understandings of democracy have upon political participation? At this stage it is not clear whether citizens’ beliefs about what democracy is have any kind of repercussion on their behaviour.

We might expect that if someone was a strong believer in elements of democracy such as the importance of civil rights and liberties, that they might be inclined to act politically if they feel these liberties aren’t being met, or if they feel there is a strong case to improve the lot of the people. In comparison, if someone had a much more authoritarian notion of democracy, these individuals might be much less inclined to be involved, believing that the authorities knew best, and should not be challenged outside of elections – i.e. taking a much more Schumpeterian view of the system.

Recent examinations have started to tackle this issue (Neblo *et al.*, 2010; Webb, 2013; Bengtsson and Christensen, 2014), although these have tended to focus on deliberative understandings of democracy only in specific country settings.

If the conceptualisations are shown not to have any effect on participation above and beyond a citizen’s support for democracy, then we might be inclined to accept that the current focus within the literature, on support for democracy as an abstract term, is all that is needed as an explanatory motive for people’s political actions. We could conclude that the ‘lip-service’ (Inglehart 2003, p.51) being played to democracy is sufficient – it could well be that regardless of what they think it is actually is, as long as people support democracy, they will be willing participate in politics.

However, if we test the conceptualisations and find out that they do have an effect, and they have *different* affects, then it will be clear that understandings of democracy might be working differently ‘behind the scenes’, even between two people who both say that democracy is a good thing.

The chapter is structured as follows. In Section 6.1, I outline why I test the conceptualisations of democracy on informal, as opposed to formal, political participation. Following this, the model variables are outlined in detail, examining the theoretical reasons why they are expected to have an effect, alongside other existing and popular theories of political participation. For this discussion, Section 6.2 focuses on individual-level theories, and Section 6.3 looks at contextual theories.

Section 6.4 provides a brief discussion of logistical multilevel regression modelling before moving on to present the model results in 6.5. Firstly, all the World Values Surveys are used to discuss trends of informal political participation over time. Then regression models are used to examine the effect of democratic understandings on this particular political behaviour. A conclusion is presented in Section 6.7.

## 6.1 Informal Political Participation

The focus of this chapter is on non-institutionalised political behaviour, that is, informal types of participation not linked to official mechanisms of representation (such as voting), and whether the two conceptualisations of democracy that have been outlined in this thesis so far – compound and authoritarian – can help explain such activity. Therefore the principal components are utilised as key explanatory variable (Bjørnskov, 2006; Dalton, 2008; Whiteley *et al.*, 2010; Lora and Fajardo, 2013; Karyotis and Rudig, 2015).

In contrast to institutional participation, these informal methods include signing a petition, boycotting a product, and joining demonstrations. My substantive interest is whether an individual’s mental mapping of what democracy means has an impact upon their likelihood of carrying out these politicized acts. I am also interested in whether a person’s understanding of democracy affects their political behaviour above and beyond the influence that their general support for democracy has in an abstract sense (i.e. whether they think democracy is a ‘good’ or ‘bad’ thing; see Chapter 1).

So why focus on informal and non-institutionalised political participation? The reason is that most common *formal* and institutionalised act of participation is voting, and an extensive literature examines voting behaviour. Generally, voting in elections is only a right in democratic regimes. It is true that people are able to vote in many countries which are not democratic; however, such repressive regime are frequently accused of coercing people into voting in a certain way, or potentially preventing people from voting at all. Such charges are levelled at countries such as Russia (NDI, 2012). Or, it might be that people can vote, however the choices on offer are only for one party (or allowed allies), such as in China. The voting here is neither free nor fair. And in some authoritarian countries, elections are simply not held at all.

However, since my conceptualisations of democracy are drawn from a sample covering a large array of regimes, I want to test their effect on a type of political behaviour that might be more readily available across the countries. The strength of the WVS dataset is that it contains citizens who live in democratic *and* non-democratic regimes. *In principle*, informal political participation should be more available in these non-democracies, whereas institutionalised participation will be less available such as voting is not. Of course some non-democratic regimes are highly repressive of *any* political participation, and heavily regulate civil society. However, by adding in country-level contextual variables, I can attempt to control for this using MLM.

As Pattie et al. (2003, p.620) have noted, “By concentrating attention on one political act, voting in elections, there is a tendency for observers to treat political participation as an either/or phenomenon.” This, or course, is not an accurate reflection of most people’s potential political repertoire. Many citizens undertake both formal and informal participation, however, an advantage of looking at informal participation is that “participants in non-institutionalised forms of political participation keep some distance from the political system by trying to have an indirect impact on political decision making, or by boycotting the political system altogether” (Marien et al. 2010, p.188). By engaging in informal activity, citizens are undertaking a democratic right to influence policy, but are doing it indirectly, without the need for the democratic apparatus to necessarily be there.

Furthermore, this type of political behaviour is argued to be on the increase around the world, and is not restricted to liberal democracies. As Dalton et al. (2009, p.21) have described, this protest political behaviour, whilst once considered unconventional and fringe, is increasing and becoming part of the political repertoire across many nations. In advanced democracies it is even becoming as popular as the established forms of conventional participation, such as contacting MPs.

To assess how understandings of democracy impact upon informal political participation, I examine existing theories of why citizens engage in these activities, and test these alongside the two dimensions of democratic understanding that have been produced and examined in this thesis. Dalton et al. (2009) provide a comprehensive overview of these existing theories, whilst also examining the nexus between theories at the individual level and the institutional level. As this thesis is interested in both these levels of analysis, I adopt and expand Dalton et al.’s (2009) approach for the following discussion. One primary difference here is that I refer to the two levels as individual and ‘contextual’, as I feel this terminology better captures the range of explanatory factors available at this level of analysis, not all of which are necessarily linked to institutions.

At the individual level the prominent theories that outline potential motivations of informal political participation are grievance theory, resource theory, social capital, cognitive engagement and religiosity. At the contextual level, importance is placed on the political opportunity structure of a country, and also on its social-economic development. These are discussed in the following section.

Although Dalton et al.’s (2009) study informs much of the following discussion, it is important to note that this thesis pushes forward the analysis carried out in that research in two important ways. Firstly, I use the 2005-2008 wave of the WVS, compared to the 1999-2004 surveys used in that study. Secondly, and more importantly, this thesis builds on the literature by examining the importance of citizen understandings of democracy.

In the following section, the impact these conceptualisations of democracy might have on informal participation is discussed first, followed by the remaining individual level theories, and then the contextual theories. At the end of each section, a table summarizes the expected relationship between the theories and informal participation.

## 6.2 Individual Theories

The most crucial point of this chapter is to take the two variables that are the core of this thesis – the compound understanding of democracy and the authoritarian understanding of democracy – and test their explanatory power. This means they are not used as dependent variables, as in Chapter 5, but instead I utilise them as independent variables. This is inspired by remarks made by Bengtsson and Christensen (2014, p.251) in their own study of democratic conceptualisations in Finland:

“More importantly, these different conceptions of democracy are not just ideals without substantial consequences. On the contrary, they have systematic effects on the way and extent in which people choose to engage in political activities”

Their study makes the clear argument that this finding should be examined at a broader level across more contexts.

It is predicted that the compound understanding of democracy will have a positive relationship with informal participation. As higher scores on the scale comport with belief in the more liberal characteristics of democracy, the prediction is that the higher individuals score on this scale, the more likely it is that they see their civil rights as central to democracy, and they will then be more likely to stand up for them by taking political action, not just in times of elections. Yet this prediction is not clear-cut; the notion of having civil rights does not in itself predict or necessarily demand that citizens get involved in non-institutionalised political participation. The corollary is that those who score low on this scale are predicted to be less likely to participate, other things being equal.

The authoritarian scale is predicted to have a negative relationship with informal participation. The reason for this is that a strong belief in authority figures being the essential characteristic of a democracy diminishes the role of citizens in such a system. In this conceptualisation, support for the authoritarian characteristics, religious and military, are expected to be associated with a system that does not expect informal participation from citizens. Again in contrast, those who score low on this scale are those rejecting the authoritarian characteristics, and they are expected to be much more likely to participate.

In order to properly test the influence of the conceptualisations of democracy on informal political participation, they will be examined alongside two other variables which examine attitudes towards democracy. The first measures support for democracy in the following way: *How important is it for you to live in a country that is governed democratically? On this scale where 1 means it is “not at all important” and 10 means “absolutely important” what position would you choose?* [[25]](#footnote-25)This question is discussed in further detail in the Introduction. It is expected that those who think it more important to live in a democracy are more likely to participate.

The second is a binary measure also used in Chapter 1, of how good individuals think democracy is as a system of government with the responses ‘Very Good’ and ‘Good’ summed together against ‘Bad’ and Very Bad’. Again it is expected that those who think democracy is a good system of government are more likely to endorse the notion of citizen participation and get involved

The purpose of adding these questions is simple; by controlling for such assessments, we can test whether the varying conceptualisations of democracy have an effect above and beyond the idea of support and assessment of democracy. There are four broad possible outcomes for this test:

1. Neither support for, nor conceptualisation of, democracy has an effect. Therefore, non-institutionalised participation is not driven by the respondents’ views of democracy, and we should look elsewhere for an explanation.
2. Support for democracy has an effect but the conceptualisations do not. And so we can argue that it is of lesser importance to examine understandings of democracy when it comes to participation, and support will suffice.
3. Conceptualisations of democracy have an effect, but support does not. In this case, we can reject more fully the idea of only measuring support for democracy, as it does not help explain participation; what matters is understandings of democracy.
4. Both support and conceptualisation have an effect. Therefore, we can argue that both are important when looking into non-institutionalised political participation.

The following sections examine the other popular theories at the individual levels that have addressed political participation, and which will be tested alongside the democratic measures.

#### Grievance theory

It would perhaps seem a relatively straightforward idea that protest and non-institutionalised participation occurs when people are subject to deprivation and hardship; when these are persistent issues, we might expect an individual to seek out and try to influence political change, in order to improve their lot in life. More sophisticated is the idea that it is not absolute deprivation necessarily, but *relative* deprivation that matters (Runciman, 1966; Gurr, 1968). In particular Gurr (1968, p.1104) popularized this idea,[[26]](#footnote-26) and provided the following outline of its mechanisms:

*“The basic theoretical proposition is that a psychological variable, relative deprivation, is the basic precondition for civil strife of any kind, and that the more widespread and intense deprivation is among members of a population, the greater is the magnitude of strife in one or another form….The underlying causal mechanism is derived from psychological theory and evidence to the effect that one innate response to perceived deprivation is discontent or anger, and that anger is a motivating state for which aggression is an inherently satisfying response.”*

This framework focuses on tensions between what individuals think they deserve and what they think they can get, and this led to Gurr’s (1970) use of the term ‘grievance’. However, empirical testing of this theory has frequently concluded that grievance conceptualised in this way does little to explain why people participate in politics, formal or informal (McPhail, 1971; Barnes, Kasse and Allerbeck, 1979; Finkel, Muller and Opp, 1989). Others have found the opposite effect; that those who feel relatively deprived are *less* likely to participate (Pattie et al. 2004, p.177).

There are numerous possible reasons for this lack of explanatory power. The first is that the theory might seem plausible because those who do protest often strongly vocalise and advertise their grievances as a motivation for the protest (that, after all, is what a protest demonstration is primarily about), yet the problem with this is protestors are usually a small number of people, and there are likely to be many people who suffer the same grievances but aren’t spurred by them to act. In other words, any grievance effect might not be at all systematic. Related to this is that grievance theorised in this way is an individualised notion, and so it struggles to account for collectivised social movements (Gurney & Tierney 1982, Olzak & Shanahan 1996). There is some evidence to suggest that the effect is stronger in developing countries as opposed to developed countries (Dalton et al. 2009, p.57), where the majority of empirical studies focus. Finally, it is difficult to operationalise the idea of *relative* deprivation as it requires complex analysis of perceived injustice at the individual level, which will interact with perceptions of the contextual situation (see below). And, it could theoretically be having a reverse effect because it is possible that deprivation does not spur people to act, but promotes a form of apathy or fatalism instead, and people accept their lot as fate, and something that can’t be changed.

However, whilst unfashionable for some decades, there has been a resurgence in the idea of relative deprivation and grievance as drivers of protest behaviour in the field of social psychology and identity (Walker and Smith, 2002). Further, a study of the post-2008 economic crisis in Europe suggested that we should examine further the role of ‘suddenly imposed’ grievances, which may shock people into action (Kern et al. 2015).

To operationalise grievance I use two variables, plus an interaction between them. The first variable is the ten-point scale on perceptions of income. As explained in the previous chapter, this variable is interesting in that it concerns people’s *perceptions* of their *relative* position in society, and is not their material income (which we don’t know). This is now very useful for trying to capture the notion of relative deprivation and is expected to have a negative effect on participation, i.e. the higher up the income scale an individual thinks they are, the less likely they are to engage in non-institutionalised forms of participation.

The second variable is a ten-point scale concerning the respondent’s *satisfaction* about their household financial situation. Again, according to grievance theory, a negative effect is expected. These are then interacted, to see if there is an effect of perceived income in relation to satisfaction with household finances.

#### Resource Theory

A different theory at the individual level suggests the motivation to participate is not primarily someone’s grievance but instead the individual resources they have access to. Brady et al. (1995) argue that individual resources helped explain protest in the US, with resources split into two types; higher levels of education and income provide the means of engagement, whilst organizational membership and social capital provide networks to encourage and facilitate engagement. Similar arguments have been made for citizens in the UK (Parry, Moyser and Day, 1992; Pattie, Seyd and Whiteley, 2004).

This idea is also present in the theory of post-materialism, as outlined particularly by Inglehart (1997; 1977) who has claimed that post-material values, concerned with self-expression and personal efficacy, develop amongst the resource-rich. In essence, the resource-wealthy are no longer required to worry about material demands, and instead can articulate wants which are much more autonomous and more concerned with self-*expression* than self-*preservation*. Norris (2011; 2003; 1999) applied the gist of this idea to citizens in democracies who believe in democracy but have limited trust or confidence in politicians and political parties (disaffected democrats, or critical citizens). These individuals use non-conventional methods of political action to try and influence the political agenda.

Dalton and van Sickle (2005, p.7) argued that resource mobilization theory and grievance are in a sense “opposite sides of the same coin – one predicting that economic and social needs will stimulate contentious politics, the other predicting that resource rich environments facilitate contentious action”. Yet there is something of a catch-22 here if these theories are linked: how do the aggrieved resource poor gain the resources to then undertake contentious action to make their demands for more resources heard?

Without access to panel data, this element of the theory is tricky to test. Here I use the same educational variable as used in Chapter 5, with the expectation that higher educational attainment increases the likelihood of participating. Resources in terms of income are already tested in the model with the perceived income scale. If resource theory has more explanatory power than grievance theory, the relationship between income and participation is expected to be reversed in this test, i.e. to be positive rather than negative.

Finally, I also use a proxy for efficacy, a question which asks how much freedom and control the individual thinks they have in their life (1-10 scale). Whilst this is not a perfect test of resources, it does try to get at the notion that the individual feels they might have the ability to get out and make a difference in their life, as opposed to being powerless or passive.

#### Social Capital

Associational life is argued to help produce and support democracies and a key underlining factor at play here is trust (Paxton, 2002). As explained in Chapter 5, increased social capital is seen as generating trust and reciprocity which lowers the transaction costs of collective action (Putnam, 1995; van Deth and Zmerli, 2010). Social trust and institutional trust are measured the same way in this chapter as they are in the previous one.

It is expected that higher levels of social trust increase the likelihood of participating, as individuals have a positive approach to people and feel their actions will benefit those around them and their actions won’t be exploited. Institutional trust is expected to operate in the opposite way to social trust: if you have higher degrees of confidence in institutions, you will be less likely to engage in non-institutionalised forms of participation, because you believe the system will intervene if it needs to.

A variable measuring membership of a civic organization is also used (Putnam, 1995; Pharr, Putnam and Dalton, 2000), as in Chapter 5. The membership variable asks whether respondents are members of eight different types of organisations, including sports, religious, arts, unions and environmental groups. Where they do report membership, they are also asked whether they are an inactive or active member, giving some insight into not only membership but also the intensity of involvement. I take a strict approach to this measure and only class as members those who consider themselves to be ‘active’ members, with the argument that an inactive membership does very little to increase engagement. The variable is then split into three – those who are not an active member of any groups, those who are active members of one group, and those who are members or two or more. Those who are members of a group are expected to be more likely to undertake non-institutional political activities.

#### Cognitive Engagement

In terms of the impact of cognitive engagement, the expectation is that those who are actively interested in politics and who inform themselves about news event through the media are more likely to participate in non-institutionalised forms of political participation than those who are less interested and less informed. As Pattie et al. (2004, p.138) put it “participation depends on the individual’s access to information and on their ability and willingness to use that information to make informed choices”. The theory has shown itself to be a powerful predictor of whether an individual votes and is a staple in examinations of formal participation in the US, UK and other industrial democracies (Whiteley et al. 2013; Dalton 2008; Pattie et al. 2004; Nie et al. 1996).

It is expected that more engagement with the world of politics will increase the likelihood of participating. The same two variables are used to examine this as in Chapter 5. Political interest is measured in an index built from two questions. The first asks ‘*How interested would you say you are in politics?*’ and provides the following options: Very interested, Somewhat interested, Not very interested and Not at all interested (plus Don’t know). The second question asks ‘*For each of the following aspects, indicate how important it is in your life: Politics’* with the following options: Very important, Rather important, Not very important and Not at all important (plus Don’t know). The two variables were combined into an index (using the alpha function in Stata; coefficient 0.74, with the ‘Don’t know’ answers dropped) and converted to a scale from 10 were the respondent thought politics was very important and they were very interested, to 1, where the respondent is somewhat apathetic, thinks politics is not all important and is not at all interested in it (see Welzel 2011, p.22).

Secondly, as before, media use is measured by how many items of media the respondent has used in the previous week to get information about what was going on in their country and in the world. The list of sources includes TV broadcasts, newspapers, magazines, reports, books, the internet and colleagues. The variable is coded into three categories: those who do not use any media; those who use 1-4 sources; and those who use 5 or more.

#### Religiosity

Churches have been theorised to play a relatively unique role in helping the resource-poor participate in political activities, and are suggested to be an important ‘corrective’ to the bias in political participation towards those with more resources (education and income in particular: see Jones-Correa & Leal 2001; Verba et al. 1995). Findings suggest it is not necessarily the type of religion that matters, but the degree to which the place of worship is civically engaged which encourages participation, whether voting or undertaking some form of political protest (Jones-Correa and Leal, 2001; Dana, Barreto and Oskooii, 2011; Sarkissian, 2012; Shaykhutdinov and Achilov, 2014; Gerber, Gruber and Hungerman, 2015)

Yet, this is not always the case and contextual histories certainly play a part. For instance McDonough et al. (1998) found that in Spain religiosity has a negative effect on civic participation, in contrast to a positive effect in Brazil and South Korea; this most likely stems from Catholicism’s link to Francoism in the Spanish context. And when it comes to religiosity, Campbell (2004, p.155) notes that the time “evangelical Protestant denominations spend in service to their church comes at the expense of participation in the wider community, contrary to the way mainline Protestant and Catholic churches foster civic activity among their members”.

When it comes to Islam, popular scholarship examining Islam and political participation has often taken a rather monolithic approach, and assumed there would be a negative relationship (see Huntington 1993). However, more recent studies have presented a more nuanced picture, showing firstly that Muslim support for democracy appears little different to that of anyone else (Norris and Inglehart, 2002).

Secondly, the picture of political participation is complex. Sarkissian (2012) argued that whilst in some cases the religious civil society can resist the power of potentially malign authorities, if religion is “nationalised” and the government controls the education system and religious organisations, then this lack of autonomy means it does not function as an independent check on government authority (see also Chaibong 2004 and McCargo 2004). Therefore, non-institutionalised participation in the fashion we are interested in is likely to be curtailed. In certain contexts, Sarkissian (2012) also noted that increased prayer can reduce participation. So a lot depends on how outward or inward looking particular religious organisations are in society, and so sweeping generalisations are difficult to predict. Furthermore, whilst the roles of Catholicism, Protestantism and Islam have been examined in some depth, there is less scholarly work focusing on other religions such as Hinduism or Buddhism.

As in Chapter 5, the impact of religion is tested with two variables at the individual level. Religious denomination uses a categorical variable that groups people into those who associate themselves as Protestant, Catholic, Muslim, Hindu, Orthodox, Buddhist and Other, with those who are Non-Affiliated as a reference group. Religiosity is measured in a composite variable that combines whether an individual thinks they are religious and how important an individual thinks religion is in their life, running from 1 (least religious) through to 10 (most religious).

Overall, it is suggested that both the effect of religiosity and denomination is unclear in the literature and remains too contested to predict.

