

# AFRO BAROMETER

Working Paper No. 39

## POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

by Wonbin Cho

**A comparative series of national public  
attitude surveys on democracy, markets  
and civil society in Africa.**



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SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA**

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## **Abstract**

Do political institutions affect citizens' satisfaction with democracy? Using cross-sectional Afrobarometer survey data on attitudes toward democracy for 10 sub-Saharan Africa countries together with country-level data on political institutions, this article demonstrates that political institutions do indeed influence citizens' attitudes toward the democratic system. Political institutions mediate the relationship between citizens' political status – i.e., as winners, non-partisans, or losers – and their satisfaction with the way democracy works in the country. Specifically, I find that: 1) those who have a party identification with the incumbent government (winners) are significantly more satisfied with the way democracy works than are those who do not (losers and non-partisans); 2) citizens who live under a balanced two-party system are more satisfied with democratic governance than those who live under both predominant one-party systems and fragmented party systems; and 3) losers in parliamentary systems show lower levels of dissatisfaction with the way democracy works than do losers in presidential systems.

## **POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND SATISFACTION WITH DEMOCRACY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA**

Do political institutions affect citizens' political attitudes? In this research paper, I take institutions into account to explain citizen's attitudes toward democratic governance across sub-Saharan Africa. This paper investigates whether, and how, cross-national differences in political systems affect citizens' evaluations of their country's democratic governance. Further, this study also shows that the nature of representative political institutions mediates the relationship between a person's political status as part of the political minority or majority and his or her satisfaction with the way the system works. Presidential and parliamentary systems differently and systematically affect citizen satisfaction with democracy.

This study particularly focuses on systems that are undergoing a transition to a more democratic political system. In contrast to the advanced democracies, questions of popular support for the regime are particularly important for emerging democracies in sub-Saharan Africa. It has long been assumed that low levels of citizen support can pose serious problems for democratic systems because the functioning and maintenance of these systems are intimately linked with popular views about the quality of democratic governance (Lipset, 1959).

The relationships revealed among political institutions, a citizen's political status, and his or her democratic satisfaction will shed light on the question concerning the effects of institutions on citizen attitudes toward how well their political systems work.

On the basis of directly comparable survey data from 10 democratic or newly democratizing sub-Saharan African countries collected by the Afrobarometer<sup>1</sup> between 1999 and 2001, this article examines the determinants of cross-national differences in citizen satisfaction with a democratic way of governance. I investigate whether, and to what extent, political institutions help us understand differences in the levels of satisfaction with the political regime in African countries. I find that those who support the government party show higher levels of satisfaction with the system than do those who do not. Moreover, there is an interaction between the institutional context and a person's status as a part of the political majority or minority. Losers in parliamentary systems show lower levels of dissatisfaction with the way democracy works than do losers in presidential systems. In addition, this study finds that citizens who live under a balanced two-party systems are more satisfied with democratic governance than those who live under both predominant one-party systems and fragmented party systems.

I will begin with a review of the literature on political institutions and citizens' satisfaction with democracy. I then develop a model of citizens' satisfaction with democracy that includes political institutions and individual-level variables, which I use to empirically test these relationships.

### **POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND PERFORMANCE**

The connection between political institutions and citizen attitudes toward democracy is a subject of particular relevance to contemporary debates about democratic performance because it involves the extent

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<sup>1</sup> Round 1 of the Afrobarometer, completed in September 2001, covered 12 countries: Botswana, Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. A preliminary overview of results is published as *Afrobarometer Working Paper No. 11*, "Compendium of Comparative Data from a Twelve-Nation Survey," available at [www.afrobarometer.org](http://www.afrobarometer.org). This research includes all countries except Ghana and Uganda, because the questionnaires used in these two countries were significantly different from the others, and did not yield results of adequate comparability with respect to the issues under analysis here.

to which those attitudes and the potential for protest or instability are mediated by a country's political institutions. Such questions are especially relevant to our understanding of newly emerging democracies.

Democratic political institutions have relatively stable features that serve to constrain citizens' political experience and influence them as they develop attitudes about the functions of the political system. People form attitudes about politics in the context of systematic structures that mediate preferences and define the choices available (Powell, 1982, 1989). How democratic institutions treat citizens is very important for their stability and democratic development.

An extensive literature has explored the consequences of alternative political institutions, for example, the influence of presidential or parliamentary rule on executive stability. However, only two studies have looked systematically at the influence of political institutions on citizens' attitudes about democratic systems. A study by Anderson and Guillory (1997), based on Eurobarometer data, shows clear evidence of a positive relationship between "consensual" systems and democratic satisfaction. By contrast, Norris finds that "majoritarian institutions tended to produce greater institutional confidence than consociational arrangements" (1999: 233). However, while her study is based on a far wider set of cases (25 countries) than the Anderson and Guillory study (11 countries), Norris uses an institutional confidence scale combining confidence in five major political and civic institutions, including parliament, the civil service, the legal system, the police and the army, rather than direct satisfaction with democratic governance, as a dependent variable. Thus, the contrasting results of the two studies are not necessarily directly comparable.

Anderson and Guillory provide valuable theoretical insights and an innovative research design linking individual characteristics and macro-level contexts. This approach needs to be expanded, however, since the study suffers from sampling limitations. By focusing only on European Union member states, the study was necessarily restricted to a limited range of established parliamentary democracies. It is necessary to widen the scope of the comparison, for example to presidential systems, as well as to newly emerging democracies. The broader the institutional variance, the more confidence we can have in the results.

### **Structure of the Party System: The Effects of Fragmentation**

Parties remain the most important mediating institutions between citizens and the state. Miller and Listhaug (1990) have argued that a smaller number of parties is correlated with popular dissatisfaction with democratic governance because there are fewer policy choices for citizens. Because some electoral systems inhibit the emergence of new parties that can take account of new demands, they may, as a result, experience lower levels of system support in the long run. In contrast, in his cross-national study of system support in western democracies, Weil (1989) found that party system fragmentation – that is, a larger number of parties – was systematically associated with lower levels of democratic support. Norris, meanwhile, shows that people under two-party and moderate multiparty systems have more confidence in political institutions than those under both fragmented party systems and one-party predominant systems. In countries with a dominant governing party and fragmented oppositions, it is extremely difficult for citizens to use elections as an opportunity to change officeholders or governments whose performance does not satisfy them.

This study uses the Laakso and Taagepera (1979) index to estimate the effective number of parties in parliament (ENPP), based on seat shares in the lower house. I expect that (*HI*) ENPP and satisfaction with democratic governance should have a quadratic relationship. The quadratic should have a parabolic shape. That is, the marginal effect of ENPP is expected to be positive until it reaches a turning point, then negative after passing that point.



## Political Structure: Presidentialism Vs. Parliamentarism

Does the structure of a democratic regime affect citizens' satisfaction with democracy? The merits of parliamentary versus presidential systems have been widely debated (Lijphart, 1992; Linz and Valenzuela, 1994). Linz (1994) claims that a presidential system with a weak legislature has the advantages of executive stability, popular control, and limited government, but also the disadvantages of executive-legislative deadlock, temporal rigidity, and winner-take-all government. Parliamentary systems are claimed to reverse these pros and cons.

Lijphart (1999: 117-124) identifies three crucial differences between parliamentary and presidential systems of government. First, parliamentary systems have "collective or collegial" executives, whereas presidential systems have one-person, "non-collegial" executives. While the prime minister's position in cabinet can vary from preeminence to virtual equality with the other ministers, there is always a relatively high degree of collegiality in decision making. On the contrary, the members of presidential cabinets are mere advisers and subordinates to the president. That is, the most important decisions in presidential systems can be made by the president with or without, or even against, the advice of the cabinet.

In addition, parliamentary systems impose on parties both a greater responsibility for governance, as well as a need to cooperate and compromise (except when one party gains an absolute majority). Governments can demand support in votes of confidence from their parties, threatening them with resignation or even dissolution of the legislature if support is not forthcoming. In addition, the role of each party is clear to the voters, who are unlikely to tolerate destructive actions by parties. Parties that fail to support an incumbent prime minister may have to pay a price.