### Summary

Overall, numerous studies have examined the impact of different factors on this kind of political activity. Testing across theories in the UK context, Pattie at al (2004, p.182) grouped these activities - along with other activities - into individual action (petitions and boycotts) and collective actions (demonstrating). They found that the education, political knowledge, media exposure, interest in politics and group membership all had positive relationships with individual action, and most notably trust failed to have any influence. When it came to collective action, the pattern was the same for political interest and education, but was negative for political knowledge, trust and group membership. The model was also much weaker for collective action. Using the WVS to test a wider context, Norris (2002, p.202) found that education had a positive relationship with what she calls ‘protest politics’ (petitioning, boycotting, demonstrating, unofficial striking and occupying buildings) and the more professional class were also more likely to have engaged in such acts, and men. Finally, using the same WVS variables as Norris but calling them ‘social movement activity’, Welzel (2013, p.229-246) also examines what influences them, utilising all available waves (almost 200,000 respondents across 88 countries) to also provide evidence that education, political interest and group membership have a positive relationship with such activity, as does increasing levels of government distrust. The substantive focus of this thesis is on understandings of democracy, and so largescale pooled examinations of alternative theories of political participation using earlier WVS waves is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, these waves are used to examine broad trends in informal political activity over time in those countries which are outlined in Section 6.5 and informed by existing evidence as discussed above, Figure 6.1 summarises the expected relationships between the alternative theories and informal political participation, as well as the expected influence of democratic understandings.

Figure 6:1 Theoretical Predictions and Test Variables

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Theory** | **Test Variables** | **Predicted Relationship** |
| Democratic Understanding | Compound Conceptualisation | Positive |
|  | Authoritarian Conceptualisation | Negative |
| Grievance Theory | Income | Negative |
|  | Satisfaction with Household Income | Negative |
|  | Interaction [Income x Satis. Household] | Negative |
| Resource Theory | Education | Positive |
|  | Income | Positive |
| Social Capital | Social Trust | Positive |
|  | Institutional Trust | Negative |
|  | Associational Activities | Positive |
| Political Knowledge | Political Interest | Positive |
|  | Media Use | Positive |
| Religion | Religiosity | Unclear |
|  | Denomination | Unclear |

## 6.3 Contextual Theories

The impact of context on political participation has of course been heavily researched by addressing issues such as political culture, economic development, and type of political system (Kitschelt, 1986; Kriesi *et al.*, 1995; Meyer, 2004; Dalton, van Sickle and Weldon, 2009; Klingemann, 2009). In a number of ways, the expectations at the contextual level are the same as those for the understandings of democracy, and so this section overview will be brief. The contextual measures tested here are also the same as in Chapter 5: development, press freedom, currently or formerly communist regimes, history of democracy, level of freedom and Huntington’s civilizational classifications.

Higher levels of development are expected to produce higher levels of informal participation, as citizens gain the time and resources to pursue post-material interests. A free press is expected to also increase the likelihood of protest, as a free media allows information to flow to citizens on issues that they might be concerned about. Countries with a longer history of democracy, a current classification as Free, and without a communist legacy are expected to have higher levels of participation than countries with a shorter or patchier history of democracy, weaker freedom scores, or a communist legacy, as the former all have more open political opportunity structures for citizen engagement (Vrablikova, 2013).

The possible impacts of the two remaining contextual measures on informal participation are more contested. The issues of inequality and democracy were outlined in the previous chapter, Section 5.2 (see Ansell & Samuels 2014, Boix 2003 and Acemoglu & Robinson 2006). Higher levels of inequality could potentially have opposite effects. A more unequal society could lead to more participation, as people strive to balance out what they see as an unfair playing field; this aligns with grievance theory. Or, a more unequal society could deprive people of resources and foster apathy, as it becomes too difficult to challenge the status quo; this aligns with resource theory.

Figure 6.2 summarizes the expected relationship between informal political participation and national context.

Figure 6:2 Contextual Theoretical Predictions and Test Variables

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Contextual Theory** | **Test Variables** | **Predicted Relationship** |
| Modernization | HDI | Positive |
|  |  |  |
| Socialization | Democratic History | Positive |
|  | Freedom House | Positive |
|  | Communist | Negative |
|  |  |  |
| Inequality | Gini | Unclear |
|  |  |  |
| Access to Information | Press Freedom | Positive |
|  |  |  |

## 6.4 Informal Political Participation

Three particular forms of informal participation are focused on in this study: signing a petition, boycotting, and demonstrating. These form part of a standard set of informal activities asked in the WVS, the European Social Survey, the British Electoral Study and others, and are a staple way of examining levels of informal participation (see amongst many others Pattie et al. 2004; Norris 2002; Inglehart 1997; Brady et al. 1995). The full wording in the WVS2008 is as follows:

|  |
| --- |
| *Now I’d like you to look at this card. I’m going to read out some different forms of political action that people can take, and I’d like you to tell me, for each one, whether you have actually done any of these things, whether you might do it or would never, under any circumstances do it:*  *-Signing a petition*  *-Joining in boycotts*  *-Attending lawful/peaceful demonstrations* |

To model this type of political behaviour, those who “have” or “might” undertake these activities are compared to those who “would never do” them. Placing the *act* of protesting with the *propensity* *to act* in the same category follows the work of Barnes and Kaase (1979). Generally, small numbers of citizens actually carry out nonconventional or informal political acts. However, the nature of these acts means that it is not always possible, or necessary, to pursue politics in this manner. This does not mean there is not a readiness to carry out these activities should the opportunity present itself. Barnes and Kaase (1979:58) note that “the *potential to participate*, the individual readiness to be mobilized, is an abiding property of a wide sector of the whole political community, whether currently active or not.”

### Logistical Regression Modelling

The dichotomous dependent variable (Have/might vs would never do) makes multi-level *logit* regression the appropriate form of analysis and I look at each type of activity separately.[[27]](#footnote-27) When examining political action as a binary variable, linear regression approaches are not appropriate, as the distribution of variance in the variable is not standard normal. Logistic regression is much more suitable as in logistic regression, the aim is to explain the likelihood of an event. For this reason, the standard practice is to code the non-event (in this case, saying you would never act) as zero, and the event (in this case saying you have or might act) as one. Coded in this way the variable is a dummy, and “the mean of a dummy variable equals the proportion of cases with a value of 1, and can be interpreted as a probability” (Pampel 2000, p.2). As with Chapter 5, due to country level variance, it is important to control for these effects (see Section 5.3) and so a MLM is fitted to the data. Using multilevel logistic regression on binary variables, using countries as the second level of analysis is now somewhat commonplace amongst the quantitative literature (Schueth and Loughlin, 2008; Hopcroft and McLaughlin, 2012; Lee, 2012; Armingeon and Guthmann, 2014; Giugni and Grasso, 2016).

The concepts of democracy are examined in an initial model before moving on to examining their explanatory power alongside the alternative theories outlined above, as well as a test in a full model. This is undertaken at the single level before the full model is tested in a multilevel model with contextual variables. The unstandardized coefficients are reported in all models, and are not converted into any form of odds or risk ratio. As Menard (2010, p.94) notes, in social science analysis the “odds ratio does not generally seem preferable to the simple unstandardized coefficient.” The use of odds ratios can often be confused with effect size, even though the odds ratio provides no additional information to the unstandardized coefficient (*ibid*, pp.93-97). Furthermore, concerning odds ratios in a multilevel model, “[F]or variables varying on the cluster level, the quantification is more difficult; the usual odds ratio interpretation is incorrect, because it is necessary to compare persons with different random effects, since the variable of interest does not vary between individuals within-cluster” (Larsen and Merlo, 2005, p.82). Therefore the substantive interest in this analysis is to look at the significance and direction of relationship for the conceptualisations of democracy variables. Magnitude of effect is of less concern here as the key is to outline if there are effects at all (following Bengtsson and Christensen, 2014), however there will be discussion of the variables in relation to other theories as the multiple models are built up to examine their relative explanatory power.

Whilst all models report the unstandardized coefficients, predicted margins are calculated in order to eaese interpretation of the understandings of democracy variables, visualed by gender. These are provided in each section.

### Model Fit

There are numerous ways to calculate R2 scores for logit models, and no consensus on which is the most appropriate. This is particularly true for hierarchical models. Furthermore, the R2, or pseudo-R2 as it is for these models, is not really analogous to those which are used for the OLS models. Because of this, in this discussion I report the log-likelihood, AIC value and BIC value of each model. The lower the number the better, as they describe model fit, with the AIC also accounting for the number of parameters in the model (Yang and Bozdogan, 2011). These measures are not outlining an intuitive degree of explained error which can then be compared against a desired amount (i.e. with R2 on a scale of 0-1). However, when looking at models which attempt to predict the outcome I am interested in (political participation), if one model features my main variables of interest (understandings of democracy) and another does not, I can see if the model fit has improved with my added variables. This is my substantive interest – do these variables help explain participation – and so these are useful post-estimation measures of model fit.

## 6.5 Results

This section begins by examining the patterns of informal protest across countries and time. Questions on non-institutional political participation have been asked in the World Values Survey since its inception and so the scene can be set in more detail to determine whether there are any noticeable trends across time and place when it comes to the popularity of these types of protest.

Once this context has been addressed, the following part examines if any trends can be outlined for these informal types of participation, before testing the long-standing theoretical measures against the two unique measures of democratic understanding that have been generated by this thesis.

### Patterns of Informal Participation

A common finding of the literature is that protest activities are more common in advanced economies (Dalton et al. 2009, p.63). Figure 6.3 presents the percentages of those undertaking protest activities in the WVS2008 survey, using a simple Human Development Index categorisation that splits countries into either developed or developing (a country below 0.7 is classed as developing).

Citizens in developed countries do appear more likely to have undertaken these particular types of informal political participation. The largest difference is for signing a petition: respondents are almost four times more likely to do this than are those in developing countries (39.2% for developed countries, compared to 10.2% for developing).

The corollary is that citizens in developing nations are much more likely to say they would *never* undertake such activities and in fact this group constitute a considerable majority for each activity, with the highest result being almost 70% of developing country respondents who say they would never engage in boycotts.

Figure 6:3 Informal Participation by Development (%)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Have** | **Might** | **Would Never** |
| **Petition** | *Developed* | 39.2 | 29.3 | 31.4 |
| *Developing* | 10.2 | 30.25 | 59.6 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Boycotts** | *Developed* | 9.9 | 32.0 | 58.1 |
| *Developing* | 6.6 | 24.5 | 68.9 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Demonstrating** | *Developed* | 19.4 | 37.6 | 43.1 |
| *Developing* | 13.7 | 28.5 | 57.8 |

*n*=51, 33 developed and 18 developing countries

Overall, petitioning is the most popular form of informal activity and around 30% of citizens, would consider doing it both developed and developing countries. In general this ‘latent’ or ‘potential’ consideration of protest tends to attract around a similar amount (roughly a third) of citizens across all the activities.

The least popular form of action is boycotting, with only 10% of citizens having done this activity in a developed country and a large majority in both types of country saying they would never do it. Pattie and Johnston (2013) have noted that in the UK this type of political activity is undertaken by considerably engaged, trusting, and well-educated citizens with an active interest in politics. These qualities are all important. For instance, citizens engaging in boycotts must have a degree of trust in other citizens to also join in and enhance the potential impact of the boycott (Ibid., p.182). It is then quite easy to see how this would be less likely in developing countries, where resources are already scarce and it is difficult to appreciate the impact a boycott might be having.

The act of demonstrating is perhaps surprisingly popular, with 57% of people in developed countries who have done or would consider doing it, and 42% thinking the same in developing countries. This is surprising as, out of these three activities, demonstrating is arguably the most risky, resource-intensive, and costly. Although the survey specifies lawful/peaceful protests, a lot of time and effort is still required to attend a demonstration, with the added potential risks associated with large public demonstrations getting out of hand or being repressed by security forces (especially in more authoritarian states).

### Informal Participation Over Time

A second common claim in the literature is that informal political participation is increasing in popularity over time (Dalton et al. 2009; Norris 2002, p.198). Whilst the WVS does not feature every country in every wave, it is still possible to examine change over time with a smaller number of countries. Figure 6.4 shows percentages for Have/Might undertake petition for countries which have results available in 3 or more consecutive waves of the survey. Preliminary results from the WVS2010-2014 are also included here.

The table reiterates the divide between developed and developing countries. In some cases this divide becomes a gulf, as in the examples of United States and Sweden, where over nine out of 10 citizens have or would consider singing a petition, compared to Jordan where it fails to reach two out of 10.

Figure 6:4 Have/Might petition (%) by country and wave

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Have/Might Do: Petition (%) | | | | | |
|  | ***1981-1984*** | ***1990-1994*** | ***1994-1999*** | ***1999-2004*** | ***2005-2008*** | ***2010-2014*** |
| *Argentina* | 72.9 | 54.9 | 68.6 | 54.1 | 66.9 | - |
| *Chile* | - | 56.5 | 55.9 | 47.1 | 37.3 | 48.1 |
| *Egypt* | - | - | - | 57.1 | 21.5 | 4.3 |
| *India* | - | 69.9 | 71.0 | 57.5 | 54.7 | - |
| *Japan* | - | - | - | 92.8 | 87.7 | 76.9 |
| *Jordan* | - | - | - | 17.0 | 10.5 | 14.9 |
| *Mexico* | 49.0 | 79.0 | 79.7 | 55.1 | 61.1 | 57.7 |
| *Moldova* |  | - | 44.4 | 40.1 | 42.5 | - |
| *Morocco* | - | - | - | 46.5 | 42.1 | 13.7 |
| *Peru* | - | - | 63.7 | 81.0 | 62.8 | 60.6 |
| *Serbia* | - | - | 57.8 | 65.1 | 63.8 | - |
| *South Africa* | 60.5 | 71.6 | 54.7 | 65.3 | 46.7 | - |
| *South Korea* | 70.6 | 83.8 | 82.4 | 89.4 | 77.3 | 69.3 |
| *Spain* | - | 54.4 | 58.0 | 62.0 | 70.0 | 65.1 |
| *Sweden* | - | - | 94.4 | 97.6 | 94.9 | 93.4 |
| *Turkey* | - | 54.4 | 54.7 | 56.2 | 47.3 | 40.7 |
| *United States* | - | - | 91.7 | 96.9 | 94.5 | 91.9 |
| ***Average*** | 63.3 | 65.6 | 67.5 | 63.6 | 57.7 | 53.1 |

Percentages exclude ‘Don’t Knows’

When it comes to change over time however, patterns are quite difficult to discern. The developed countries appear more consistent in their results, whereas developing countries present more fluctuation. The two developed countries with the most data, the US and Sweden, show remarkable consistency since the mid-1990s with little sign of any increase or decrease in popularity. However, participation in petitioning there was already high to begin with. Increasing levels of participation can be clearly seen only in Spain, though even here the latest result bucks this trend. In some countries petition signing seems on the decline, gradually in Chile and India, and dramatically in Egypt.

The averages, from such small and fluctuating numbers, should then be read cautiously. For instance, in 2005-2008, the very low result for Jordan is two standard deviations from the mean, and, if removed, the average across all the countries rises from 57.7% to 60.7%. The results for 2010-2014 also show Jordan, Egypt and Morocco with considerably different results to the rest. There are not outliers in terms of standard deviation, but this is because the standard deviation is very large in this much smaller set of numbers. However if these three are removed the average across the countries changes quite dramatically: from 53.1% to 67.1%.

Focusing on the states with more robust data, there seems to be relatively minor fluctuations across time within the 60-70% range, with some discrepancies from these three non-democracies, all of which interestingly were affected, to varying degrees, by the Arab Spring.

Figure 6.5 shows the same calculations but this time for boycotting. Once again the latest wave is added. The overall percentages are lower compared to petitioning. We might expect this if we argue that a boycott of certain products might not be a practical or useful political act in much poorer countries where choice is limited (see below, in discussion of Egypt). Indeed, the gap between developed and developing countries is again clear; for instance three-quarters of Swedes have considered or have undertaken boycotting, compared to one quarter of Moldovans. No country shows any clear sign of boycotting activity increasing over time. There are also some considerable differences between waves. In the 1994-1999 wave, 43.5% of Mexicans had or considered boycotting, but this fell to 19.7% in the following wave.

In Egypt in the 1999-2004 wave, 66.9% supported boycotting, a not impossible but high amount, comparable to India in the previous wave. However, in 2005-2008 this drops spectacularly to only 8.8% and then further to 7.3% in the following wave. The considerable drop for the final wave might be expected, as the survey took place in early 2012, just over a year after the Arab Spring uprisings which resulted in the fall of the Mubarak regime and in an unstable environment in which, for many reasons, people may be less inclined to admit to undertaking such political activities. However, the survey for the wave before this took place in early 2008, almost three years before the uprisings. As can be seen in Figures 6.4 and 6.5, the drop occurred in the other activities in Egypt, but less dramatically and from a lower starting point. What might explain this boycott result is the huge rise in food prices in Egypt following the 2008 financial crisis. Indeed, the cost of bread led to riots in 2008, a month after the survey was completed (Anon, *The Telegraph*, April 8, 2008). Indeed, in such a time of hardship, it is arguable that boycotting products on moral grounds was not something people were actively considering.

Figure 6:5 Have/Might boycott (%) by country and wave

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Have/Might Do: Boycott (%) | | | | | |
|  | ***1981-1984*** | ***1990-1994*** | ***1994-1999*** | ***1999-2004*** | ***2005-2008*** | ***2010-2014*** |
| *Argentina* | 22.7 | 12.6 | 12.6 | 9.2 | 18.3 | - |
| *Chile* | - | 15.4 | 15.1 | 18.3 | 14.1 | 20.8 |
| *Egypt* | - | - | - | 66.9 | 8.8 | 7.3 |
| *India* | - | 61.2 | 65.8 | 40.5 | 44.5 | - |
| *Japan* | - | - | - | 72.6 | 58.8 | 42.7 |
| *Jordan* | - | - | - | 8.4 | 9.0 | 14.7 |
| *Mexico* | 19.3 | 42.1 | 43.5 | 19.7 | 17.8 | 18 |
| *Moldova* | - | - | 15.4 | 17.0 | 25.7 | - |
| *Morocco* | - | - | - | 32.8 | 41.9 | 13.3 |
| *Peru* | - | - | 16.7 | 49.2 | 30.3 | 20.9 |
| *Serbia* | *-* | *-* | 41.3 | 51.7 | 54.4 | - |
| *South Africa* | 32.1 | 57.9 | 45.7 | 50.1 | 34.5 | - |
| *South Korea* | 50.1 | 61.0 | 74.5 | 71.9 | 58.3 | 52.7 |
| *Spain* | - | 32.8 | 27.2 | 27.7 | 42.1 | 40.2 |
| *Sweden* | - | - | 82.3 | 87.8 | 77.2 | 72.5 |
| *Turkey* | - | 28.5 | 25.2 | 34.5 | 35.3 | 29.1 |
| *United States* | *-* | - | 62.9 | 76.9 | 73.0 | 67.6 |
| ***Average*** | 31.1 | 38.9 | 40.6 | 43.2 | 37.9 | 33.3 |

Percentages exclude ‘Don’t Knows’

It may also be that boycotting as a form of protest is particularly susceptible to focused campaigns, such as the widely publicised boycotting of *Nestlé* products which started in the 1970s. As such campaigns are often short-lived and focussed on particular countries and products, this is liable to produce relatively large short-term rises and falls in the proportions (considering) boycotting, with different countries seeing rises and falls at different times.

The results for the final act of informal political participation, demonstrating, are in Figure 6.6. As we saw in Figure 6.3, there is more muted difference between developed and developing countries, suggesting that, whilst it might be the most energy intensive and risky of acts, the act of demonstrating is less conditioned by the level of development in a country.

Figure 6:6 Have/Might demonstrate (%) by country and wave

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Have/Might Do: Demonstration (%) | | | | | |
|  | ***1981-1984*** | ***1990-1994*** | ***1994-1999*** | ***1999-2004*** | ***2005-2008*** | ***2010-2014*** |
| *Argentina* | 55.4 | 36.1 | 43.0 | 36.1 | 57.7 | - |
| *Chile* | - | 53.8 | 43.3 | 38.9 | 35.8 | 45.9 |
| *Egypt* | - | - | - | 17.5 | 8.7 | 10.6 |
| *India* | - | 60.1 | 59.3 | 52.3 | 46.4 | - |
| *Japan* | - | - | - | 49.7 | 41.9 | 45.6 |
| *Jordan* | - | - | - | 9.3 | 11.4 | 11.4 |
| *Mexico* | 45.3 | 65.2 | 58.6 | 14.2 | 59.4 | 50.8 |
| *Moldova* | - | - | 51.3 | 44.6 | 51.0 | - |
| *Morocco* | - | - | - | 37.4 | 46.6 | 19.4 |
| *Peru* | - | - | 44.7 | 68.3 | 64.0 | - |
| *Serbia* | - | - | 46.8 | 56.2 | 58.0 | - |
| *South Africa* | 38.1 | 60.2 | 48.4 | 55.3 | 47.7 | - |
| *South Korea* | 43.4 | 52.9 | 51.4 | 67.2 | 56.5 | 66.9 |
| *Spain* | - | 59.4 | 56.4 | 67.6 | 75.6 | 64.8 |
| *Sweden* | - | - | 78.4 | 88.0 | 78.7 | 74.4 |
| *Turkey* | - | 37.3 | 35.7 | 41.8 | 36.9 | 33.9 |
| *United States* | - | - | 59.3 | 75.7 | 69.9 | 69.5 |
| ***Average*** | 45.6 | 53.1 | 52.0 | 48.2 | 49.8 | 41.1 |

Percentages exclude ‘Don’t Knows’

Across these three activities and times certain countries show themselves to have very weak levels of informal political. Prominent among them are states like Jordan and, particularly in the last two waves of the survey, Egypt: often 80% or more respondents claimed they would *never*, *under any circumstances* undertake that particular type of political action. Notably, both these countries have very recent authoritarian histories. What is interesting about this is that large-scale civil unrest has occurred in Egypt (2010-ongoing) and Jordan (2011-ongoing, although at a much lower level). The results for Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia and Malaysia (not shown as they were only available for two years or less) are also very low, even though there were relatively widespread demonstrations and marches in all those countries around the times the surveys were taken.