In presidential systems, however, parties are not responsible and accountable for government stability and policy, because those are the tasks of the president. Parties are likely to concentrate their efforts on opposing and criticizing the executive. Parties under a presidential system are less likely to support the executive, respond to its policy initiatives, or assume responsibility for them. It is natural that once a president is elected, parties are likely to turn to their distinctive partisan agendas in the congressional elections and, even if they were part of the president's electoral coalition, assert their distinctiveness by criticizing the president. It is also natural that, not having responsibility for national policy, they would turn to the representation of special interests, localized interests, and clientelistic networks in their constituencies. There is no reason for them to care about the success of a president from a different party or to support unpopular policies because there is no reward for doing so (and, in fact, a great likelihood of being punished). There are no incentives for party responsibility and party discipline.

Based on the arguments of Linz and Lijphart, it would be expected that (*H2*) parliamentary systems, where all parties continue to have a stake in the policy-making process, should generate greater system support than winner-take-all presidential systems.

## Winners, Losers, and Non-partisans

Democracy is about winning and losing within a context of set rules: "Since the struggle for political office is bound to create winners and losers, this necessarily generates ambivalent attitudes towards authorities on the part of the losers" (Kaase and Newton, 1995: 60). At the simplest level, if people feel that the rules of game allow the party they endorse to be elected to power, they are more likely to feel that representative institutions are responsive to their needs so that they can trust the political system, and consequently, they are inclined to be satisfied with the government's performance (Lambert, *et al.*, 1986) and with the way the system works (Kornberg and Clarke, 1994; Nadeau and Blais, 1993). On the other hand, those whose preferred party loses are more likely to feel that their voices are excluded from the decision-making process, producing dissatisfaction with political institutions. In their study of 11

European democracies, Anderson and Guillory found that respondents who voted for the winning party or parties were more likely to be satisfied with how well democracy works in their country than respondents who voted for the losing party or parties.

Losers play a crucial role in political development. Their regime support has greater impact on the stability of the regime than winners' regime support. Because democracies are inherently designed to create winners and losers through a series of elections, there must be a tension between those in the majority and those in the minority in democratic political life. That is, even when they perform satisfactorily, democracies, by their very nature, face the potential for instability due to the different preferences that those in the political majority and minority have for legitimizing the system. I therefore expect that, relative to those in the political majority (the winners), (*H3*) citizens who are in the political minority (the losers) should have a diminished stake in the system. As a consequence, they are likely to express more negative views of the political system's performance. Non-partisans could be expected to fall somewhere between winners and losers.

But the distinctions between winners and losers may be more complex than this. Institutional structures also affect behavior by providing incentives or disincentives for certain behavioral patterns. Winning and losing have different meanings in different political systems. Anderson and Guillory's study shows the general pattern that differences in regime satisfaction between winners and losers are significantly smaller in consensual democracies than in majoritarian democracies.

I therefore argue that the nature of representation in political institutions systematically mediates the relationship between political majority/minority status and attitudes toward the way democracy works. It is expected that (*H4*) losers who live in parliamentary systems should be more satisfied with democratic governance than losers who live in presidential systems.