However, increased levels of activity do not necessarily mean that percentages would go up – marches, even as large as those which occurred in Egypt, still contain very small numbers of protestors compared to the overall population. However, there could be an effect that in times of heightened political action by the public against repressive regimes, respondents in general are *less* likely to admit they partake in such activities. This could be a wish to answer the survey question in a ‘socially-desirable’ way, or it could be a genuine fear and a belief that they would not undertake (or admit to undertaking) these types of protests.

## Informal Political Participation and Understandings of Democracy

Using multilevel logistic regression modelling this section now addresses the question, “What impact do citizen’s understandings of democracy have upon their likelihood of taking part in non-institutionalised forms of political participation?”. As with Chapter 5, the models in this section are built up to examine each theory. In this case, understandings of democracy are added to the first model and then tested against the other models before being tested in a full model at the individual level, and then at the multilevel model the full model is tested with contextual variable individually. All models feature controls for age and gender. Model 1 examine the effects of the Compound and Authoritarian understandings. Model 2 adds other democratic attitudinal variables to check that the impact of these understandings is not simply part of perceived importance of democracy or whether democracy is seen as a good or bad system of government. These variables then form the foundations of models 3-8 which test the following at the individual level.: grievance theory (3); resource theory (4); social capital (5); cognitive engagement (6); religion (7); full model (8). Models 9-13 continue using the full model, but test the following contextual variables: control for country-level variance (9); level of development according to the HDI (10); freedom of the press (11); communist history (12); democratic history (13); income inequality (14); and, Freedom House ratings (15). In Figures 6.8, 6.10, and 6.12, these numbers are linked to the letter for each political act: petitioning (P); boycotts (B); and demonstrating (D).

Before this analysis takes place, Figure 6.7 outlines null models for each political act at the single level and in a multilevel model. LR-tests are all significant demonstrating, that the reduction likelihood reduction between the models is worth examining the results with contextual controls. The models confirm the pattern seen above that boycotting is the least popular of the three activities. Furthermore, we can see in the change of constant from the single model to the MLM that context has the most influence on petitioning in the dataset, suggesting this is the activity most strongly shaped by what country a respondent is from.

**Figure 6:7 Null models (logit single-level and ML) for petitioning, boycotting and demonstrating**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Petition** | | **Boycott** | | **Demonstration** | |
|  | Logit | Logit MLM | Logit | Logit MLM | Logit | Logit MLM |
| Constant | 0.49\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.76\*\*\*  (0.19) | -0.31\*\*\*  (0.01) | -0.32\*  (0.13) | 0.18\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.26\*  (0.12) |
| *N* | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 |
| *N country* | . | 43 | . | 43 | . | 43 |
| Log lik. | -25230 | -20363 | -25944 | -22945 | -26238 | -23585 |
| ICC | . | .322338 | . | .190479 | . | .148232 |

### Petitioning

We have seen from the previous section that almost 40% of citizens in developed countries claim to have completed a petition, compared to only 10% in developing countries. Around 30% would consider it in both developed or developing countries, yet as many as 60% of respondents from developing countries would *never* sign a petition, twice as high as that for respondents in developed countries. The pattern over time is mixed, with no clear signal as to whether the activity has become generally more or less popular; it seemed to peak in the late 1990s and has been on the decline since, but this trend is only a tentative conclusion from limited data points.

For the following analysis I focus on the 2005-2008 wave of the WVS which is the survey containing the battery on democratic characteristics, from where the two components were derived. Across single and multi-level logistic models, Figure 6.8 presents the coefficients for citizens signing a petition. The model examines the impact of the compound and authoritarian understandings of democracy at the individual level, alongside general support for democracy, and grievance theory, resource theory, social capital, cognitive engagement and religiosity. They also examine and control for the contextual level theories of modernization, socialization, inequality and culture. For petitioning, boycotting and demonstrating my principle interest is on the understandings of democracy variables. Across the models we can see that the older and male respondents are more likely to say they have or would sign a petition.

#### Understandings of Democracy

As seen in Model P1 the two understandings of democracy have statistically significant effects on individuals’ chances of signing petitions in this basic model. The effect is also in the theorised direction; the more people buy into the compound understanding of democracy, the more likely they are to petition. In contrast, the more people buy into the authoritarian understanding, the less likely they are to petition, and this negative effect seems more powerful. Notably, when controlling for other attitudes towards democracy in Model P2, we see the democratic conceptualisation variables hold their influence. In fact, they hold their significance when controlling for all other alternative theories. The lose a little influence when controlling for resource theory (P4) and religion (P7). The change in coefficients is expected following the results of Chapter 5 that education is an important predictor, as is religiosity (especially for the authoritarian understanding). In the full model (P8) whilst the effect of democratic understandings is diminished, it still consistently helps to predict participation in petitioning. This effect remains in the MLM models (P9-P15). The compound understanding holds up throughout, as does the authoritarian understanding, although the coefficient for this understanding is somewhat reduced. This suggests that when controlling for country-level errors this large effect is diminished somewhat and most likely now concentrated in only certain contexts. To ease interpretation of the results, the predictive margins for the compound and authoritarian understandings of democracy are presented in Figure 6.9, produced for male and female respondents in Model P9, holding all other variables at their means.

These models demonstrate that understandings of democracy have an influence of political behaviour above other democratic attitudes (such as whether democracy is important) and when controlling for a wider range of alternative indicators including trust, income and education. Therefore we have evidence to support and greatly expand Bengtsson and Christensen's (2014, p.251) findings concerning democratic conceptualisations in Finland, that different conceptions of democracy have substantial consequences and systematic effects on engagement in political activity.

**Figure 6:8** **Logistic multilevel models, understandings of democracy and alternative theory influences on signing a petition**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Logit Single-Level Models | | | | | | | | Logit MLM | | | | | | |
|  | (P1) | (P2) | (P3) | (P4) | (P5) | (P6) | (P7) | (P8) | (P9) | (P10) | (P11) | (P12) | (P13) | (P14) | (P15) |
| Age | 0.03\*\*\* | 0.03\*\*\* | 0.03\*\*\* | 0.03\*\*\* | 0.03\*\*\* | 0.02\*\*\* | 0.03\*\*\* | 0.03\*\*\* | 0.03\*\*\* | 0.03\*\*\* | 0.03\*\*\* | 0.03\*\*\* | 0.03\*\*\* | 0.03\*\*\* | 0.03\*\*\* |
|  | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) |
| Age-squared | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* |
|  | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) |
| Gender (Ref=*Female)* | 0.16\*\*\* | 0.16\*\*\* | 0.16\*\*\* | 0.13\*\*\* | 0.15\*\*\* | 0.09\*\*\* | 0.15\*\*\* | 0.03\*\*\* | 0.09\*\*\* | 0.09\*\*\* | 0.09\*\*\* | 0.09\*\*\* | 0.09\*\*\* | 0.09\*\*\* | 0.09\*\*\* |
| (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) |
| **Democratic Understanding** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Compound (1-10) | 0.10\*\*\* | 0.08\*\*\* | 0.08\*\*\* | 0.06\*\*\* | 0.09\*\*\* | 0.08\*\*\* | 0.07\*\*\* | 0.06\*\*\* | 0.09\*\*\* | 0.09\*\*\* | 0.09\*\*\* | 0.09\*\*\* | 0.09\*\*\* | 0.09\*\*\* | 0.09\*\*\* |
|  | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.02) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.02) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) |
| Authoritarian (1-10) | -0.23\*\*\* | -0.23\*\*\* | -0.23\*\*\* | -0.20\*\*\* | -0.22\*\*\* | -0.21\*\*\* | -0.17\*\*\* | -0.15\*\*\* | -0.05\*\* | -0.05\*\* | -0.05\*\* | -0.05\*\* | -0.05\*\* | -0.05\*\* | -0.05\*\* |
|  | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| Importance of democracy (1-10) |  | 0.07\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.06\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.05\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.06\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.04\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.07\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.03\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.03\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.03\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.03\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.03\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.03\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.03\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.03\*\*\*  (0.01) |
| V/Good System of Democracy (Ref = *V/Bad*) |  | -0.03  (0.04) | -0.04  (0.04) | -0.01  (0.04) | -0.05  (0.04) | -0.07  (0.04) | 0.11\*\*  (0.01) | 0.09\*\*  (0.04) | 0.21\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.21\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.21\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.20\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.21\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.21\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.21\*\*\*  (0.00) |
| **Grievance Theory** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Satisfaction income (1-10) |  |  | 0.06\*\*\*  (0.01) |  |  |  |  | 0.03\*\*  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) |
| Income (1-10) |  |  | 0.04\*\*  (0.01) |  |  |  |  | 0.02  (0.01) | 0.08\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.07\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.07\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.07\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.08\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.08\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.08\*\*\*  (0.00) |
| Satisfaction x Income | |  | -0.00  (0.00) |  |  |  |  | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) |
| **Resource Theory** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Education (Ref=*Lower*) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Middle* |  |  |  | 0.53\*\*\* |  |  |  | 0.27\*\*\* | 0.31\*\*\* | 0.30\*\*\* | 0.30\*\*\* | 0.31\*\*\* | 0.31\*\*\* | 0.31\*\*\* | 0.31\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  | (0.03) |  |  |  | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) |
| *Higher* |  |  |  | 0.97\*\*\* |  |  |  | 0.58\*\*\* | 0.63\*\*\* | 0.63\*\*\* | 0.63\*\*\* | 0.63\*\*\* | 0.63\*\*\* | 0.63\*\*\* | 0.63\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  | (0.03) |  |  |  | (0.04) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) |
| Control in life (1-10) |  |  |  | 0.04\*\*\* |  |  |  | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 |
|  |  |  |  | (0.01) |  |  |  | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| **Social Capital** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Group membership  (Ref= *None*) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *One* |  |  |  |  | 0.60\*\*\* |  |  | 0.39\*\*\* | 0.26\*\*\* | 0.26\*\*\* | 0.26\*\*\* | 0.26\*\*\* | 0.26\*\*\* | 0.26\*\*\* | 0.26\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  |  | (0.03) |  |  | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) |
| *Two or more* |  |  |  |  | 0.86\*\*\* |  |  | 0.54\*\*\* | 0.46\*\*\* | 0.47\*\*\* | 0.47\*\*\* | 0.46\*\*\* | 0.46\*\*\* | 0.46\*\*\* | 0.46\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  |  | (0.03) |  |  | (0.03) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) |
| Trust (Ref = *Can’t be trusted*) |  |  |  |  | 0.30\*\*\*  (0.03) |  |  | 0.13\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.13\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.13\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.13\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.13\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.13\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.13\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.13\*\*\*  (0.03) |
| Institutional Trust (1-10) |  |  |  |  | -0.02\*\*\*  (0.01) |  |  | -0.06\*\*\*  (0.01) | -0.04\*\*\*  (0.01) | -0.04\*\*\*  (0.01) | -0.04\*\*\*  (0.01) | -0.04\*\*\*  (0.01) | -0.04\*\*\*  (0.01) | -0.04\*\*\*  (0.01) | -0.04\*\*\*  (0.01) |
| **Cognitive Engagement** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Political Interest (1-10) | |  |  |  |  | 0.11\*\*\* |  | 0.14\*\*\* | 0.17\*\*\* | 0.17\*\*\* | 0.17\*\*\* | 0.17\*\*\* | 0.17\*\*\* | 0.17\*\*\* | 0.17\*\*\* |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.00) |  | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| Media Use (Ref=*None*) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *1-4 Sources* |  |  |  |  |  | 0.38\*\*  (0.07) |  | 0.26\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.39\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.38\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.39\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.39\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.38\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.38\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.38\*\*\*  (0.08) |
| *5+ Sources* |  |  |  |  |  | 1.04\*\*\* |  | 0.66\*\*\* | 0.56\*\*\* | 0.55\*\*\* | 0.55\*\*\* | 0.56\*\*\* | 0.55\*\*\* | 0.55\*\*\* | 0.55\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.07) |  | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) |
| **Religion** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Religiosity (1-10) |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.07\*\*\* | -0.08\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| Religion (Ref=*Non-affiliated*) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Catholic* |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.10\* | 0.13\*\* | 0.06 | 0.06 | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.07 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.06) |
| *Protestant* |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.10 | -0.02 | 0.08 | 0.08 | 0.08 | 0.08 | 0.08 | 0.08 | 0.08 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.06) |
| *Muslim* |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.89\*\*\* | -0.70\*\*\* | -0.17\* | -0.16\* | -0.16\* | -0.16\* | -0.16\* | -0.16\* | -0.16\* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) |
| *Orthodox* |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.87\*\*\* | -0.81\*\*\* | 0.23\*\* | 0.23\*\* | 0.23\*\* | 0.23\*\* | 0.23\*\* | 0.23\*\* | 0.23\*\* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) |
| *Buddhist* |  |  |  |  |  |  | -1.50\*\*\* | -1.60\*\*\* | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.05 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) |
| *Hindu* |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.37\*\*\* | -0.28\*\*\* | -0.09 | -0.09 | -0.09 | -0.09 | -0.09 | -0.09 | -0.09 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.08) | (0.8) | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.10) |
| *Other* |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.00 | -0.06 | 0.10 | 0.10 | 0.10 | 0.10 | 0.10 | 0.10 | 0.10 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.06) |
| **Country-level Effects** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| HDI (0-100) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.03\*\*\*  (0.01) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Press Freedom (0-100 | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.05\*\*\*  (0.01) |  |  |  |  |
| Communist (Ref=*Not*) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -1.52\*\*\*  (0.45) |  |  |  |
| Democratic History (0-100) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.04\*\*\*  (0.01) |  |  |
| Inequality (GINI) (0-100) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.03  (0.02) |  |
| Freedom House (Ref=*Free*) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Partly Free* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -1.21\*\*  (0.39) |
| *Not Free* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -2.12\*\*\*  (0.61) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *N* | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 |
| *N country* | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | 43 | 43 | 43 | 43 | 43 | 43 | 43 |
| AIC | 47881 | 47760 | 47611 | 46818 | 46550 | 46020 | 45196 | 42834 | 37801 | 37792 | 37779 | 37793 | 37768 | 37800 | 37789 |
| BIC | 47932 | 47828 | 47705 | 46912 | 46652 | 46114 | 45333 | 43082 | 38058 | 38057 | 38044 | 38058 | 38033 | 38065 | 38062 |
| Log lik. | -23935 | -23872 | -23795 | -23398 | -23263 | -22999 | -22582 | -21388 | -18871 | -18865 | -18859 | -18866 | -18853 | -18869 | -18862 |
| ICC | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | .3107997 | .257827 | .203357 | .262387 | .165814 | .298169 | .238290 |

Standard error in brackets. p<0.1=\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.001\*\*\*

Before examining whether this finding holds across boycotting and demonstrating, I discuss the results from the alternative theories examined in the models.

**Figure 6:9** **Petitioning Predictive Margins for Compound and Authoritarian Understandings of Democracy by Gender, Model (P9)**



#### Alternative Theories

At the individual level, theoretical expectations for resource theory (P4), social capital (P5) and cognitive engagement (P6) are generally borne out to match the theoretical predictions. In terms of resources, the higher your educational attainment, the more likely you are to petition, a result that holds across the MLMs. The notion of control over your life however falls from significance once country-level errors are taken into account. Further research could explore whether there is a culturally specific understanding of this notion of efficacy that plays out differently in different countries. The variables examining social capital matter consistently too; those who are more active in civil society groups are also more likely to petition and having trust in society at large also increases the individual’s chances. However, the result for institutional trust shows a clear signal in the opposite direction – those with more trust in institutions are less likely to sign a petition. And of course, the other way of looking at that, is that those who are sceptical of power are more likely to political engage, which aligns somewhat with Norris’s (1999;2002) notion of the critical citizen. Using more media sources to follow the news and self-describing yourself as interested in politics, with the belief that it is important, all increase the chances of an individual petitioning. Increased levels of cognitive engagement seem to boost the chances of political participation, matching other findings in the literature (Whiteley et al. 2013; Dalton 2008; Pattie et al. 2004; Nie et al. 1996).

When it comes to religiosity, (P7) Campbell's (2004, p.155) argument that higher levels of evangelicalism may come at the expense of participation in the wider community finds some support here: the more religious an individual is, the less likely they are to petition. However, examining differences between religious faiths complicates the picture, especially in the MLM. For Muslim respondents, this negative relationship holds across the model, yet for Orthodox individuals the relationship switches from negative to positive. Therefore, when considered at a global individual level (P7-P8), Orthodox respondents are less likely to petition than those who are non-affiliated. However, when controlling for country effects, they are more likely. Samuel Huntington (1993) classifies countries into certain civilizations, which include Orthodox and Islamic. In this WVS dataset around 85.5% of Orthodox respondents live in an Orthodox country, and around 83.6% of Muslim respondents live in an Islamic country. Therefore, it suggests there are differing contextual and compositional effects regarding how religious respondents participate in their own culture, compared to the non-affiliated. However, Huntington’s measure is a subjective and crude one, and further research would need to be considered in order to tease apart the differences here.

Finally, for individual-level variables, there is grievance theory to discuss. The results show the *more* income you have, the *more* likely you are to petition, which suggests that resources play an important role here. Satisfaction with income drops from significance in the MLM however and the interaction effect, whilst significant, is quite small, and so overall the results for grievance theory are somewhat inconsistent and appear to align more with resources than issues of (dis)satisfaction with income.

At the national level, income equality also fails to have a significant effect. However, all the other national variables reach significance, and in the expected direction. The higher level of development, the more press freedom and the longer democratic history a country has, the more likely citizens have or would consider signing a petition. In contrast, having a former or current communist regime, and living under more restrictive regimes according to the Freedom House measure, lower the likelihood of petitioning. Aside from the lack of result for the gini coefficient, these results match the theoretical predictions discussed in Section 6.3.

### Boycotting

Boycotting is the least popular type of informal political participation under consideration here, with less than 10% of citizens having claimed to have boycotted anything and a large majority claiming they would never undertake such an action (58% in developed countries, and 69% in developing countries). Over time, as with petitioning, the popularity of boycotting seems to rise and fall, peaking in the 1999-2004 wave at around 43% who said they have or would consider boycotting. The modelling approach here is the same as with petitioning.

#### Boycotting and Different Understandings of Democracy

Once again, the conceptualisations of democracy have an impact upon informal participation in the same direction that they do for petitioning; the more someone buys into the compound understanding, the more likely they are boycott, and the more they buy into the authoritarian understanding, the less likely they are to boycott (Figure 6.10). It appears if you forefront the importance of authority figures in your understanding of democracy, you appear less likely to get involved in informal political participation. These effects are slightly weaker for the compound understanding of democracy once the country level effects are controlled for (B9-B15). As before, predictive margins are plotted for male and female respondents in Figure 6.11. Matching previous results in the petitioning models, education and religiosity seems to vie with the two understandings for explanatory power, but once again the effects remain consistent and robust in all models.

**Figure 6:10 Logistic multilevel models, understandings of democracy and alternative theory influences on boycotting a product**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Logit Single-Level Models | | | | | | | | Logit MLM | | | | | | |
|  |  | | | | | | | |  | | | | | | |
|  | (B1) | (B2) | (B3) | (B4) | (B5) | (B6) | (B7) | (B8) | (B9) | (B10) | (B11) | (B12) | (B13) | (B14) | (B15) |
| Age | 0.04\*\*\* | 0.04\*\*\* | 0.04\*\*\* | 0.04\*\*\* | 0.04\*\*\* | 0.03\*\*\* | 0.04\*\*\* | 0.04\*\*\* | 0.04\*\*\* | 0.04\*\*\* | 0.04\*\*\* | 0.04\*\*\* | 0.04\*\*\* | 0.04\*\*\* | 0.04\*\*\* |
|  | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) |
| Age-squared | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* |
|  | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) |
| Gender (Ref=*Female)* | 0.29\*\*\* | 0.29\*\*\* | 0.28\*\*\* | 0.27\*\*\* | 0.28\*\*\* | 0.22\*\*\* | 0.26\*\*\* | 0.17\*\*\* | 0.18\*\*\* | 0.19\*\*\* | 0.19\*\*\* | 0.19\*\*\* | 0.19\*\*\* | 0.19\*\*\* | 0.19\*\*\* |
| (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) |
| **Democratic Understanding** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Compound | 0.09\*\*\* | 0.05\*\*\* | 0.06\*\*\* | 0.04\*\*\* | 0.07\*\*\* | 0.06\*\*\* | 0.05\*\*\* | 0.05\*\*\* | 0.07\*\*\* | 0.07\*\*\* | 0.07\*\*\* | 0.07\*\*\* | 0.07\*\*\* | 0.07\*\*\* | 0.07\*\*\* |
|  | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| Authoritarian | -0.19\*\*\* | -0.18\*\*\* | -0.18\*\*\* | -0.16\*\*\* | -0.17\*\*\* | -0.17\*\*\* | -0.14\*\*\* | -0.12\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* | -0.07\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* |
|  | (0.00) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| Importance of democracy |  | 0.08\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.07\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.07\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.06\*\*  (0.01) | 0.04\*\*  (0.01) | 0.07\*\*  (0.01) | 0.07  (0.01) | 0.04\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.04\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.04\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.04\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.04\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.04\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.04\*\*\*  (0.01) |
| V/Good System of Democracy (Ref = *V/Bad*) |  | -0.06  (0.04) | -0.05  (0.04) | -0.07  (0.04) | -0.07  (0.04) | -0.01  (0.04) | 0.13\*\*  (0.04) | 0.13  (0.04) | 0.17\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.17\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.17\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.17\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.17\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.17\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.17\*\*\*  (0.04) |
| **Grievance Theory** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Satisfaction income (1-10) | |  | 0.02\*  (0.01) |  |  |  |  | 0.02  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) |  |
| Income (1-10) |  |  | 0.07\*\*\*  (0.01) |  |  |  |  | 0.05\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.08\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.08\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.08\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.08\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.08\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.08\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.08\*\*\*  (0.01) |
| Satisfaction x Income | |  | -0.00  (0.00) |  |  |  |  | -0.00  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*  (0.00) |  |
| **Resource Theory** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Education (Ref=*Lower*) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Middle* |  |  |  | 0.40\*\*\* |  |  |  | 0.17\*\*\* | 0.20\*\*\* | 0.20\*\*\* | 0.20\*\*\* | 0.20\*\*\* | 0.20\*\*\* | 0.20\*\*\* | 0.20\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  | (0.03) |  |  |  | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) |
| *Higher* |  |  |  | 0.87\*\*\* |  |  |  | 0.47\*\*\* | 0.53\*\*\* | 0.53\*\*\* | 0.53\*\*\* | 0.53\*\*\* | 0.53\*\*\* | 0.53\*\*\* | 0.53\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  | (0.03) |  |  |  | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) |
| Control in life |  |  |  | -0.00 |  |  |  | -0.02\*\*\* | -0.01\* | -0.01\* | -0.01\* | -0.01\* | -0.01\* | -0.01\* | -0.01\* |
|  |  |  |  | (0.01) |  |  |  | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| **Social Capital** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Group membership  (Ref= *None*) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *One* |  |  |  |  | 0.39\*\*\* |  |  | 0.27\*\*\* | 0.15\*\*\* | 0.15\*\*\* | 0.15\*\*\* | 0.15\*\*\* | 0.15\*\*\* | 0.15\*\*\* | 0.15\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  |  | (0.03) |  |  | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) |
| *Two or more* |  |  |  |  | 0.68\*\*\* |  |  | 0.45\*\*\* | 0.34\*\*\* | 0.34\*\*\* | 0.34\*\*\* | 0.34\*\*\* | 0.34\*\*\* | 0.34\*\*\* | 0.34\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  |  | (0.03) |  |  | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) |
| Trust (Ref = *Can’t be trusted*) |  |  |  |  | 0.37\*\*\*  (0.02) |  |  | 0.21\*\*\*  (0.02) | 0.19\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.19\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.19\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.19\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.19\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.19\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.19\*\*\*  (0.03) |
| Institutional Trust (1-10) |  |  |  |  | -0.01  (0.01) |  |  | -0.03\*\*\*  (0.01) | -0.03\*\*\*  (0.01) | -0.03\*\*\*  (0.01) | -0.03\*\*\*  (0.01) | -0.03\*\*\*  (0.01) | -0.04\*\*\*  (0.01) | -0.03\*\*\*  (0.01) | -0.03\*\*\*  (0.01) |
| **Cognitive Engagement** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Political Interest (1-10) | |  |  |  |  | 0.13\*\*\* |  | 0.14\*\*\* | 0.15\*\*\* | 0.15\*\*\* | 0.15\*\*\* | 0.15\*\*\* | 0.15\*\*\* | 0.15\*\*\* | 0.15\*\*\* |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.00) |  | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| Media Use (Ref=*None*) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *1-4 Sources* |  |  |  |  |  | 0.20\*\*  (0.07) |  | 0.09  (0.08) | 0.25\*\*  (0.08) | 0.25\*\*  (0.08) | 0.25\*\*  (0.08) | 0.25\*\*  (0.08) | 0.25\*\*  (0.08) | 0.25\*\*  (0.08) | 0.25\*\*  (0.08) |
| *5+ Sources* |  |  |  |  |  | 0.74\*\*\* |  | 0.42\*\*\* | 0.43\*\*\* | 0.43\*\*\* | 0.43\*\*\* | 0.43\*\*\* | 0.43\*\*\* | 0.43\*\*\* | 0.43\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.08) |  | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) |
| **Religion** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Religiosity (1-10) |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.06\*\*\* | -0.07\*\*\* | -0.06\*\*\* | -0.06\*\*\* | -0.06\*\*\* | -0.06\*\*\* | -0.06\*\*\* | -0.06\*\*\* | -0.06\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| Religion (Ref=*Non-affiliated*) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Catholic* |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.05 | -0.05 | -0.01 | -0.01 | -0.01 | -0.01 | -0.01 | -0.01 | -0.01 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) |
| *Protestant* |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.28\*\*\* | 0.19\*\*\* | -0.03 | -0.03 | -0.03 | -0.03 | -0.03 | -0.03 | -0.03 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) |
| *Muslim* |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.31\*\*\* | -0.15\*\* | 0.13 | 0.13 | 0.13 | 0.13 | 0.14\* | 0.13 | 0.13 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) |
| *Orthodox* |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.43\*\*\* | -0.36\*\*\* | -0.13 | -0.13 | -0.13 | -0.13 | -0.15\* | -0.13 | -0.13 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) |
| *Buddhist* |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.85\*\*\* | -0.94\*\*\* | -0.15 | -0.15 | -0.15 | -0.15 | -0.15 | -0.15 | -0.15 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.09) | (0.09) | (0.09) | (0.09) | (0.09) | (0.09) | (0.09) |
| *Hindu* |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.18\*\* | 0.27\*\* | -0.20 | -0.20 | -0.20 | -0.20 | -0.20 | -0.20 | -0.20 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.11) |
| *Other* |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.13\*\* | 0.07 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.03 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) |
| **Country-level Effects** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| HDI (0-100) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.01  (0.01) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Press Freedom (0-100 | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.03\*\*\*  (0.01) |  |  |  |  |
| Communist (Ref=*Not*) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.92\*\*  (0.32) |  |  |  |
| Democratic History (0-100) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.02\*\*\*  (0.00) |  |  |
| Inequality (GINI) (0-100) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.02  (0.02) |  |
| Freedom House (Ref=*Free*) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Partly Free* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.36  (0.28) |
| *Not Free* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -1.63\*\*\*  (0.45) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *N* | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 |
| *N country* | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | 43 | 43 | 43 | 43 | 43 | 43 | 43 |
| Log lik. | -24854 | -24780 | -24700 | -24414 | -24298 | -23899 | -24264 | -23121 | -21341 | -21340 | -21332 | -21337 | -21334 | -21339 | -21334 |
| AIC | 49720 | 49577 | 49422 | 48851 | 48619 | 47820 | 48561 | 46299 | 42741 | 42741 | 42726 | 42736 | 42730 | 42740 | 42733 |
| BIC | 479771 | 49645 | 49516 | 48944 | 48721 | 47913 | 48698 | 46548 | 42998 | 43006 | 42991 | 43001 | 42995 | 43005 | 43007 |
| ICC | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | .181763 | .174831 | .128592 | .157854 | .140472 | .169800 | .143985 |

Stand error in brackets. p<0.1=\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.001\*\*\*

**Figure 6:11 Boycotting Predictive Margins for Compound and Authoritarian Understandings of Democracy by Gender, Model (P9)**



#### Alternative Theories

As with petitioning, it is clear that explanations concerning resources, social capital and cognitive engagement have explanatory power and follow the theoretical expectations. The higher educational attainment an individual has, the more likely they are to boycott. This time however, control in life does have an effect, not in an efficacious way, but rather the more control someone has over their life, the less likely they are to have considered or taken part in a boycott. Social capital plays out the same as with petitioning in that being more active in civil society groups leads to a higher chance of boycotting, as does trust in people around you. Once again, institutional trust can be understood through the lens of critical citizens – the less you trust institutions the more likely you are boycott (Norris 1999; 2002). And cognitive engagement matters in that increased use of media again has a positive relationship, as does interest in politics.

Religiosity again has a negative effect but when it comes to individual religious beliefs these do not reach significance in the MLM, apart from a weak positive relationship with Islam and a weak negative relationship with Orthodox once democratic history is taken into account. This provides additional evidence for the need for further research to unpick religious effects on political participation in different contexts (Sarkissian 2012).

In terms of the remaining contextual indicators, HDI does not have an effect. This is perhaps unexpected as you might expect boycotting to be more popular in wealthier and more developed countries where individuals have the resources to make political consumption choices, guided by post-material values (Inglehart, 2002). However, democratic history and press freedom follow the same relationship as with petitioning – a longer history and more freedom are associated with higher likelihoods of boycotting behaviour. Having a communist history decreases likelihood, as does living in a Not Free state, however, living in a Partly Free state appears to have no difference in likelihood levels than a completely Free state. Income inequality again has no significant result.

### Demonstrating

Demonstrating is the riskiest and most costly form of informal political participation under examination here, but almost half of people claim to have done it, or would consider doing it. The models are presented in the same order as for petitioning and boycotting.

#### Democratic Attitudes and Demonstrating

In this final test of the democratic conceptualisation measures they again have explanatory power, and again in the expected direction; those who buy more into the compound understanding have a higher likelihood of demonstrating, and those who buy more into the authoritarian understanding have a lower likelihood (see Figure 6.12 and 6.13)

Overall, this shows that the democracy variables have a robust and consistent effect across all three types of informal participation. It provides evidence that the way an individual understands the idea of democracy influences their propensity to get involved in informal political participation. This finding has an effect above and beyond assessments and support for the idea of democracy in the abstract. In other words, the *substantive* understanding of the idea matters, as well as lip-service paid to it.

**Figure 6:12 Logistic multilevel models, understandings of democracy and alternative theory influences on demonstrating**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Logit Single-Level Models | | | | | | | | Logit MLM | | | | | | |
|  | (D1) | (D2) | (D3) | (D4) | (D5) | (D6) | (D7) | (D8) | (D9) | (D10) | (D11) | (D12) | (D13) | (D14) | (D15) |
| Age | 0.02\*\*\* | 0.02\*\*\* | 0.01\*\*\* | 0.01\*\*\* | 0.02\*\*\* | 0.01\*\*\* | 0.02\*\*\* | 0.02\*\*\* | 0.02\*\*\* | 0.02\*\*\* | 0.02\*\*\* | 0.02\*\*\* | 0.02\*\*\* | 0.02\*\*\* | 0.02\*\*\* |
|  | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) |
| Age-squared | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* | -0.00\*\*\* |
|  | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) |
| Gender (Ref=*Female)* | 0.23\*\*\* | 0.23\*\*\* | 0.23\*\*\* | 0.21\*\*\* | 0.22\*\*\* | 0.16\*\*\* | 0.24\*\*\* | 0.13\*\*\* | 0.14\*\*\* | 0.14\*\*\* | 0.14\*\*\* | 0.14\*\*\* | 0.14\*\*\* | 0.14\*\*\* | 0.14\*\*\* |
| (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) | (0.02) |
| **Democratic Understanding** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Compound | 0.11\*\*\* | 0.08\*\*\* | 0.08\*\*\* | 0.07\*\*\* | 0.10\*\*\* | 0.09\*\*\* | 0.05\*\*\* | 0.05\*\*\* | 0.06\*\*\* | 0.06\*\*\* | 0.06\*\*\* | 0.06\*\*\* | 0.06\*\*\* | 0.06\*\*\* | 0.06\*\*\* |
|  | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| Authoritarian | -0.19\*\*\* | -0.19\*\*\* | -0.19\*\*\* | -0.16\*\*\* | -0.18\*\*\* | -0.17\*\*\* | -0.14\*\*\* | -0.13\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* | -0.05\*\*\* |
|  | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) | (0.00) |
| Importance of democracy |  | 0.06\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.06\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.06\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.05\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.03\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.07\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.06\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.05\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.05\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.05\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.05\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.05\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.05\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.05\*\*\*  (0.01) |
| V/Good System of Democracy (Ref = *V/Bad*) |  | 0.08\*  (0.04) | 0.08  (0.04) | 0.09\*  (0.04) | 0.06  (0.04) | 0.04  (0.04) | 0.18\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.14\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.14\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.14\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.14\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.14\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.14\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.14\*\*\*  (0.04) | 0.14\*\*\*  (0.04) |
| **Grievance Theory** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Satisfaction income (1-10) | |  | 0.00  (0.01) |  |  |  |  | 0.02  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) | -0.01  (0.01) |  |
| Income (1-10) |  |  | 0.06\*\*\*  (0.01) |  |  |  |  | 0.03\*  (0.01) | 0.05\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.05\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.05\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.05\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.05\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.05\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.05\*\*\*  (0.01) |
| Satisfaction x Income | |  | -0.00  (0.00) |  |  |  |  | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) |  |
| **Resource Theory** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Education (Ref=*Lower*) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Middle* |  |  |  | 0.41\*\*\* |  |  |  | 0.15\*\*\* | 0.30\*\*\* | 0.30\*\*\* | 0.30\*\*\* | 0.30\*\*\* | 0.30\*\*\* | 0.30\*\*\* | 0.30\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  | (0.03) |  |  |  | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) |
| *Higher* |  |  |  | 0.86\*\*\* |  |  |  | 0.48\*\*\* | 0.68\*\*\* | 0.68\*\*\* | 0.68\*\*\* | 0.68\*\*\* | 0.68\*\*\* | 0.68\*\*\* | 0.68\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  | (0.03) |  |  |  | (0.01) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) |
| Control in life |  |  |  | -0.00 |  |  |  | -0.01 | -0.01 | -0.01 | -0.01 | -0.01 | -0.01 | -0.01 | -0.01 |
|  |  |  |  | (0.01) |  |  |  | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| **Social Capital** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Group membership  (Ref= *None*) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *One* |  |  |  |  | 0.43\*\*\* |  |  | 0.32\*\*\* | 0.19\*\*\* | 0.19\*\*\* | 0.19\*\*\* | 0.19\*\*\* | 0.19\*\*\* | 0.19\*\*\* | 0.19\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  |  | (0.03) |  |  | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) |
| *Two or more* |  |  |  |  | 0.85\*\*\* |  |  | 0.65\*\*\* | 0.51\*\*\* | 0.51\*\*\* | 0.51\*\*\* | 0.51\*\*\* | 0.51\*\*\* | 0.51\*\*\* | 0.51\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  |  | (0.03) |  |  | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) |
| Trust (Ref = *Can’t be trusted*) |  |  |  |  | 0.11\*\*\*  (0.02) |  |  | 0.02  (0.03) | 0.11\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.11\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.11\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.11\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.11\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.11\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.11\*\*\*  (0.03) |
| Institutional Trust (1-10) |  |  |  |  | -0.03  (0.01) |  |  | -0.02\*\*  (0.01) | -0.01\*  (0.01) | -0.01\*  (0.01) | -0.01\*  (0.01) | -0.01\*  (0.01) | -0.01\*  (0.01) | -0.01\*  (0.01) | -0.01\*  (0.01) |
| **Cognitive Engagement** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Political Interest (1-10) | |  |  |  |  | 0.13\*\*\* |  | 0.14\*\*\* | 0.16\*\*\* | 0.16\*\*\* | 0.16\*\*\* | 0.16\*\*\* | 0.16\*\*\* | 0.16\*\*\* | 0.16\*\*\* | 0.16\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.00) |  | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| Media Use (Ref=*None*) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *1-4 Sources* |  |  |  |  |  | 0.42\*\*\*  (0.07) |  | 0.32\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.45\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.45\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.45\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.45\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.45\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.45\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.45\*\*\*  (0.08) |
| *5+ Sources* |  |  |  |  |  | 0.88\*\*\* |  | 0.59\*\*\* | 0.63\*\*\* | 0.62\*\*\* | 0.62\*\*\* | 0.62\*\*\* | 0.62\*\*\* | 0.62\*\*\* | 0.62\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.08) |  | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.08) |
| **Religion** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Religiosity (1-10) |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.03\*\*\* | -0.04\*\*\* | -0.03\*\*\* | -0.03\*\*\* | -0.03\*\*\* | -0.03\*\*\* | -0.03\*\*\* | -0.03\*\*\* | -0.03\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| Religion (Ref=*Non-affiliated*) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Catholic* |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.16\*\*\* | 0.20\*\*\* | -0.00 | -0.00 | -0.00 | -0.00 | -0.00 | -0.00 | -0.00 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) |
| *Protestant* |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.10\* | -0.03 | -0.16\*\* | -0.16\*\* | -0.16\*\* | -0.16\*\* | -0.16\*\* | -0.16\*\* | -0.16\*\* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.04) | (0.5) | (0.5) | (0.5) | (0.5) | (0.5) | (0.5) | (0.5) | (0.5) |
| *Muslim* |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.62\*\*\* | -0.45\*\*\* | -0.08 | -0.08 | -0.08 | -0.08 | -0.08 | -0.08 | -0.08 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.07) | (0.07) | (0.07) | (0.07) | (0.07) | (0.07) | (0.07) |
| *Orthodox* |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.10\* | -0.00 | 0.31\*\*\* | 0.31\*\*\* | 0.31\*\*\* | 0.33\*\*\* | 0.33\*\*\* | 0.33\*\*\* | 0.33\*\*\* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.06) | (0.05) | (0.07) | (0.07) | (0.07) | (0.07) | (0.07) | (0.07) | (0.07) |
| *Buddhist* |  |  |  |  |  |  | -1.41\*\*\* | -1.54\*\*\* | -0.12 | -0.12 | -0.12 | -0.12 | -0.12 | -0.12 | -0.12 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.09) | (0.09) | (0.09) | (0.09) | (0.09) | (0.09) | (0.09) |
| *Hindu* |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.12 | -0.10 | -0.13 | -0.13 | -0.13 | -0.13 | -0.13 | -0.13 | -0.13 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.08) | (0.08) | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.11) |
| *Other* |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.15\*\*\* | -0.23\*\*\* | -0.04 | -0.04 | -0.04 | -0.04 | -0.04 | -0.04 | -0.04 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  | (0.04) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) | (0.05) |
| **Country-level Effects** | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| HDI (0-100) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.01  (0.01) |  |  |  |  |  |
| Press Freedom (0-100 | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.03\*\*\*  (0.01) |  |  |  |  |
| Communist (Ref=*Not*) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.77\*\*  (0.30) |  |  |  |
| Democratic History (0-100) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 0.01\*  (0.00) |  |  |
| Inequality (GINI) (0-100) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.01  (0.01) |  |
| Freedom House (Ref=*Free*) | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Partly Free* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -0.49\*  (0.24) |
| *Not Free* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | -1.72\*\*\*  (0.38) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *N* | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 | 38,082 |
| *N country* | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | 43 | 43 | 43 | 43 | 43 | 43 | 43 |
| Log lik. | -25078 | -25020 | -24991 | -24657 | -24515 | -24251 | -24333 | -23144 | -21782 | -21782 | -21772 | -21779 | -21779 | -21782 | -21773 |
| AIC | 50167 | 50057 | 50003 | 49336 | 49054 | 48524 | 48697 | 46346 | 43624 | 43626 | 43606 | 43620 | 43620 | 436250 | 43610 |
| BIC | 50219 | 50125 | 50098 | 49430 | 40157 | 48618 | 48834 | 46594 | 43880 | 430890 | 43871 | 43885 | 43885 | 43891 | 43883 |
| ICC | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | . | .151464 | .149922 | .099508 | .133458 | .134562 | .150187 | .103371 |

Standard error in brackets. p<0.1=\*, p<0.05\*\*, p<0.001\*\*\*

**Figure 6:13 Demonstrating Predictive Margins for Compound and Authoritarian Understandings of Democracy by Gender, Model (P9)**



#### Alternative Theories

The pattern of results for resource theory, social capital and cognitive engagement follow previous results for boycotting; group membership and trust in people boost the chance of demonstrating, whereas higher institutional trusts decreases it. Better education has a positive effect, but control over life does not register a significant result. The issue with the results for grievance theory remain; satisfaction with income does not render a significant result when controlling for context, whereas increased income leads to higher, not lower, chances of demonstrating.