## **A MODEL OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND DEMOCRATIC SATISFACTION**

### **The Dependent Variable: Satisfaction with Democratic Governance**

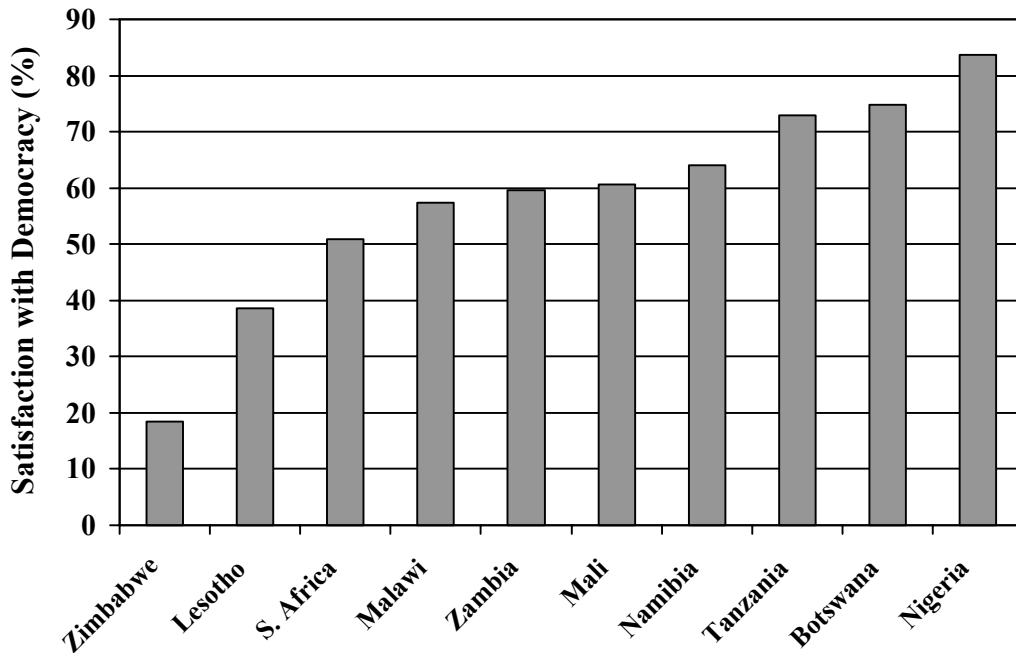
To assess current levels of political support, I rely on comparative survey data from the Afrobarometer over the period of 1999-2001. Political support is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. David Easton (1965, 1975) distinguished between support for the community, the regime, and the authorities. His distinction between diffuse system support and specific evaluation of state performance is probably the most influential typology. This study focuses attention on regime performance, measuring support for how democratic political systems function in practice. It is commonly measured by "satisfaction with the way democracy works in [this country]."<sup>2</sup> In other words, the question is concerned with how democracy functions in practice, as opposed to the ideal. No consensus yet exists regarding what dimension or dimensions of political support are measured by "satisfaction with democracy." A number of scholars criticize this concept for its ambiguity, as it can tap multiple dimensions of political support, for example both support for democracy as a value and satisfaction with the incumbent government (Norris, 1999; Canache, *et al.*, 2001; Linde and Ekman, 2003). The question on "satisfaction with democracy", however, has most commonly been used as a measure of system support (e.g., Anderson and Guillory, 1997; Farrel and McAllister, 2003; Fuchs, 1999; Fuchs, Guidorossi, and Svensson, 1995; Harmmel and Robertson, 1986; Klingemann, 1999; Lockerbie, 1993; Morlino and Tarchi, 1996; Toka, 1995; and Weil, 1989). While they criticize that the item "satisfaction with democracy" represents multiple levels of political

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<sup>2</sup> In the Afrobarometer survey, respondents were asked: "Generally, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in (your country)?" Response categories included: 1 = "very dissatisfied"; 2 = "somewhat dissatisfied"; 3 = "somewhat satisfied"; 4 = "very satisfied."

support, Canache, *et al.* (2001) show that it is consistently and significantly related to system support in 17 Latin American countries. Thus, this paper uses this item as a dependent variable to measure the levels of political support across 10 sub-Saharan African countries.

**Figure 1: Satisfaction with Democracy, by country**



Combining the percentage of respondents saying they are “very” or “somewhat satisfied” with the way democracy works, Figure 1 shows the distribution of satisfaction with democracy across the countries investigated in this study. Satisfaction ranged from 84 percent in Nigeria in January 2000 to 18 percent in Zimbabwe in October 1999, with a mean of 58 percent, and a standard deviation of 18.9. In eight of the 10 countries, more than 50 percent of respondents reported that they were very or somewhat satisfied with the way democracy works in their country.