When it comes to faith, Protestantism has a modest negative effect – Protestants are less likely to demonstrate compared to those without a religion – whereas those with Orthodox faith have higher odds in comparison to the same reference group.

Across the results for the three different types of political behaviour then it is difficult to generate a clear story from the results of the different faiths, and this stands out as an area of further study. Indeed Sarkissian (2012) argues that only very recently have other surveys, such as Arab Barometer and the Muslim American Survey, started to go into enough detail to be able to test much more nuanced issues concerning religious practices and the relationship between religious groups and civil society.

Throughout these models, whilst the individual results for faiths are inconsistent, the general relationship between religiosity and political participation appears to be a negative one, supporting the section of the literature that sees religiosity as perhaps an inward-looking trait which supports institutions and sees informal political participation as an unnecessary or negative act (Campbell 2004), in contrast to those findings which suggest strength of faith may be a corrective to bias in participation against those who are poorer and not as well educated (Jones-Correa & Leal 2001). Of course, this does not preclude these people from carrying out altruistic and charitable acts, it may simply be that those which appear “politicised” do not fall within this space of action (Sarkissian 2012, p.618-619).

There is further evidence to suggest that country context has an impact on demonstrating, as measured by press freedom and democratic history variables once again. HDI and gini measures however fail to reach significance. The communist and Freedom House measures again point towards more closed regimes being associated with lower likelihoods of informal political participation.

## Summary

Across these types of political participation, the resource indicators, social trust, social capital, political interest and media use have consistent explanatory effects. Those getting involved with informal political actions have the cognitive engagement and they have the resources. When it comes to the focus of this thesis –understanding of democracy – the pattern is also clear and consistent. The more a citizen buys into the compound understanding of democracy, the more likely they are to consider or be involved in informal political participation. In contrast, the more a citizen buys into the authoritarian concept of democracy, the less likely they are to be involved, or even consider being involved, in such activity.

From this finding I can return to the conclusion made by the more focused study on Finland, examined by Bengtsson and Christensen (2014, p.251) and discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.4:

“…these different conceptions of democracy are not just ideals without substantial consequences. On the contrary, they have systematic effects on the way and extent in which people choose to engage in political activities.”

Their different conceptions of democracy were built from a different survey and using different questions and so the conceptions themselves do not, unfortunately, map onto mine (as a reminder, they had three: representation elite; expertise technocratic; and, participation pluralistic). However, the important finding of their study, that these conceptions are not simply abstract inconsequential imaginings but have effects on political behaviour, is also borne out in my study.

At the end of their study Bengtsson and Christensen (ibid.) note that: “Research from other contexts is therefore necessary to establish how well the conclusions drawn here apply to other settings”. This is exactly what my study has done, and it bolsters the notion that conceptualisations of democracy influence political participation across a wide variety of contexts.

Beyond this point, I have also looked at how these conceptualisations of democracy fare against the more traditional variable of analysis: support for democracy in the abstract. The results consistently show that both elements of the story help explain informal political participation: ‘lip-service’ paid to the idea, and understandings of it.

This systematic examination of understandings of democracy and their influence on informal participation has not, to the author’s knowledge, been carried out across such multiple contexts in this way. When it comes to the compound understanding, the consistent positive relationship is of interest as the elements that make-up this understanding do not pre-assume a relationship with informal political participation. The only elements in the compound understanding related to participation are deal with ‘free and fair elections’ and referendum. These are both in the most part elite-led and institutional processes (Bowler, Donovan and Karp, 2007). This chapter has demonstrated that above and beyond existing predictors of participation (social capital, resources etc.), having a particular conceptual understanding of democracy helps explain informal political activity. This is also above support for democracy more generally. Further research should now build on this to identify more deeply how understandings of democracy and democratic behaviour inform each, and whether there is a reciprocal relationship.

Further research may also be interested in the links between support for religious and military authority and the lack of engagement in these informal political activities. The authoritarian understanding of democracy has the potential to generate multiple tensions: those who strongly align with this understanding imbue authority with a lot of powers (to interpret law and overthrow regimes) and yet understand this as ‘democracy’. This mindset lowers the likelihood of political participation – and so in instances when large scale public protests are occurring (for instance the Arab Spring), there are multiple chances for cross-wires to occur over exactly what elements of the population are acting democratically.

## 6.6 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated what impact different conceptualisations of democracy have on informal political participation, in the process showing how important it is to look above and beyond simple support for democracy, to make sure *understanding* of democracy is accounted for.

The two conceptualisations of democracy generated by this thesis have significant but contrasting effects. The compound understanding has a consistently positive relationship with participating, whereas the authoritarian understanding has a consistently negative one. These effects are present even when controlling for other long-standing theoretical explanations of political participation, including resource theory, social capital and cognitive engagement

Much of what drives participation seems to be at the individual level of analysis, however, some can be identified at the contextual level, predominantly a cultural effect, according to Huntington’s classifications of civilizations. Buddhist and Islamic countries appear consistently less likely to participate when compared with Western ones.

From these results, this chapter presented a group of citizens classed as ‘hard-to-reach’, citizens who score higher than average on the authoritarian conceptualisation of democracy, and had low levels of educational attainment, low trust in people and no membership of any associational groups. For the least democratic regimes in the WVS, it was shown that these hard-to-reach citizens constituted a significant proportion of the population, around 20%, but up to almost half in some cases. The implications of the democratization was discussed for these citizens, with the argument that the process could be problematic, as their character traits suggest a potential for apathy in, or even resistance to, a democratic or democratizing regime.

My overall finding matches the fourth of my possible outcomes for this analysis:

1. Both support and conceptualisation have an effect. Therefore, we can argue that both are important when looking into non-institutionalised political participation.

But with the additional argument that in many ways, measuring support on its own is not enough. Dig beneath the surface to look at understandings of democracy, and not just support, and a far more nuanced picture emerges.

Throughout this chapter I have been driven by objectives 3.1 and 3.2 as outlined in Chapter 1, which were to determine what impact the understanding components have on non-institutionalised behaviour and compare this impact with that of other predominant theories in the field, respectively. This leaves only a concluding chapter, in which I provide an overview of the thesis, and tackle objective 3.3, to evaluate the success of the approach I have taken throughout this analysis, and outline further potential research in this area of study.

# Conclusions

**So far we have talked about the gap between what scholars, philosophers, and teachers have said about the ordinary man ought to do in a democracy and what in fact he does. But what about the ordinary man himself? What does he think he should do? (Almond & Verba 1963, p.163)**

This final chapter summarises and draws together the main findings and results of the thesis. It outlines how these help build upon the literature in this field by highlighting the existing weaknesses in approaches towards how we measure citizen understandings of democracy. It demonstrates how this alternative approach was taken further and used to help provide some explanation for political participation, over and above the existing literature.

The chapter begins by returning to the aims and objectives as laid out in Chapter 1, and outlines how these were achieved throughout the thesis, whilst highlighting what the results have been along the way. After this, some limitations of my approach are discussed, linked to suggestions of further areas of research which can be expanded upon. Finally, there is a brief concluding summary.

## 7.1 Research Findings and Results: Returning to the Aims and Objectives

In Chapter 1 I outlined the three core aims of this thesis, and made the important point that they are inter-linked and work as aims within sequential steps of analysis, with each aim building on the previous one. In brief, the three aims were: to produce dimensions of citizen understandings of democracy; explain them; and test their impact on political behaviour. I will now discuss how these core aims and the more specific objectives were completed throughout this thesis.

### Aim 1. Produce dimensions of citizen understandings of democracy

The first aim of this project was the core concern of Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4. Within Chapter 1 and predominantly in Chapter 2, the Literature Review, I tackled three objectives under this aim:

* 1. *To detail the motivation behind this study: that measurements of democratic support have become meaningless when we do not know how the term ‘democracy’ is understood;*
  2. *To investigate the development of theoretical conceptualisations of democracy, to outline what role the knowledge and support of citizens play in a democratic regime;*
  3. *To produce a literature review to identify contemporary studies that have started to examine citizen understandings of democracy;*

Across the broad sweep of theoretical approaches to democracy – from minimalist, Schumpeterian conceptions through to deliberative accounts – and through the alternative approaches to democratization – from macro to micro and the consolidation framework – I looked at what role ‘the people’ were expected to play (Sections 2.1-2.2). In this I found a wide variety of expectations, from providing a simple majority vote in the procedural accounts through to complex expectations of engagement and participation in the deliberative accounts. However, even in the theories where the people were most relegated to the side-lines of the political system, it is clear that there must be a degree of political knowledge and a certain type of civic culture for a democracy to work (Sections 2.3). Citizens must vote to provide legitimacy for the system, they are expected to be knowledgeable enough at the very least to cast a vote and use the system in this way, and they are expected, when providing support to a political system, to conceptualise the system at different levels, from politicians to political parties to much broader notions of the system as a whole (Easton 1957; 1965; 1975).

This differential of levels of political support is important. It means that should a citizen disagree with the policy output of a democratic government, they will understand that it came about through a democratic procedure. And so citizens are expected, even if they show a strong dislike for government, political parties or politicians, to support the broader abstract idea of democracy.

From my discussion, I came to make the following three points:

1. To effectively support democracy, citizens must be knowledgeable of democracy

Yet:

1. Examinations of citizen support for democracy frequently *assume* a shared understanding of democracy

And so:

1. Reported levels of support for democracy have a limited theoretical ability to explain political behaviour

This argument led me to highlight the importance of a growing field of study which is focusing on taking a step back, in a sense, to unpick what support for democracy means in much more detail by actually looking at how the idea of democracy is understood by citizens.

In many ways this isn’t new when it comes to democratic theory and democratization – it is implicit in much of the work on political support and civic culture – however, it is only much more recently that empirical analysis has turned the spotlight directly on this issue, addressing a citizen’s substantive understanding of democracy, as opposed to their support for the idea (Section 2.4).

In this section I addressed the recent studies on this topic across different levels of focus: global, regional and national. Three of the global studies (Cho 2015; Welzel 2013; Norris 2011) were published at various points during the undertaking of this study, and use the same dataset. A fourth (Dalton et al. 2008) was part of the original inspiration for my focus on this subject. Together they address the issue of democratic understanding from an international, or global, perspective. They also take what I have called a ‘civics test’ approach, by taking their questions on democracy and building a test of *how well* citizen’s understand, or prioritise, the liberal democratic characteristics. Whilst Dalton et al. (2008) ended with quite an optimistic understanding that liberal democracy was widely understood, the other studies were more cautious, arguing that most respondents failed their tests.

In comparison, the regional approaches, particularly those across Latin America (Canache 2012; Carlin & Singer 2011), and national-level studies in Mexico (Schedler and Sarsfield 2007), Chile (Carlin, 2011) and Russia (Carnaghan, 2011) take rather more exploratory approaches, either using empirical techniques such as cluster analysis or more qualitative approaches such as interviews. Their conclusions are also rather cautious. Finally, a national-level study in Finland (Bengtsson and Christensen, 2014), again taking theoretically-determined approach, came to the conclusion that not only do respondents think about democracy differently, but these understandings of democracy *effect their political behaviour*.

From these studies, two quotes made it clear where future research could focus. The first was from Schedler and Sarsfield (2007, p.654) who used cluster analysis on survey results from Mexico:

“Rather than resigning ourselves to the meaninglessness of overt democratic support, we should strive to uncover its structure of meaning by reading it in the context of individual attitudes towards more specific components of liberal democracy – be they conceptual, institutional or normative.”

And secondly, from the Finnish study (Bengtsson & Christensen 2014, p.234), who, after arguing that conceptualisations of democracy influence political behaviour, made the following request for further research:

”Research from other contexts is therefore necessary to establish how well the conclusions drawn here apply to other settings”

I used these suggestions to outline how I would add to this field of study: by taking the more exploratory analysis from the regional/national levels and applying it to the global level, and, furthermore, trying to confirm Bengtsson and Christensen’s findings that conceptualisations of democracy effect political behaviour, but across a much broader selection of contexts.

From this I moved towards the following two objectives in Chapter 3:

* 1. *Use the literature in objectives 1.1 – 1.3 to identify the most appropriate data and methodological approach for producing my own dimensions of democratic understanding*
  2. *Examine what theoretical expectations are borne out in the descriptive data*

This chapter outlined how the WVS2005-2008 and the battery of questions on democratic characteristics provide the best test for looking at an understanding of democracy from an international perspective (Section 3.1). It then provided an in-depth examination of the questions with descriptive statistics and a link to their theoretical origins (Section 3.2-3.3). The analysis showed that from this initial exploration of the data there was some disjuncture between the theoretical expectations and the results, with the populist and social characteristics scoring unexpectedly high. It became clear that a dimensional approach would help further our understanding of how these characteristics ‘hang together’ in the minds of citizens, and this was the core aim of Chapter 4:

* 1. *Using the data, produce a framework of how citizens themselves understand democracy.*

As I deliberately eschewed a stand-alone methods chapter, the first half of my exploration of democratic conceptualisations was given over to outlining how principal components analysis (PCA) provided the most useful statistical technique for me to utilise and pursue my interest of examining conceptualisations of democracy by exploring survey data in a way that allowed the underlying conceptual mappings of citizens to take precedence over a theoretically predetermined structure; this is of course within the limitations of secondary survey data analysis with a provided battery of questions. I provided background on the workings and main issues surrounding PCA, and argued how I believed these offered an improvement over the civics test approaches used by Cho (2015), Norris (2011) and Welzel (2013) in particular (Section 4.1-4.2).

Two dimensions of citizen understandings of democracy were then produced using principal components analysis; one which was labelled as a *compound* understanding, and one which was labelled as an *authoritarian* understanding (Section 4.3). The compound understanding – named after Satori’s (1987b) observation that the system of liberal democracy is a compound of ideas – showed itself to be a hodgepodge of characteristics that defied the clear-cut theoretical definitions of other civics test approaches. It demonstrated, if not a ‘everything and the kitchen sink’ approach to democracy , then at least a broad understanding when the term is examined from an international perspective. Liberal elements constitute the core of the idea, but populist sentiments concerning economic growth and criminal punishment are also important, and there is further a space for the social notion of providing unemployment aid. Many theorists would indeed see these as potential *outputs* in a democracy, not constitutive elements, yet citizens see it differently.

The second element is authoritarian it that it holds essential to democracy ideas which are associated much more with authorities who do not have an inherent democratic notion of accountability: authorities from religious and military powers (Section 4.4). The results show how these understandings were mapped out across counties and how these results were also combined (Section 4.5). Highlighted was the fact that, since these are dimensional understandings, they are not compartmentalised ones such as those which would have been produced by a cluster analysis approach. Individuals score on both of them. I then showed how people could simultaneously buy into *both* concepts of democracy, a scenario which my analysis showed was particularly the case in countries such as Vietnam, Egypt, and Jordan.

Chapter 4 then completed the first set of objectives under the first aim, and allowed me to move onto my second aim.

### Aim 2. Outline what individual characteristics, and what national contexts, explain these dimensions of understanding

The second aim of this thesis was to interrogate these conceptualisations of democracy to try and explain how they come about. Because an international perspective on democracy was produced from across different countries, I had two levels of interest which informed the two objectives of this section:

*2.1 With reference to theoretical expectations analyse the individual variables that explain different understanding of democracy; and*

*2.2 With references to theoretical expectations analyse the contextual variables that explain different understandings of democracy.*

Both these aims were tackled in Chapter 5 where I outlined numerous theories which might help explain these varying conceptualisations of democracy. This section demonstrated that the four areas of interest under scrutiny – modernization, social capital, cognitive engagement and religiosity – all have a part to play in helping us to understand what might inform the two different understandings of democracy.

Before discussing the results, I should point out again that the first half of this chapter was also important in justifying my methodological approach at this stage of the analysis. Here I introduced my use of multilevel modelling (MLM), a regression technique which allows the simultaneous examination of different ‘levels’ of analysis, and so making it well suited to my interest in the influence of both individual and contextual factors.

Higher levels of educational attainment is associated with people more strongly buying into the compound understanding, as is increased political interest, media use, and social trust. Higher institutional trust lowered a respondent’s score on the compound understanding. These effects appear robust and consistent across context.

The effect of income on the compound understanding of democracy however was contingent on income inequality and levels of development. In developing countries with low levels of inequality, there appears to be no difference in the attitudes towards the compound democracy between those who see themselves as the best off in their society and those who see themselves as the worst off – both are very high (around 9 out of 10 on the compound scale). However, as inequality increases this favouring of the compound understanding drops, but it drops much more precipitously for the best off. At the highest level of inequality it drops to 7 out of ten for the worst off, and less than 6 out of ten for the best off. This finding aligns most closely to Boix’s (2003) theorising on inequality and democratization – that in highly unequal countries the rich see themselves as having too much to lose from the redistributive effects of democracy and so will resist any kind of transition.

Religiosity had no discernible effects on the compound understanding, and neither did the different types of faith. At the contextual level, what mattered a great deal was that those in the Not Free and Partly Free countries scored much higher on this understanding of democracy in comparison to those in Free countries. It appears that not having access or experience of democracy does not limit the respondents understanding of it, when it comes to this compound understanding, which is anchored on important liberal characteristics. However, what would be interesting and what merits further examination is the degree to which this global understanding of democracy is shaped by particular countries in the dataset. I discuss this in the later section on areas for further study.

Certain parts of this story are reversed for the authoritarian understanding of democracy. For instance, those with lower education, a lack of interest in politics, higher trust in institutions, and a lower trust in people at large were more likely to buy into this understanding. Membership in groups only seemed to have a negative effect when the respondent was in two or more groups, and media use did not seem to have an influence – however, the examinations of interaction effects provided a more nuanced picture here, which I will discuss in a moment. The more religious an individual was the more they bought into this understanding, although those who considered themselves Protestant scored lower than those who were atheist. On balance, whilst it may boost an authoritarian understanding of democracy, religiosity had no effect on the compound understanding, and so it does not appear to be quite the concrete obstacle to democracy as it is sometimes painted to be, and neither do the non-Christian faiths (Huntington 1993).

At the national level, the development of a country (as measured by HDI) and the freedom of its press mattered. In both instances, when these were lower, the authoritarian understanding of democracy was increased in comparison to more developed countries and those with a freer press. In the less free countries this authoritarian understanding was also more prevalent.

And so it was that the interactions between individual and contextual level variables also proved insightful in trying to explain these understandings of democracy, in particular the authoritarian one (I have already addressed the one on income and inequality). For instance, the information environment (Jerit, Barabas and Bolsen, 2006), that is the broader context in which citizens gain their information and media, was shown to have an effect on media use for the authoritarian understanding; in countries with very limited press freedom, individuals scored significantly higher on this understanding in comparison to those in countries with a free press. Therefore we might realistically posit that when a repressive regime interferes in the availability of information for its citizens, there is a potential for it to influence citizens into thinking that democracy is actually a system that requires unaccountable and strong authorities i.e. the system that is already present.

Furthermore, interaction effects examining group membership and the openness of the regime (as measured by Freedom House) suggested that for the compound understanding of democracy there is some evidence that social capital as understood in this way might not have the hoped for positive effect under a repressive regime. Indeed, my analysis suggested that in such regimes, those who are highly active members in civil society groups may lean away from the compound understanding of democracy, in comparison to those who are not heavily involved at all. As Rossteutscher (2010, p.752) put it, this finding could, in some contexts, be one that ‘throws a spanner in the works of democratization’.

Finally then, the results showed that many of the theoretical expectations were borne out in the analysis. Social capital, modernization and cognitive engagement appeared to play an important role. The final step of my thesis was to then take these understandings of democracy, and see if they themselves had an influence on political behaviour.

### Aim 3. Examine what impact these understandings have on political participation

The final substantive analytical section of the thesis was an attempt to show that what could have be seen as ‘academic exercise’ with limited consequence – an general interest in what individuals think democracy is – can actually be argued to have important ramifications for the political behaviour of those individuals. In Chapter 6 I focused on the following two objectives within my third aim:

*3.1 Determine what impact the understanding components have on non-institutionalised, informal political participation;*

*3.2 Compare this impact with that of other predominant theories in the field*

I chose informal, non-institutionalised political participation as a focus in order to test the effect of the two conceptualisations of democracy at a broad a level as possible (Section 6.1). Institutionalised participation, in particular voting, was restricted to only certain countries in the dataset, and also presupposes a particular mechanism is already in existence (even if it is not free or fair). However, non-institutionalised participation offers a chance to look at something more integral to civil society, that is, citizens involving themselves in political behaviour to express their grievances or political opinions in the hope of producing an outcome that suits them (even it if is not policy change *per se*).

In this chapter MLM was again the technique chosen, but this time it was a logit analysis, as the result had a binary outcome : ‘have done’ combined with ‘would considered doing’ a type of political act versus ‘would never do’. The three acts analysed were signing a petition, boycotting, and demonstrating (Section 6.4).

An initial analysis of trends over time used 5 waves of the World Waves survey from the wave conducted in 1981-1984 through to the latest wave added in 2010-2014 (released during the course of this thesis – see Section 7.3 below for more information). The results showed limited evidence of any clear trends of behaviour (Section 6.5). Patterns were difficult to confirm as many countries did not have enough data points. The averages across countries appeared skewed by some very low results. Egypt and Morocco in particular saw a drop in activity, particularly in the final wave. This could be as a result of the political turmoil in North Africa following the Arab Spring, but it is not possible to be sure. In general, results in this section were inconclusive. However, what did seem to be the case was that the developed countries had higher levels of participation in boycotts and petitioning then the developing countries (as classed by HDI).

Next, to examine the influence of the democratic conceptualisations on informal political behaviour, they were examined alongside popular explanations for participation – grievance theory, resource theory, social capital, cognitive engagement, and religiosity (discussed in Section 6.2). These alternative approaches in general provided consistent results with higher resources, social capital and cognitive engagement all boosting the odds that someone would participate. Grievance theory suggested that those who weren’t happy with their income would participate, but this effect was stronger for those who already had a high degree of income. And whilst higher levels of religiosity showed themselves to decrease the odds of participating, the results for different faiths were rather inconsistent and inconclusive. At the country level HDI, press freedom and democratic history all had positive relationships with such activity, whereas the Not Free and communist classifications tended to decrease likelihood.

The understandings of democracy variables showed consistent results across all three types of political activity. The more someone bought into the compound understanding, the higher the odds of participating, and the more someone bought into the authoritarian understanding, the lower the odds of participating. Importantly, these variables had an effect above and beyond the effect that support for democracy had, measured in terms of how important the individual thought it was to live in a democracy, and whether democracy was a good system or not. This test then provides evidence that understandings of democracy need to be taken seriously, because they have explanatory power when it comes to informal political participation on top of those variables which examine support for democracy in the abstract.

Taken together, my thesis has shown that taking an exploratory approach towards examining how citizens understand democracy has numerous benefits in comparison to a ‘civics test’ approach. It can provide the researcher with a dimensional understanding of democracy generated by the priorities of citizens, not limited by the theoretical frameworks imposed by the researcher. Furthermore, these different ways that citizens understand democracy have a clear effect on their political behaviour, and they should be taken seriously. They substantively move our understanding and analytical depth forward beyond only looking at support for democracy in the abstract.

The following section now outlines the limitations present in this study, and looks at how these can be tackled with further research.

## 7.3 Limitations and Further Research

The first limitation to consider is that raised in Chapter 4, Section 4.2, of taking a global approach which subsumes potential national level differences in democratic conceptualisations. This thesis was concerned with outlining how exploratory approaches could produce understandings of democracy, explaining these understandings of democracy, and testing to see if they influenced behaviour. The thesis was an attempt to explain across broad contexts that this focus mattered (Bengtsson and Christensen, 2014). However, by taking the broad, international perspective towards democratic understandings that I have, this has closed off another avenue of analysis, which is how this battery of questions could be explored on a country-by-country basis.

In this thesis I can demonstrate how closely certain countries align with a ‘global’ understanding of democracy, and look at the explanatory factors behind this alignment. But I am not able to show if countries have in fact, at their national level, a different structure of democratic understanding completely. Different country conceptualisations are submerged within this framework. This remains an important limitation. It was felt early on in the thesis that the global level of analysis was where it was important to show how conceptualisations could be examined and impacts examined, compared to the civics test approaches (Norris, 2011; Welzel, 2013; Cho, 2015) and to further bolster the fledging research in this area which had tentatively suggested that this sort of analysis would bear fruit (Bengtsson and Christensen, 2014) in demonstrating that how democracy is understood influences political participation. Therefore, if results were to be found demonstrating at the broadest possible scale that conceptualisations of democracy effected political behaviour (which they have been), then this forms an important argument for taking this approach seriously, and justifies future research at the national level. An extensive comparative-exploratory approach undertaken at the national was felt to be too cumbersome and unwieldly in the space of this thesis (for instance by running 46 PCAs and then forming a classification system), however, future research could certainly look to see if regional patterns exist, for example. In this future analysis, country experts would be able to bring their knowledge to explain why democratic conceptualisations might be different in a certain context, something I could not do with such an extensive cross-national dataset.

A second limitation is that this analysis is a static one. As it stands, using one survey collected at one moment in time provides only a snapshot of how people might understand democracy. This issue runs through much of the studies I outlined in my literature review on this subject (Cho 2015; Welzel 2013; Norris 2011; Damarys Canache 2012; D Canache 2012b; Carnaghan 2011; Schedler & Sarsfield 2007; Dalton et al. 2008; Dalton et al. 2007). During the course of this thesis the follow-up World Values Survey Wave 2010-2014 was released: the first release was in April 2014, but official launch of the clean dataset was not until January 2016. Although the thesis was very far through at this point, the data potentially could have provided some sort of robustness check or comparison, however, there were two problems. Firstly, the dataset contains a different selection of countries; this would have meant significantly lowering the number of countries under examination to make the best comparison over time. And secondly, crucially, the next survey wave did not include the same selection of questions.

The battery of questions in the follow-up wave dropped the populist characteristics on criminal punishment and prospering economy. This seems perhaps surprising, since these were popular answers. The issues around whether these variables were in fact policy preferences possibly informed this decision, but this now limits the ability to demonstrate that citizens blend policy outputs and democratic characteristics together. In their place is a characteristic concerning ‘people obey their rulers’ and also ‘The state makes people’s incomes more equal’ (which still has a contested conceptual relationship to policy output). This second choice is also an unusual one perhaps, as ‘Government’s tax the rich and subsidize the poor’ remains in the battery, and there is arguably some overlap in the principle being examined here. The characteristic on referenda is also dropped, leaving the battery with only 9 characteristics in total; there is therefore no simple way to examine the concepts of democracy across the two waves.

However, this does not mean it could not be attempted in further research. Analysis could look at this in two ways; either whittling down the two batteries of questions so that only the same questions are used in a PCA, or, running a PCA on the new set to see if again there is evidence of a similar split into two conceptualisations. Very preliminary analysis taking this secondary route suggests this might be the case (see Figure 7.1). It seems that there is again a clear authoritarian dimension, with the ‘People obey their leaders’ also showing in that dimension. And the state interventionist social policies in income equalization straddle the two dimensions, without really shaping either too strongly. However, as with the two dimensions found in this thesis, the unemployment safety net loads along with the liberal democratic characteristics. Arguably, this notion of a compound understanding of democracy, which is not theoretically clear-cut, might again be present, opposite an authoritarian one. Therefore, this suggests a potential avenue of research in the future – how do citizens conceptualise the difference between outputs of democracy and democratic procedures, and what are the implications of this?

Figure 7:1 PCA loadings for Absolute Values (WVS2010-2014)

|  | *1* | *2* |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Free Elections | **.772** | -.064 |
| Equal Gender Rights | **.728** | -.054 |
| Civil Rights | **.754** | *.059* |
| State Aid | **.670** | .272 |
| Tax Subsidies | **.457** | .392 |
| State Equalizes Income | .415 | **.547** |
| People Obey Rulers | .192 | **.594** |
| Army Intervention | -.059 | **.726** |
| Religious Authorities | -.130 | **.759** |
| Eigenvalue | 2.88 | 1.69 |
| % of Variance | 32.0% | 18.8% |
| *N* | 78,955 | |
| Countries | 60 | |

It seems that there is again a clear authoritarian dimension, with the ‘People obey their leaders’ also showing in that dimension. And the state interventionist social policies in income equalization straddle the two dimensions, without really shaping either too strongly. However, as with the two dimensions found in this thesis, the unemployment safety net loads along with the liberal democratic characteristics. Arguably, this notion of a compound understanding of democracy, which is not theoretically clear-cut, might again be present, opposite an authoritarian one. Therefore, this suggests a potential avenue of research in the future – how do citizens conceptualise the difference between outputs of democracy and democratic procedures, and what are the implications of this?

A final limitation with this exploratory approach to conceptualisation is that the exploration is only as open as the set of questions which are available. In the case of using secondary data, the questions are pre-determined, and, as I discussed in Chapter 3, Section 2.2, they are added to the survey on the grounds of stringent theoretical justification (as would be expected). However, it should be noted that the second component of understanding the authoritarian one explained a relatively low degree of variance in the data. Much more needs to be done untangling the two facets of religious and military authority and their relationship to democratic structures and understanding. Indeed, after popular and longstanding assumptions concerning secularism and liberal democracy (see discussion in Elshtain, 2009), it is only more recently that understanding how religious attitudes intertwine with authoritarian and democratic ones has re-emerged as an area of theoretical concern (Collins and Owen, 2012; Grzymala-Busse, 2012; Vlas and Gherghina, 2012; Minkenberg, 2007; Fox, 2006, 2011; but see Stepan, 2000). A deeper exploration of a citizen understanding of democracy would require an in-depth qualitative study, but then this would limit the ability in which to make any broader comparisons or look at effects on political behaviour at the international level as done here. However, I do believe that from the findings of this thesis the case can be made when moving forward that surveys on political values and behaviours would benefit from containing questions that address the substantive understandings of democracy, and not just support for it.

The questions would not need to simply replicate those which were studied here (especially since they have already changed in the follow-up survey wave). But if an exploratory approach was taken, then again it could be examined to see if other results replicate the overriding findings here: that citizens draw from different theoretical traditions when outlining their ideas on democracy, and importantly, many believe certain ideas that really cannot be classed as democratic are democratic.

Some recent studies have looked at the notion of ‘stealth democrats’ (Webb 2013; Hibbing & Theiss-Morse 2002) that is, citizens who take the view of democracy that they want it run in the background of their lives and demand as little of them as possible. They are happy not to understand the mechanisms of policy-making, or be involved. Some have argued that this is essentially ‘populist’ and, should it take an anti-establishment viewpoint, may lead to citizens showing little patience for political compromise (Webb 2013, p.761). Others however (Neblo *et al.*, 2010) have argued – using evidence from field experiments in the US where citizens were invited into an online forum to deliberate with members of congress online – that whilst stealth democrats are demobilized by elite partisan politics and elections, they actually benefit and want to engage and participate in deliberative democratic acts. These complex and developing conceptualisations of how citizens understand democracy could certainly feed into larger batteries of questions on the meaning of democracy for different people in different places.

Alongside this limitation in terms of the variables examining understandings of democracy, are limitations with those variables that proxy for explanatory and alternative theories in the regression modelling. It is always worth being cautious about the degree to which survey variables capture the complexities of theories: for instance, I attempt to improve on past tests of grievance theory through an interaction effect, but the test remains simplistic. The models that attempt to explain the compound understanding of democracy with notions of cognitive engagement, social capital, modernization and religiosity had relatively low exploratory power, and this is something to consider in the future when attempting to examine and identify alternative theories of how it is that democracy comes to be understood by citizens.

## 7.4 Concluding Statement

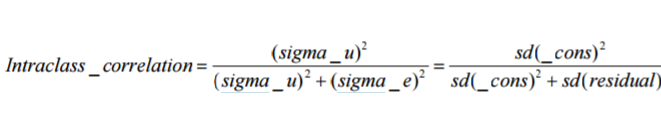
However it is that research into democracy – whether the focus is on democratic theory, political support, political participation and behaviour, democratization, etc. – moves forward, this thesis makes the point that analysis of how ‘the people’ understand democracy can, and should, be understood as a crucial part of the puzzle. For a system ‘of the people, by the people, for the people’ (Lincoln, 1863), those who study it should do well to ask the people just how they might be understanding such a thing.

**"People who want to understand democracy should spend less time in the library with Aristotle and more time on buses and in the subway" (Simeon Strunsky, 1944 – quoted in Jay 2012)**

# Appendix

## Section A

The formula to calculate the intraclass correlation (ICC) for Figure 3.4 is as follows:



The following figures show adapted Stata output for null models for each democratic characteristic, using a maximum likelihood mixed-effects multilevel model (mixed). The ICC is estimated using ‘estat icc’.

For each model the number of observations is 45,454 and the number of countries is 46. The minimum number of observations is 474 (Bulgaria) and the maximum is 2273 (Iran). The average number per country is 990.1

**Figure A1: Null Model - Elections (Adapted Stata output)**

Log-likelihood: -98470.908

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Elections*** | **Coef.** | **Std. Err.** | | **z** | **P>|z|** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Constant** | 8.540588 | .0778876 | | 109.65 | 0.000 | 8.387931 8.693245 |
|  | | |  | |  |  |
| **Random Effect Parameters** | | | **Estimate** | | **Std.Err.** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country sd(\_cons)** | | | .2740261 | | .057976 | .1810099 .4148408 |
| **sd(residual)** | | | 4.402282 | | .0291871 | 4.345446 4.459861 |

LR test vs. linear regression: chibar2(01) = 3076.86 Prob >= chibar2 = 0.0000

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Level** | **ICC** | **Std. Error** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country** | .0585988 | .0585988 | .0394855 .0861343 |

**Figure A2: Null Model – Gender Equality (Adapted Stata output)**

Log-likelihood: -99009.353

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Equality*** | **Coef.** | **Std. Err.** | | **z** | **P>|z|** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Constant** | 8.652236 | .0892364 | | 96.96 | 0.000 | 8.477336 8.827136 |
|  | | |  | |  |  |
| **Random Effect Parameters** | | | **Estimate** | | **Std.Err.** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country sd(\_cons)** | | | .3611504 | | .0762134 | .2388138 .5461561 |
| **sd(residual)** | | | 4.50648 | | .0298779 | 4.448299 4.565422 |

LR test vs. linear regression: chibar2(01) = 3850.67 Prob >= chibar2 = 0.0000

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Level** | **ICC** | **Std. Error** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country** | .0741943 | .0145028 | .0503165 .1081134 |

**Figure A3: Null Model – Civil Rights (Adapted Stata output)**

Log-likelihood: -102474.29

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Civ. Rights*** | **Coef.** | **Std. Err.** | | **z** | **P>|z|** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Constant** | 7.957743 | .1239429 | | 64.20 | 0.000 | 7.714819 8.200667 |
|  | | |  | |  |  |
| **Random Effect Parameters** | | | **Estimate** | | **Std.Err.** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country sd(\_cons)** | | | .7006431 | | .1471002 | .4642874 1.057321 |
| **sd(residual)** | | | 5.244398 | | .0347703 | 5.17669 5.312991 |

LR test vs. linear regression: chibar2(01) = 6297.94Prob >= chibar2 = 0.0000

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Level** | **ICC** | **Std. Error** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country** | .1178534 | .0218383 | .0813145 .1678119 |

**Figure A4: Null Model – Referendum (Adapted Stata output)**

Log-likelihood: -103953.28

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Referendum*** | **Coef.** | **Std. Err.** | | **z** | **P>|z|** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Constant** | 7.893523 | .1170851 | | 67.42 | 0.000 | 7.664041 8.123006 |
|  | | |  | |  |  |
| **Random Effect Parameters** | | | **Estimate** | | **Std.Err.** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country sd(\_cons)** | | | .6242064 | | .1313029 | .4133106 .9427138 |
| **sd(residual)** | | | 5.597318 | | .0371102 | 5.525054 5.670527 |

LR test vs. linear regression: chibar2(01) = 5117.18 Prob >= chibar2 = 0.0000

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Level** | **ICC** | **Std. Error** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country** | .1003301 | .0189968 | . 06875 .1441708 |

**Figure A5: Null Model – Economy (Adapted Stata output)**

Log-likelihood: -102904.48

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Economy*** | **Coef.** | **Std. Err.** | | **z** | **P>|z|** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Constant** | 7.695083 | .1303056 | | 59.05 | 0.000 | 7.439689 7.950477 |
|  | | |  | |  |  |
| **Random Effect Parameters** | | | **Estimate** | | **Std.Err.** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country sd(\_cons)** | | | .774943 | | .1627387 | . 513472 1.169561 |
| **sd(residual)** | | | 5.34397 | | .0354305 | 5.274977 5.413866 |

LR test vs. linear regression: chibar2(01) = 6143.05 Prob >= chibar2 = 0.0000

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Level** | **ICC** | **Std. Error** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country** | .1266472 | .0232394 | .0876449 .1795892 |

**Figure A6: Null Model – Criminal Punishment (Adapted Stata output)**

Log-likelihood: -108290.23

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Punish*** | **Coef.** | **Std. Err.** | | **z** | **P>|z|** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Constant** | 7.525752 | .1405976 | | 53.53 | 0.000 | 7.250185 7.801318 |
|  | | |  | |  |  |
| **Random Effect Parameters** | | | **Estimate** | | **Std.Err.** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country sd(\_cons)** | | | .9015657 | | .1894938 | .5971581 1.361148 |
| **sd(residual)** | | | 6.770376 | | .0448876 | 6.682967 6.858928 |

LR test vs. linear regression: chibar2(01) = 5548.15 Prob >= chibar2 = 0.0000

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Level** | **ICC** | **Std. Error** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country** | .1175147 | .021808 | .0810371 .1674205 |

**Figure A7: Null Model – Unemployment Aid (Adapted Stata output)**

Log-likelihood: -106671.84

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Aid*** | **Coef.** | **Std. Err.** | | **z** | **P>|z|** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Constant** | 7.319228 | .1300591 | | 56.28 | 0.000 | 7.064317 7.574139 |
|  | | |  | |  |  |
| **Random Effect Parameters** | | | **Estimate** | | **Std.Err.** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country sd(\_cons)** | | | .7708911 | | .1620391 | .5105908 1.163893 |
| **sd(residual)** | | | 6.306461 | | .0418118 | 6.225041 6.388945 |

LR test vs. linear regression: chibar2(01) = 5424.45 Prob >= chibar2 = 0.0000

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Level** | **ICC** | **Std. Error** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country** | .1089237 | .0204119 | .0748847 .1558289 |

**Figure A8: Null Model – Tax Subsidies (Adapted Stata output)**

Log-likelihood: -110864.88

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Tax*** | **Coef.** | **Std. Err.** | | **z** | **P>|z|** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Constant** | 6.474192 | .1352197 | | 47.88 | 0.000 | 6.209166 6.739217 |
|  | | |  | |  |  |
| **Random Effect Parameters** | | | **Estimate** | | **Std.Err.** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country sd(\_cons)** | | | .8324052 | | .1752608 | .5509555 1.257631 |
| **sd(residual)** | | | 7.582246 | | .0502703 | 7.484355 7.681417 |

LR test vs. linear regression: chibar2(01) = 4820.30 Prob >= chibar2 = 0.0000

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Level** | **ICC** | **Std. Error** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country** | .0989233 | .0187771 | .0677284 .1422933 |

**Figure A9: Null Model - Army (Adapted Stata output)**

Log-likelihood: -113551

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Army*** | **Coef.** | **Std. Err.** | | **z** | **P>|z|** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Constant** | 4.239797 | .1831212 | | 23.15 | 0.00 | 3.880886 4.598708 |
|  | | |  | |  |  |
| **Random Effect Parameters** | | | **Estimate** | | **Std.Err.** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country sd(\_cons)** | | | 1.24 | | 0.13 | 1.01-1.52 |
| **sd(residual)** | | | 2.92 | | 0.01 | 2.90-2.93 |

LR test vs. linear regression: chibar2(01) = 7489.17 Prob >= chibar2 = 0.0000

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Level** | **ICC** | **Std. Error** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country** | .1523625 | .0271089 | .1064432 .2133611 |

**Figure A10: Null Model – Religious Authorities (Adapted Stata output)**

Log-likelihood: -108201.4

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Relig. Auth.*** | **Coef.** | **Std. Err.** | | **z** | **P>|z|** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Constant** | 4.067546 | .2105495 | | 19.32 | 0.00 | 3.654877 4.480215 |
|  | | |  | |  |  |
| **Random Effect Parameters** | | | **Estimate** | | **Std.Err.** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country sd(\_cons)** | | | 2.031514 | | .4249828 | 1.348195 3.061167 |
| **sd(residual)** | | | 6.738489 | | .0446762 | 6.651492 6.826624 |

LR test vs. linear regression: chibar2(01) = 13341.92 Prob >= chibar2 = 0.0000

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Level** | **ICC** | **Std. Error** | **95% Conf. Interval** |
| **Country** | .2316435 | .0372523 | .1666891 .3124194 |

**Figure A11. Correlation analysis between national level variables**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **HDI** | **Press Freedom** | **Democratic History** | **GINI** |
| **HDI** | 1.00 |  |  |  |
| **Press Freedom** | 0.40 | 1.00 |  |  |
| **Democratic History** | 0.68 | 0.65 | 1.00 |  |
| **GINI** | -0.36 | -0.08 | -0.26 | 1.00 |