### The Independent Variables

#### ***Individual Political Status: Winner, Loser, or Non-partisan (Two Dummy Variables)***

The Afrobarometer data set classifies respondents as being a winner, loser, or non-partisan with the help of a survey question that asks which party, if any, the respondent feels close to. The data set then combines these responses with information about the party or parties that won the most recent presidential, legislative, or general elections to identify winner and loser.

I created two dummy variables, omitting the *winner*s, who form the base group. If the respondent felt close to an opposition party, I coded that individual as one in the *loser* dummy variable, while a winner or a person who did not have any party affiliation was coded as zero. In the *non-partisan* dummy variable, if the respondent did not feel close to any party, I coded that person as one, while a winner and a loser were coded as zero.

#### ***Interest in Politics***

Many political scientists have demonstrated that interest in politics is related to regime support (Almond and Verba, 1965; Anderson and Guillory, 1997; Weatherford, 1991). Citizens who understand the

political process and believe that their participation can influence policymaking are likely to take a more optimistic view of democratic governance. The Afrobarometer asked respondents how interested they are in public affairs. Using these results, I expect to find that those who are more interested in politics are also more likely to be satisfied with the way democracy works.<sup>3</sup>

### ***Economic Performance Evaluations: Sociotropic and Egocentric Evaluations***

Citizen evaluations of system outputs can be one of the most important factors shaping the reputation of political institutions and of the political system as a whole (Weatherford, 1987). In particular, several studies suggest that economic performance, as well as public perceptions of both personal and national economic conditions, are related to system support (Clarke, Dutt, and Kornberg, 1993; Kornberg and Clarke, 1992; Listhaug and Wiberg, 1995; Weatherford, 1984, 1987). For this study, I use responses to two Afrobarometer questions that asked respondents to evaluate national and personal economic conditions, that is, to form sociotropic and egocentric evaluations of economic performance.<sup>4</sup> I expect that those who evaluate economic performance positively should be more satisfied with the way democracy works.

### ***Effective Number of Parliamentary Parties***

This study assumes a chain of causality running from political institutions (e.g., the structure of party systems) to satisfaction with democracy. Different electoral systems should result in particular kinds of party systems, which, in turn, should affect citizen satisfaction with democratic governance. Party system indicators can be taken to be independent variables that affect the level of citizen satisfaction with democratic governance.

I will test whether party system fragmentation – that is, an indicator of the structure of the party system – is indeed systematically associated with levels of satisfaction with democratic performance in sub-Saharan Africa countries. To measure fragmentation, I use an index developed by Laakso and Taagapera (1979), which measures the effective number of parties ( $N$ ) in a system as follows:

$$N = \frac{1}{\sum_{i=1}^n s_i^2}$$

in which  $s_i$  is the proportion of seats of the  $i$ -th party (Lijphart, 1999: 68). This formula contains information about the number and relative size of the parties in the system. It helps to differentiate between two- and multi-party systems, but also offers a more subtle measure than simply counting the number of parties that gain representation or receive votes.

### ***Political System (Dummy Variable): Parliamentary System***

There are two types of democratic political systems represented in the data set: presidential systems (Malawi, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe), and parliamentary systems

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<sup>3</sup> Interest in Politics: “How interested are you in politics and government?” 0 = “not interested”; 1 = “somewhat interested”; 2 = “very interested.” For the analysis, I create a dummy variable coded as “1” including “Very interested” and “Somewhat interested.” The other two responses are coded as “0.”

<sup>4</sup> National Economic Performance: “How satisfied are you with your life now compared to one year ago?” 1 = “much less satisfied”; 2 = “less satisfied”; 3 = “about the same”; 4 = “more satisfied”; 5 = “much more satisfied.” Personal Economic Performance: “Now let us speak about your personal economic conditions. Would you say they are worse, the same, or better than other people in (your country)?” 1 = “much worse”; 2 = “worse”; 3 = “about the same”; 4 = “better”; 5 = “much better.”

(Botswana, Lesotho and South Africa). I created a dummy variable for parliamentary system, which omits presidential systems, making them the base group.

### ***Interaction term between Political System and Individual Political Status***

To examine whether losers who live in parliamentary systems exhibit a higher level of satisfaction with democratic governance than do those who live in presidential systems, I include interaction terms between political systems and individual political status in the model.<sup>5</sup> Specifically, I create two interaction terms, *Loser\*Parliamentary* and *Non-partisan\*Parliamentary*. The coefficient of each interaction term measures the effect of different political systems among winners, losers, and non-partisans. I expect that losers who live in parliamentary systems should show a higher level of satisfaction with the way democracy works than do those who live in presidential systems. And, non-partisans' level of satisfaction should be somewhere in between losers' and winners' in both parliamentary and presidential systems.

### ***Democratization: Freedom House Index***

For the purpose of this study, I adopt the Freedom House Status of Freedom Index<sup>6</sup> to control for the different degrees of democratization across the 10 sub-Saharan countries in the model. The mean combined scores for political rights and civil liberties for the survey year of each country is used in the analysis. For convenience of interpretation, however, I recoded the Freedom House index in the reverse; that is, the greater the number of the (reversed) Freedom House index, the higher the level of democratization in this study. Across countries it would be expected that the existence of widespread political rights and civil liberties should be associated with higher levels of public satisfaction with democratic governance. In her study on 25 democracies, Norris (1999) shows that citizens express more confidence in countries where there are widespread opportunities for civic participation and protection of human rights.

### ***Economic Development: GDP per capita in 1999 (US\$)***<sup>7</sup>

To control for the level of economic development across these 10 countries, I introduce *GDP per capita* in 1999 (PPP US\$) in this study. Majority of the sub-Saharan Africa countries under study are defined by the UNDP as relatively impoverished, with an average per capita income of \$1000 or less per annum, but it is notable that the most democratic countries in the survey have a per capita GDP about ten times higher than the other nations, as shown in Table 1, which lists some of the basic features of the countries included in the study.

### ***Demographic Variables: education, gender, and age***

I control for the usual socio-demographic variables: education, gender, and age. Descriptive statistics for the individual-level variables used in this study are shown in Appendix A.

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<sup>5</sup> Anderson and Guillory (1997) instead use two separate sub-samples, i.e., winners and losers, to estimate the relationship between individual political status and political institutions. However, this way of dealing with a qualitative independent variable that is hypothesized to have an interactive effect with another independent variable on the dependent variable has drawbacks. Stratifying the sample into two sub-samples not only reduces the sample size, but also uses different samples. In this case, we cannot hold other variables constant across all observations. In turn, we are not allowed to interpret the partial relationship of the interesting variable.

<sup>6</sup> Freedom House, "Freedom around the World," 2001-2002. [www.freedomhouse.com](http://www.freedomhouse.com).

<sup>7</sup> UNDP. *The UNDP Human Development Report 2001* (New York: Oxford University Press).

**Table 1. Political-economic indicators in Sub-Saharan Africa countries under study**

Country	Political Systems	ENPP	FH Mean Score (Reversed)	GDP per capita 1999 (PPP US\$)
Zimbabwe	Presidential	1.05	2.5	2,876
Zambia	Presidential	1.30	3.5	756
Lesotho	Parliamentary	1.03	4	1,854
Nigeria	Presidential	2.11	4	853
Tanzania	Presidential	1.61	4	501
Malawi	Presidential	2.68	5	586
Namibia	Presidential	1.83	5.5	5,468
Mali	Presidential	1.77	5.5	753
Botswana	Parliamentary	1.46	6	6,872
South Africa	Parliamentary	2.18	6.5	8,908

## RESULTS

### The Effects of Political Status on Satisfaction with Democracy at the Aggregate Level

Are winners more satisfied than losers with the way democracy works? What about non-partisans? Figure 2 offers some preliminary evidence at the aggregate level. To examine differences in satisfaction between winners, non-partisans, and losers, I compare satisfaction with the way democracy works between those three groups across 10 countries, ordered according to the aggregate level of satisfaction.