## Section B

**This analysis is discussed in in Chapter 4 (Section 4:2 – Missing Data)**

***Figure B1: Percentage of respondents not answering each question, and overall sample used in the final PCA***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **% of respondents with a missing answer** | | | | | | | | | | **Overall % sample after PCA** |
| **Country** | **Tax** | **Relig.** | **Elections** | **Aid** | **Army** | **Civ.Rights** | **Economy** | **Criminal** | **Ref** | **Equal.** |
| Australia | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.7 | 2.4 | 2.7 | 2.9 | 2.7 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 2.1 | 95.8 |
| Brazil | 6.5 | 8.0 | 4.6 | 5.3 | 7.2 | 7.4 | 6.9 | 7.3 | 5.8 | 4.4 | 84.5 |
| Britain | 3.6 | 5.9 | 3.4 | 4.0 | 4.9 | 6.8 | 6.1 | 3.2 | 5.1 | 1.7 | 86.6 |
| Bulgaria | 10.4 | 18.6 | 5.3 | 5.2 | 17.3 | 12.5 | 7.6 | 6.0 | 11.2 | 5.0 | 69.4 |
| Burkina Faso | 13.1 | 16.4 | 9.0 | 12.4 | 14.6 | 14.7 | 12.0 | 10.6 | 15.0 | 8.9 | 80.2 |
| Canada | 4.4 | 5.3 | 2.0 | 2.2 | 6.9 | 8.8 | 5.1 | 3.8 | 6.3 | 1.6 | 83.2 |
| Chile | 8.5 | 12.1 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 8.3 | 11.4 | 8.3 | 6.2 | 7.5 | 4.2 | 79.8 |
| China | 12.3 | 39.1 | 12.9 | 10.7 | 32.6 | 19.4 | 10.7 | 9.5 | 26.3 | 6.6 | 54.0 |
| Cyprus | 0.0 | 0.3 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.6 | 0.3 | 0.1 | 98.7 |
| Egypt | 0.7 | 2.7 | 0.2 | 0.7 | 2.0 | 3.1 | 1.3 | 0.5 | 1.0 | 0.4 | 96.7 |
| Ethiopia | 0.6 | 3.4 | 1.6 | 2.0 | 4.1 | 5.5 | 6.0 | 1.9 | 6.3 | 0.4 | 88.2 |
| Finland | 1.9 | 2.4 | 1.2 | 1.1 | 2.2 | 2.6 | 2.7 | 2.0 | 1.8 | 0.6 | 95.5 |
| France | 1.1 | 2.2 | 0.9 | 1.6 | 1.1 | 1.4 | 1.7 | 0.9 | 1.2 | 0.5 | 96.7 |
| Georgia | 13.4 | 21.3 | 3.3 | 6.4 | 17.2 | 5.2 | 7.0 | 8.2 | 6.5 | 5.5 | 67.1 |
| Germany | 3.6 | 2.6 | 1.1 | 1.9 | 3.3 | 1.3 | 3.1 | 1.4 | 2.0 | 1.1 | 93.0 |
| Ghana | 2.0 | 3.3 | 1.3 | 3.8 | 1.9 | 2.7 | 1.5 | 0.7 | 5.7 | 1.4 | 88.3 |
| India | 13.4 | 25.3 | 13.0 | 14.5 | 29.1 | 25.9 | 24.8 | 18.2 | 24.3 | 16.2 | 64.2 |
| Indonesia | 1.7 | 10.0 | 2.8 | 2.4 | 8.7 | 3.6 | 1.1 | 1.9 | 14.5 | 1.6 | 81.6 |
| Iran | 0.9 | 2.4 | 1.6 | 0.9 | 2.4 | 2.0 | 1.3 | 1.0 | 3.1 | 1.3 | 92.8 |
| Japan | 7.3 | 15.6 | 7.1 | 7.7 | 9.3 | 14.6 | 6.8 | 5.7 | 7.4 | 5.7 | 73.1 |
| Malaysia | 0.0 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 99.3 |
| Mali | 8.2 | 9.2 | 5.2 | 7.7 | 8.7 | 10.0 | 10.4 | 7.6 | 9.5 | 5.8 | 77.2 |
| Mexico | 6.6 | 7.9 | 4.9 | 7.1 | 7.6 | 8.5 | 6.8 | 6.2 | 10.2 | 4.6 | 87.5 |
| Moldova | 4.9 | 5.9 | 2.2 | 2.4 | 7.3 | 4.5 | 1.4 | 2.3 | 6.5 | 1.2 | 85.3 |
| Morocco | 12.3 | 20.1 | 14.2 | 11.1 | 22.0 | 20.1 | 15.6 | 12.0 | 18.2 | 10.6 | 70.3 |
| Netherlands | 3.1 | 4.8 | 2.0 | 1.1 | 3.6 | 2.9 | 2.2 | 1.4 | 4.8 | 1.5 | 90.1 |
| Norway | 1.2 | 1.1 | 0.7 | 1.0 | 1.5 | 2.1 | 1.6 | 1.3 | 1.1 | 1.2 | 97.2 |
| Peru | 4.6 | 9.4 | 4.5 | 4.9 | 7.6 | 8.2 | 4.4 | 4.0 | 7.3 | 2.6 | 83.4 |
| Poland | 9.4 | 10.1 | 5.8 | 6.3 | 7.6 | 6.8 | 6.2 | 6.3 | 8.3 | 4.6 | 82.5 |
| Romania | 8.3 | 12.1 | 6.4 | 9.9 | 14.0 | 11.3 | 7.0 | 6.2 | 16.0 | 7.2 | 80.0 |
| Russia | 4.0 | 11.6 | 3.1 | 1.7 | 12.2 | 2.9 | 2.4 | 3.7 | 7.8 | 1.9 | 79.0 |
| S Africa | 4.2 | 7.3 | 1.1 | 2.6 | 7.6 | 4.9 | 3.0 | 2.1 | 9.3 | 1.7 | 82.9 |
| S Korea | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.1 | 99.8 |
| Serbia | 9.9 | 8.8 | 7.8 | 8.4 | 15.0 | 11.0 | 9.2 | 9.8 | 11.3 | 8.3 | 81.5 |
| Slovenia | 9.7 | 11.8 | 7.3 | 8.5 | 14.6 | 11.2 | 9.2 | 8.8 | 9.3 | 7.1 | 80.1 |
| Spain | 7.9 | 7.8 | 3.7 | 3.4 | 6.3 | 5.9 | 5.4 | 4.6 | 5.3 | 3.6 | 84.1 |
| Sweden | 1.24 | 1.4 | 0.8 | 1.5 | 1.9 | 1.1 | 1.4 | 1.9 | 1.3 | 0.4 | 93.8 |
| Switzerland | 2.6 | 3.1 | 1.6 | 1.9 | 3.4 | 2.4 | 4.5 | 2.7 | 1.1 | 1.2 | 90.7 |
| Thailand | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.6 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.5 | 0.3 | 0.6 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 98.1 |
| Trin. & Tobago | 0.9 | 1.6 | 1.2 | 1.3 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 1.1 | 0.6 | 0.5 | 0.3 | 92.4 |
| Turkey | 2.9 | 4.7 | 1.9 | 3.0 | 6.1 | 2.9 | 3.0 | 3.7 | 2.7 | 1.6 | 89.6 |
| Ukraine | 9.7 | 20.8 | 5.9 | 6.3 | 14.2 | 9.2 | 7.4 | 10.0 | 9.2 | 6.6 | 71.0 |
| Uruguay | 4.8 | 5.7 | 2.8 | 4.2 | 4.4 | 5.4 | 3.5 | 3.7 | 3.6 | 3.0 | 91.3 |
| USA | 1.3 | 1.7 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.6 | 1.4 | 1.5 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1.1 | 97.4 |
| Vietnam | 4.8 | 11.5 | 3.1 | 4.3 | 13.5 | 3.3 | 3.0 | 2.1 | 5.0 | 1.9 | 80.3 |
| Zambia | 2.8 | 3.3 | 1.6 | 4.8 | 3.2 | 3.5 | 3.3 | 2.9 | 3.8 | 2.0 | 88.7 |
| **Average** | **5.1** | **8.3** | **3.7** | **4.3** | **7.9** | **6.4** | **5.0** | **4.3** | **6.7** | **3.3** | **86.8** |

Note: Before PCA is carried out, total *n* is 53,108. After listwise deletion total *n* = 45,545

The following are summaries of logistic regression models output for each individual characteristic Tax through to Equality and for the full PCA model which is after step-wise deletion of cases. Dependent variable is whether the respondent answered the question or not: Not answering question = 1, Answering question = 0.

**Figure B2: Likelihood of not answering question, or not included in the PCA - All respondents**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Likelihood of not answering question or being included in PCA [All coefficients significant at p<0.001]** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Variable** | **Tax** | **Relig.** | **Elections** | **Aid** | **Army** | **Civ.Rights** | **Economy** | **Criminal** | **Ref** | **Equal.** | **PCA** |
| Age | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.00 | 0.01 | 0.01 |
| Male | -0.51 | -0.43 | -0.61 | -0.50 | -0.51 | -0.51 | -0.51 | -0.52 | -0.47 | -0.34 | -0.39 |
| *Education (ref:Lower)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Middle | -0.72 | -0.67 | -1.02 | -0.90 | -0.72 | -1.00 | -0.92 | -0.84 | -0.92 | -1.00 | -0.53 |
| Higher | -1.36 | -1.36 | -1.87 | -1.63 | -1.38 | -1.87 | -1.64 | -1.40 | -1.72 | -1.74 | -1.09 |
| Pseudo-R2 | 0.05 | 0.04 | 0.06 | 0.05 | 0.04 | 0.07 | 0.05 | 0.04 | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.03 |
| *n* | 53,108 | 53,108 | 53,108 | 53,108 | 53,108 | 53,108 | 53,108 | 53,108 | 53,108 | 53,108 | 53,108 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Figure B3: Likelihood of not answering question, or not included in the PCA - China**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Likelihood for not answering question or being included in full PCA [Coefficients \* if significant at p<0.05]** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Variable** | **Tax** | **Relig.** | **Elections** | **Aid** | **Army** | **Civ.Rights** | **Economy** | **Criminal** | **Ref** | **Equal.** | **PCA** |
| Age | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01\* | 0.01 | 0.00 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 |
| Male | -0.65\* | -0.38\* | -0.61\* | -0.48\* | -0.44\* | -0.78\* | -0.95\* | -0.58\* | -0.48\* | -0.77\* | -0.33\* |
| *Education (ref:Lower)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Middle | -0.61\* | -0.86\* | -1.00\* | -1.11\* | -0.83\* | -1.38\* | -0.99\* | -1.21\* | -0.17\* | -1.01\* | -1.01\* |
| Higher | -1.18\* | -1.33\* | -1.39\* | -1.36\* | -1.40\* | -2.22\* | -1.18\* | -0.60 | -1.21\* | -1.12 | -1.58\* |
| Pseudo-R2 | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.06 | 0.07 | 0.06 | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.06 | 0.07 | 0.06 | 0.07 |
| *n* | 1,307 | 1,307 | 1,307 | 1,307 | 1,307 | 1,307 | 1,307 | 1,307 | 1,307 | 1,307 | 1,307 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

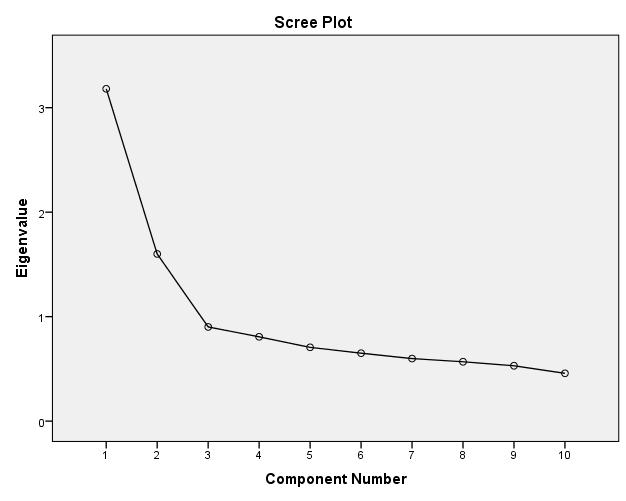
**Figure B4: Likelihood of not answering question, or not included in the PCA - India**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Likelihood for not answering question or being included in full PCA [Coefficients \* if significant at p<0.05]** | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Variable** | **Tax** | **Relig.** | **Elections** | **Aid** | **Army** | **Civ.Rights** | **Economy** | **Criminal** | **Ref** | **Equal.** | **PCA** |
| Age | 0.01 | 0.01\* | 0.01 | -0.00 | -0.01 | -0.00 | 0.00 | 0.01 | -0.00 | -0.00 | 0.01 |
| Male | -0.72\* | -0.69\* | -0.79\* | -0.76\* | -0.55\* | -0.49\* | -0.54\* | -0.79\* | -0.57\* | -0.28\* | -0.40\* |
| *Education (ref:Lower)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Middle | -0.97\* | -0.83\* | -1.24\* | -0.84\* | -0.73\* | -0.88\* | -0.80\* | -0.88\* | -0.82\* | -1.16\* | -0.66\* |
| Higher | -1.57\* | -1.80\* | -1.98\* | -1.97\* | -1.88\* | -2.02\* | -1.76\* | -1.82\* | -1.46\* | -2.39\* | -1.41\* |
| Pseudo-R2 | 0.08 | 0.09 | 0.10 | 0.09 | 0.09 | 0.09 | 0.08 | 0.09 | 0.07 | 0.10 | 0.06 |
| *n* | 1,773 | 1,773 | 1,773 | 1,773 | 1,773 | 1,773 | 1,773 | 1,773 | 1,773 | 1,773 | 1,773 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Figure B5: PCA and EFA without India and China (for comparison with Figure 4.5, pg. 163)**

|  | *Components* | | *Factors* | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *1* | *2* | *1* | *2* |
| Free Elections | .**728** | -.106 | **.627** | -.226 |
| Civil Rights | **.705** | .032 | **.630** | -.107 |
| Referendum | **.668** | -.030 | **.568** | -.138 |
| Equal Gender Rights | **.691** | -.204 | **.612** | -.160 |
| Prospering Economy | **.625** | .359 | **.587** | .304 |
| Unemployment Aid | .**564** | *.*207 | **.492** | .153 |
| Criminal Punishment | **.545** | .359 | **.496** | .282 |
| Religious Authorities | -.066 | .**787** | -.021 | **.669** |
| Army Intervention | -.086 | .**713** | -.028 | **.504** |
| Tax | .361 | .**476** | .334 | .331 |
| Eigenvalue | 3.20 | 1.61 | 3.20 | 1.61 |
| % of Variance | 32.0 | 16.1 | 32.0 | 16.1 |
| *N*  *Countries* | 44,108  44 | | | |

**Figure B6: Scree plot for PCA on Full Dataset showing clear kink after two components**



**Figure B7: Scree plot for EFA on full dataset showing clear kink after two components**



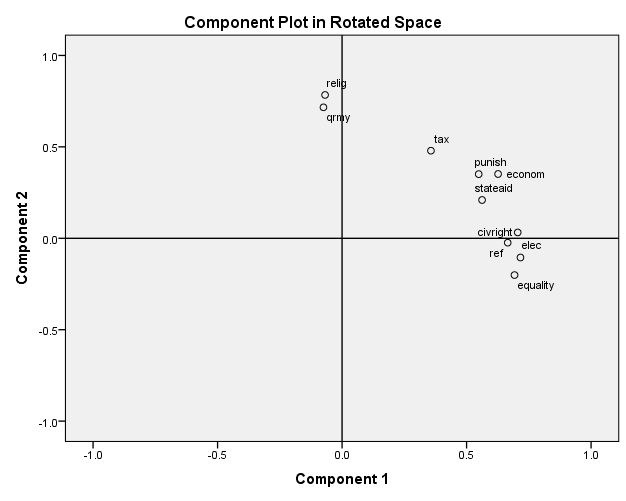
**Figure B8: Parallel Analysis for PCA on Full Dataset confirming two components**



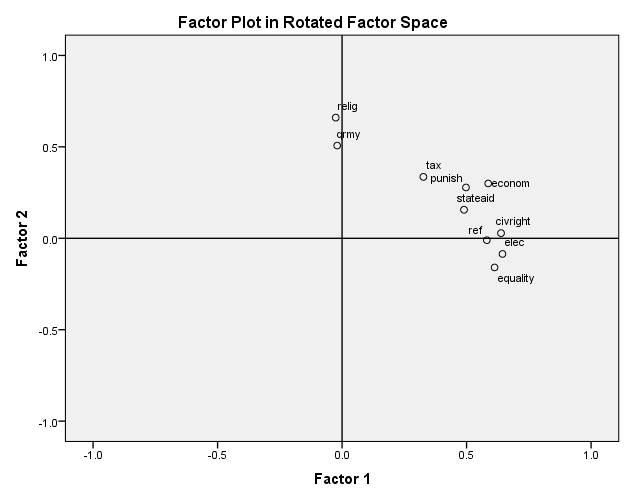
**Figure B9: Parallel Analysis for FA on Full Dataset confirming two factors**

****

**Figure B10: Component Rotation plot for PCA**



**Figure B11: Component Rotation plot for EFA**



**Figure B12: Extended Figure 4.6 showing regression score correlations between PCA and EFA with varimax rotation and PCA and EFA with Promax rotation.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **PCA 1** | **PCA 2** | **Factor 1** | **Factor 2** | **PCA1Pro** | **PCA2Pro** | **Factor1Pro** | **Factor2Pro** |
| **PCA 1** | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **PCA 2** | 0.000 | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Factor 1** | 0.997\*\* | 0.051 | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Factor 2** | 0.003 | 0.990\*\* | 0.053 | 1 |  |  |  |  |
| **PCA1Pro** | 0.995\*\* | 0.096\*\* | 0.998\*\* | 0.098\*\* | 1 |  |  |  |
| **PCAPro2** | 0.065\*\* | 0.998\*\* | 0.116\*\* | 0.989\*\* | .160\*\* | 1 |  |  |
| **FactorPro1** | 0.989\*\*\* | 0.141\*\* | 0.996\*\* | 0.144\*\* | 0.998\*\* | 0.205\*\* | 1 |  |
| **FactorPro2** | 0.098\*\* | 0.986\*\* | 0.148\*\* | 0.989\*\* | 0.192\*\* | 0.990\*\*\* | 0.237\*\* | 1 |

\*\* p<0.01

Attempting to replicate Welzel (2013, p.312) with mean-centred results and PCA results in a different loading pattern compared to his analysis using FA. I was unable to match the countries and *n* as the detail is not provided in the original study.

**Figure B13: PCA results using mean-centred variables (compare to Figure 4.2 pg.150)**

|  | *Components* | | | |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *1* | *2* | *3* | *4* | *5* |
| Free Elections | .375 | **.498** | -.119 | .155 | .126 |
| Civil Rights | .033 | **.853** | .011 | -.118 | -.116 |
| Referendum | **.757** | -.063 | -.152 | -.102 | -.111 |
| Equal Gender Rights | **.666** | .173 | .009 | -.003 | -.102 |
| Prospering Economy | -.234 | .197 | **.748** | .013 | -.103 |
| Unemployment Aid | -.051 | -.044 | -.085 | **.977** | -.012 |
| Criminal Punishment | .121 | -.355 | **.755** | -.126 | -.037 |
| Religious Authorities | -.485 | -.385 | -.312 | -.347 | -.034 |
| Army Intervention | -.479 | -.329 | .370 | .214 | -.471 |
| Tax | .234 | -.098 | -.168 | .046 | **.910** |
| Eigenvalue | 2.28 | 1.43 | 1.23 | 1.01 | 1.00 |
| % of Variance | 22.8 | 14.3 | 12.3 | 10.1 | 10.0 |
| *N* | 45,545  46 | | | |  |
| countries |  |

**Figure B14: PCA run on democracy characteristics without Tax and without Tax and Punish**

|  | *Without Tax* | | *Without Tax & Punish* | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *Components* | | *Components* | |
|  | *1* | *2* | *1* | *2* |
| Free Elections | **.705** | -.168 | **.726** | -.135 |
| Civil Rights | **.708** | -.005 | **.727** | .023 |
| Referendum | **.668** | -.044 | **.680** | -.024 |
| Equal Gender Rights | **.683** | -.223 | **.686** | -.219 |
| Prospering Economy | **.655** | .343 | **.632** | .305 |
| Unemployment Aid | .**569** | *.*144 | .**588** | *.*175 |
| Criminal Punishment | **.579** | .358 | . | . |
| Religious Authorities | -.020 | .**783** | -.005 | .**806** |
| Army Intervention | -.018 | .**764** | -.001 | .**792** |
| Tax | **.** | **.** | **.** | **.** |
| Eigenvalue | 3.02 | 1.52 | 2.74 | 1.46 |
| % of Variance | 33.6 | 16.9 | 34.2 | 18.3 |
| *N*  *Countries* | 45,545  45 | | | |

## Section C

Extended Analysis for Chapter 5

**Figure C1: Correlation results for individual level scalar variables (all correlations are significant at the 0.05 level)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Age** | **Income** | **Political interest** | **Institutional trust** | **Religiosity** |
| **Age** | **1** |  |  |  |  |
| **Income** | -0.1142 | **1** |  |  |  |
| **Political interest** | 0.0712 | 0.0796 | **1** |  |  |
| **Institutional trust** | 0.0291 | 0.0307 | 0.1843 | **1** |  |
| **Religiosity** | 0.1409 | -0.0495 | 0.0506 | 0.0871 | **1** |

**Figure C2: Correlation results for national level scalar variables (all correlations are significant at the 0.05 level)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **HDI** | **Press Freedom** | **Democratic History** | **GINI** |
| **HDI** | **1** |  |  |  |
| **Press Freedom** | 0.4015 | **1** |  |  |
| **Democratic History** | 0.67531 | 0.6463 | **1** |  |
| **GINI** | -0.3616 | -0.0810 | -0.2610 | **1** |

**Figure C3: Full interaction MLM result: Models Compound (C)7 and Authoritarian (A)7 expanded to include Income\*HDI, Income\*GINI and Income\*GINI\*HDI**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Multilevel Mixed-Effects Interaction Models** | | | | | |
|  | **Income\*HDI** | | **Income\*GINI** | | **Income\*GINI\*HDI** | |
| ***Individual Level*** | **C** | **A** | **C** | **A** | **C** | **A** |
| Age | 0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*  (0.00) | 0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*  (0.00) |
| Age-squared | -0.00\*\*  (0.00) | 0.00  (0.00) | -0.00\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.00  (0.00) | -0.00\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.00  (0.00) |
| Gender (Ref=*Female*) | 0.01  (0.01) | -0.02  (0.02) | 0.01  (0.01) | -0.02  (0.02) | 0.01  (0.01) | -0.02  (0.02) |
| **Modernization** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Education (Ref=*Lower*) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Middle* | 0.11\*\*\* (0.03) | -0.25\*\*\* (0.03) | 0.11\*\*\* (0.03) | -0.25\*\*\* (0.03) | 0.11\*\*\* (0.03) | -0.25\*\*\* (0.03) |
| *Higher* | 0.22\*\*\*  (0.04) | -0.61\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.22\*\*\*  (0.04) | -0.61\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.22\*\*\*  (0.04) | -0.61\*\*\*  (0.03) |
| Income (1-10) | -0.10\*\*\* (0.00) | 0.06\*\* (0.02) | -0.01 (0.01) | -0.04\*\* (0.02) | 0.05\*\* (0.02) | -0.05 (0.03) |
| **Cog. Engagement** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Political Interest (1-10) | 0.02\* (0.01) | -0.02\* (0.01) | 0.02\* (0.01) | -0.02\* (0.01) | 0.02\* (0.01) | -0.02\* (0.01) |
| Media Use (Ref=*None*) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *1-4 Sources* | 0.44\*\*\*  (0.08) | -0.18\*\*  (0.06) | 0.44\*\*\*  (0.08) | -0.18\*\*  (0.06) | 0.44\*\*\*  (0.08) | -0.18\*\*  (0.06) |
| *5+ Sources* | 0.55\*\*\*  (0.09) | -0.26\*\*\*  (0.06) | 0.55\*\*\*  (0.09) | -0.26\*\*\*  (0.06) | 0.55\*\*\*  (0.09) | -0.26\*\*\*  (0.06) |
| **Social Capital** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Trust (Ref = *can’t be trusted*) | 0.02 (0.03) | -0.13\*\*\* (0.02) | 0.02 (0.03) | -0.13\*\*\* (0.02) | 0.02 (0.03) | -0.13\*\*\* (0.02) |
| Institutional Trust (1-10) | 0.02\*\*  (0.01) | 0.09\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.02\*\*  (0.01) | 0.09\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.02\*\*  (0.01) | 0.09\*\*\*  (0.01) |
| Group Membership (ref = *None*) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *One* | 0.02  (0.02) | 0.05\*  (0.02) | 0.02  (0.02) | 0.05\*  (0.02) | 0.02  (0.02) | 0.05\*  (0.02) |
| *Two or more* | 0.00  (0.02) | -0.04  (0.03) | 0.00  (0.02) | -0.04  (0.03) | 0.00  (0.02) | -0.04  (0.03) |
| **Religion** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Religiosity (1-10) | 0.02\*  (0.01) | 0.10\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.02\*  (0.01) | 0.10\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.02\*  (0.01) | 0.10\*\*\*  (0.01) |
| Religion (Ref = *None*) |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *Catholic* | -0.08\*\*  (0.06) | 0.03  (0.04) | -0.08\*\*  (0.06) | 0.03  (0.04) | -0.08\*\*  (0.06) | 0.03  (0.04) |
| *Protestant* | 0.00  (0.06) | -0.04  (0.04) | 0.00  (0.06) | -0.04  (0.04) | 0.00  (0.06) | -0.04  (0.04) |
| *Muslim* | -0.04  (0.08) | 0.26\*\*\*  (0.02) | -0.04  (0.08) | 0.26\*\*\*  (0.02) | -0.04  (0.08) | 0.26\*\*\*  (0.02) |
| *Orthodox* | 0.08\*  (0.08) | 0.13\*  (0.06) | 0.08\*  (0.08) | 0.13\*  (0.06) | 0.08\*  (0.08) | 0.13\*  (0.06) |
| *Buddhist* | -0.16\*\*  (0.09) | -0.06  (0.07) | -0.16\*\*  (0.09) | -0.06  (0.07) | -0.16\*\*  (0.09) | -0.06  (0.07) |
| *Hindu* | -0.05  (0.09) | -0.09  (0.10) | -0.05  (0.09) | -0.09  (0.10) | -0.05  (0.09) | -0.09  (0.10) |
| *Other* | -0.11\*\* (0.05) | -0.02 (0.04) | -0.11\*\* (0.05) | -0.02 (0.04) | -0.11\*\* (0.05) | -0.02 (0.04) |
| ***Country Level*** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| HDI (0-100) | -0.00  (0.00) | -0.04\*\*\*  (0.00) |  |  |  |  |
| Inequality (GINI) (0-100) |  |  | -0.01  (0.01) | 0.03\*\*  (0.02) | -0.03  (0.01) | -0.03  (0.02) |
| HDI dummy (Ref = *Developing*) |  |  |  |  | -0.81  (0.67) | -4.29\*\*\*  (1.05) |
| ***Interactions*** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Income\*HDI | 0.00\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.00\*\*\*  (0.00) |  |  |  |  |
| Income\*GINI |  |  | -0.00\*  (0.00) | 0.00\*\*  (0.00) | -0.00\*\*\*  (0.00) | 0.00\*\*  (0.00) |
| Income\*HDI dummy (Ref = *Developing*) |  |  |  |  | -0.12\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.04  (0.03) |
| HDI dummy\*Gini (Ref = *Developing*) |  |  |  |  | 0.02  (0.02) | 0.07\*\*  (0.03) |
| Income\*HDI dummy\*GINI (Ref = *Developing*) |  |  |  |  | 0.00\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.00\*\*  (0.00) |
| *N individual* | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 |
| *N country* | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 |
| *R*2 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *S&B R2 (Individual)* | 0.01 | 0.16 | 0.02 | 0.08 | 0.03 | 0.17 |
| *(country)* | 0.04 | 0.51 | 0.09 | 0.22 | 0.11 | 0.56 |
| *Log-Likelihood* | -82842 | -95539 | -82852 | -95554 | -82801 | -95533 |
| ICC | .1071559 | .1529609 | .1025537 | .2234525 | .0998032 | .1391852 |

**Figure C4: Full interaction MLM result: Models Compound (C)7 and Authoritarian (A)7 expanded to include Media\*Press Freedom and Membership\*Freedom House**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Multilevel Mixed-Effects Interaction Models** | | | |
|  | **Media\*Press Freedom** | | **Membership\*Freedom House** | |
| ***Individual Level*** | **C** | **A** | **C** | **A** |
| Age | 0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*  (0.00) | 0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*  (0.00) |
| Age-squared | -0.00\*\*  (0.00) | 0.00  (0.00) | -0.00\*\*  (0.00) | 0.00  (0.00) |
| Gender (Ref=*Female*) | 0.01  (0.01) | -0.02  (0.02) | 0.01  (0.01) | -0.02  (0.02) |
| **Modernization** |  |  |  |  |
| Education (Ref=*Lower*) |  |  |  |  |
| *Middle* | 0.10\*\*\*  (0.03) | -0.25\*\*\* (0.03) | 0.10\*\*\*  (0.03) | -0.25\*\*\* (0.03) |
| *Higher* | 0.22\*\*\*  (0.04) | -0.61\*\*\*  (0.03) | 0.22\*\*\*  (0.04) | -0.61\*\*\*  (0.03) |
| Income (1-10) | -0.02\*\*\* (0.00) | -0.01\* (0.00) | -0.02 (0.00) | -0.01\* (0.00) |
| **Cog. Engagement** |  |  |  |  |
| Political Interest (1-10) | 0.02\* (0.01) | -0.02\* (0.01) | 0.02\* (0.01) | -0.02\* (0.01) |
| Media Use (Ref=*None*) |  |  |  |  |
| *1-4 Sources* | 0.19  (0.13) | 0.38\*  (0.06) | 0.43\*\*\*  (0.08) | 0.38\*  (0.06) |
| *5+ Sources* | 0.13  (0.14) | 0.48\*\*\*  (0.06) | 0.55\*\*\*  (0.10) | 0.48\*\*\*  (0.06) |
| **Social Capital** |  |  |  |  |
| Trust (Ref = *can’t be trusted*) | 0.01 (0.02) | -0.14\*\*\* (0.02) | 0.01 (0.02) | -0.14\*\*\* (0.02) |
| Institutional Trust (1-10) | 0.02\*\*  (0.00) | 0.09\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.02\*\*  (0.00) | 0.09\*\*\*  (0.01) |
| Group Membership (ref = *None*) |  |  |  |  |
| *One* | 0.02  (0.02) | 0.05  (0.02) | 0.01  (0.02) | 0.08\*  (0.03) |
| *Two or more* | 0.00  (0.02) | -0.04  (0.03) | -0.01  (0.02) | -0.00  (0.03) |
| **Religion** |  |  |  |  |
| Religiosity (1-10) | 0.02\*  (0.01) | 0.10\*\*\*  (0.01) | 0.02\*  (0.01) | 0.10\*\*\*  (0.01) |
| Religion (Ref = *None*) |  |  |  |  |
| *Catholic* | -0.08\*\*  (0.06) | 0.03  (0.04) | -0.07  (0.06) | 0.03  (0.04) |
| *Protestant* | 0.00  (0.06) | -0.04  (0.04) | 0.00  (0.06) | -0.04  (0.04) |
| *Muslim* | -0.04  (0.08) | 0.26\*\*\*  (0.02) | -0.02  (0.08) | 0.26\*\*\*  (0.02) |
| *Orthodox* | 0.08\*  (0.08) | 0.13\*  (0.06) | 0.10  (0.09) | 0.13\*  (0.06) |
| *Buddhist* | -0.16\*\*  (0.09) | -0.06  (0.07) | -0.15  (0.09) | -0.06  (0.07) |
| *Hindu* | -0.05  (0.09) | -0.09  (0.10) | -0.05  (0.09) | -0.09  (0.10) |
| *Other* | -0.11\*\* (0.05) | -0.02 (0.04) | -0.11\* (0.05) | -0.02 (0.04) |
| ***Country Level*** |  |  |  |  |
| Press Freedom (0-100) | -0.01\*  (0.00) | -0.03\*\*\*  (0.00) |  |  |
| Freedom House (ref: Free)  *Partly Free*  *Not Free* |  |  | -0.16  (0.26)  0.72\*\*\*  (0.22) | 1.04\*\*\*  (0.35)  1.89\*\*\*  (0.44) |
| ***Interactions*** |  |  |  |  |
| *Press Freedom\*Media*  *1-4 sources*  *5+ sources* | 0.00\*  (0.00)  0.01\*\*  (0.00) | -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00)  -0.01\*\*\*  (0.00) |  |  |
| *Member\*Freedom House* |  |  |  |  |
| *One x Partly Free*  *One x Not Free*  *Two or More \* Partly Free*  *Two or More\*Not Free* |  |  | 0.15\*\*\*  (0.04)  -0.06  (0.04)  0.28  (0.19)  -0.30\*  (0.12) | -0.18\*  (0.06)  -0.04  (0.07)  -0.30\*\*\*  (0.07)  0.06  (0.08) |
| *N individual* | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 | 45,454 |
| *N country* | 46 | 46 | 46 | 46 |
| *R*2 |  |  |  |  |
| *S&B R2 (Individual)* | 0.02 | 0.16 | 0.03 | 0.16 |
| *(country)* | 0.08 | 0.53 | 0.20 | 0.53 |
| *Log-Likelihood* | -82849 | --82849 | -82822 |  |
| ICC | .1036763 | .147713 | .0910869 |  |

## Section D

Details on Variable Construction (Individual Level)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **WVS Variable(s)** | **Coding Criteria** |
| Age | X003 |  |
| Gender | X002 | 0 Male, 1 Female |
| Education | X025R | 0 Lower  1 Middle  2 Higher |
| Income | X047 |  |
| Trust | A165 | 0 "You can't be too careful"  1 "Most can be trusted" |
| Institutional Trust | E069\_17, E069\_11, E069\_12, E069\_07, E069\_08 | An index was generated using the Cronbach’s alpha criterion in Stata and then coded into a 1-10 scale. The more trusting, the higher the individual scores |
| Political Interest | A004, E023 | An index was generated using the Cronbach’s alpha criterion in Stata and then coded into a 1-10 scale. The more politically interested, the more the individual scores |
| Religiosity | A006, F034 | An index was generated using the Cronbach’s alpha criterion in Stata and then coded into a 1-10 scale. Higher religiosity scores higher |
| Religion | F025 | Those who are not affiliated with any religion are the reference group |
| Media Use | E248 – E254 | Respondents are given the option of selecting up to 7 possible sources of information to learn what is going on the world. Variable is a categorical one, grouping respondents into those who use none (0), those who use between 1 and 4 (1), and those who use 5 or more (2). With non-users as the reference group. |
| Active | A098 – A105 | Respondents can choose if they are active/non-active members of a list of groups. A strict approach is taken in that anyone considered not in a group or inactive is coded as zero. Active membership is coded as 1. Across all the groups, a cumulative variable is then produced with 3 categories: those not in or active in any (0), those active in 1 (1), those active in 2 or more (2) |
| Importance of democracy | E235 | Scale 1-10 how important to live in country that is governed democratically, with 1 not at all, and 10 very important |
| System of democracy | E117 | Binary variable generated with Very Good and Good combined (1) and Very bad and Bad combined as the reference (0) |
| Satisfaction household income | C006 | Scale 1-10 how satisfied with financial situation of household with 1 dissatisfied and 10 satisfied |

Details on Variable Construction (National Level)

National level data is taken from numerous sources, which can be found in the table below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Data Location** | **Comments** |
| HDI | Accessed from: <http://hdr.undp.org> |  |
| Press Freedom | <http://en.rsf.org/press-freedom-index-2008,33.html> |  |
| Communist | The countries in this dataset to considered to have current or previous communist regimes are: Poland, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Romania, China, Ukraine, Russia, Moldova, Georgia, Vietnam and Serbia. |  |
| Democratic History | <http://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/pnorris/Data/Data.htm> |  |
| Inequality | OECD Dataset available at [stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=IDD](http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=IDD)  UNDP Open Data available at [data.undp.org/dataset/Income-Gini-coefficient/36ku-rvrj](https://data.undp.org/dataset/Income-Gini-coefficient/36ku-rvrj)  Cyprus: CIA Factbook available at [cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cy.html](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cy.html)  Burkina Faso: World Bank available at [data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI/](http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI/)  Trinidad & Tobago: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) available at [cepal.org/publicaciones/xml/4/49054/SPS\_TrinidadAndTobago\_ing.pdf](http://www.cepal.org/publicaciones/xml/4/49054/SPS_TrinidadAndTobago_ing.pdf) | No single dataset was found with accurate or up-to-date gini scores, and so the results had to come from a combination of sources |
| Freedom House | <https://freedomhouse.org/> |  |
|  |  |  |

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1. It is important to note here that the term ‘compound democracy’ has been used by Fabbrini (2003; 2010) to describe asymmetrical democratic systems operating in a nested formation, for instance the European Union or the federal-state system in the United States, and how they have varying approaches to hierarchical legislatures. However, in this case I am taking from Sartori the compositional blending together of the philosophical liberal element with democratic principles, rather than in the sense used by Fabbrini, who focuses more specifically on the constitutional engineering of governance across scale. This scalar issue is not the focus of this literature review, however, and my usage of the term is discussed in further detail in Chapter 4, Section 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This understanding of freedom echoes that of Isaiah’s Berlin’s (1969) two concepts of liberty, looking at their positive and negative conceptions. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. It is worth noting that this list of famous philosophers contains only white males. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. This quote has become perhaps even more politically pertinent in light of the controversial victory of Donald Trump over Hilary Clinton in the US president election in November 2016 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The exact question asked was “What do you think is better for the country: Democracy that respects the rights of all persons, or dictatorship that guarantees economic progress even without respecting the rights of all persons?” (Schelder & Sarsfield, 2007, p.645). Of those who answered, 86% chose democracy, 10% chose dictatorship, and 4% chose neither. Interestingly, over 20% of those asked failed to provide an answer. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Root questionnaire for the WVS2005-2008 available at [worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSDocumentationWV5.jsp](http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSDocumentationWV5.jsp) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. 1This problem is improving. For instance, the 2010 Qualitative Electoral Study of Britain represents a notable step in the right direction as they make all the transcripts from their group interviews available online (anonymised) for secondary data analysis. See here [wintersresearch.wordpress.com/2010-qesb/qes-britain/](https://wintersresearch.wordpress.com/2010-qesb/qes-britain/) for more information. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Just as an example, a Google Scholar search for “World Values Survey” produces 17,900 results: this is a well-trusted and well-utilised resource. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. See [sos.ca.gov/elections/ballot-measures/referenda.htm](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/ballot-measures/referenda.htm) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. As opposed to the relationship between rates and nature of crime and democracy, which has received considerable attention (see Cuesta 2013). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Indeed, this ambiguity has clearly been noted as the next wave of World Values Survey questionnaires updates the question to “Religious authorities *ultimately* interpret the laws”. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. The database used for this study was PscyINFO, which describes itself as “an expansive abstracting and indexing database with more than 3 million records devoted to peer-reviewed literature in the behavioral sciences and mental health, making it an ideal discovery and linking tool for scholarly research in a host of disciplines”. See <http://www.apa.org/pubs/databases/psycinfo/index.aspx> for more information. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. This discussion is informed by a personal communication with Christian Welzel, and is much appreciated. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. The EFA specifically is common factor analysis, otherwise known as principle axis factoring. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Bartlett’s test of sphericity is significant, meaning there is enough correlation within the matrices for a useful analysis. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy is .816, suggesting there are very good and compact patterns of correlations. Loadings in bold are those close to or above .5. Scree plots are outlined in Appendix Figure B6 (PCA) and B7 (EFA) [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. This was undertaken using the *SEM* function in *Stata* [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. The HDI measure also correlates strongly with GNI (PPP adjusted) at 0.81 (p<0.001) [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Available at <http://rsf.org/index2014/en-index2014.php> [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. This is not the exact opposite to Welzel’s secular variable as it does not test how often a respondent attends religious services. Whilst this is a useful way of examining religioisity beyond personal opinion of one’s own religious attitudes, there are a number of missing results in the WVS, and the question was not asked at all in Morocco and Malaysia. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. This was not a systematic review by any means, but just this cursory look at the newly published literature showed a number of studies with two potentially problematic issues: 1) the number of data points in the second level was not at all clear 2) it wasn’t justified by the author how the second level was a clustered and contextual data point, as opposed to a categorical variable which is not the same thing. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Whilst the totals are different, this process of weighting still involves producing ratios of population sizes across the countries to equalize them in total, and so these two variables correlate perfectly. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. However, weighted versions of all models were also been run to examine for differences in output and there were no significant differences. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Models are estimated using Stata Xtmixed, with robust standard errors [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. The predominant reason for this is simply ease of interpretation for both discussion and visualisation of results. The 1-10 scale correlates perfectly with the original standardized component scores. As there is some skew to the two variables, robust standard errors are used in all models. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. The correlation of this variable with the conceptualisations of democracy are 0.23 with the compound understanding, and -0.09 with the authoritarian. And so the relationship is in the expected direction, but does not produce any collinearity issue in the models. This does suggest already that believing democracy is important and scoring highly on the compound understanding are not the same thing. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Although of course the general idea of relative deprivation is implicit in earlier works including those by Marx and De Tocqueville, and has been a staple of sociological thought that examines social movements (see McPhail 1971, p.33). [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Models conducted in Stata 12.1 using the *xtmelogit* command. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)