**Figure 2: Satisfaction with Democratic Governance among Winners, Non-partisans, and Losers, by Country**

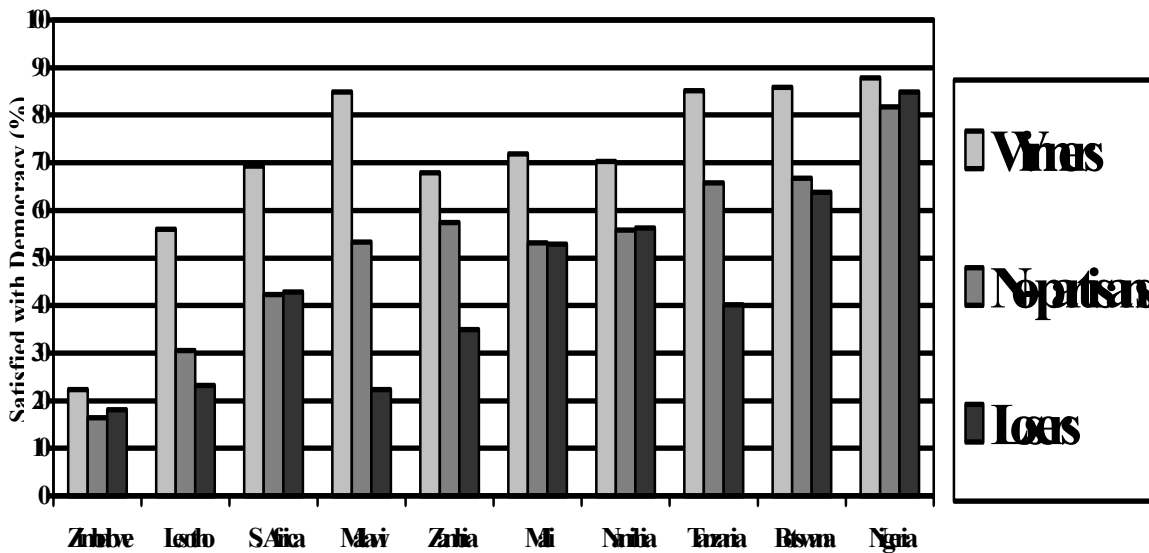


Figure 2 clearly illustrates that there are differences in satisfaction between winners, non-partisans, and losers, regardless of the general level of satisfaction with the system. Although there is variation across countries in the strength of the relationship, the differences exist in every country examined. Winners are more satisfied with democratic governance than both non-partisans and losers in every country. However, the differences between non-partisans and losers are less consistent. In several countries – e.g., Lesotho, Malawi, Zambia, Tanzania, and Botswana – non-partisans are more satisfied with democratic governance than losers. But in several others, losers are slightly more satisfied with the system, as in Zimbabwe and Nigeria. The differences between non-partisans and losers in South Africa, Mali, and Namibia are insignificant.

### **Multivariate Single-Country Models**

I next examine the performance of the individual-level variables in a series of multivariate single-country models. Linear Regression Models are commonly used for this type of analysis. However, when a variable is ordinal – a common outcome in survey analysis – while its categories can be ranked from low to high, the distances between adjacent categories are unknown.<sup>8</sup> Since the Linear Regression Model includes the implicit assumption that the intervals are in fact equal, it may not be the best tool for evaluating survey results. Instead, I use Ordered Probit Analysis (Long, 1997: 114-147) to obtain maximum likelihood estimates. Table 2 shows the results.

I find that the effects of political status – loser (minority) and non-partisan – remain even when I control for a number of other variables. The effects are strong and consistent in the expected direction. The relationship holds in all 10 countries, indicating that losers are almost always significantly less satisfied with the way democracy works than are winners, with non-partisans falling somewhere between winners and losers. The effects are slightly less strong in Zimbabwe than in the other nine countries.

Economic performance evaluations also play an important role in satisfaction with democracy. The coefficients for both national and personal evaluations of the economy are consistently significant (except for egocentric evaluation in Lesotho and Namibia) and are in the expected direction. Sociotropic evaluations have the strongest impact in South Africa, Namibia, and Zimbabwe, while the strongest egocentric effects are in Zimbabwe, Mali, Nigeria, and Malawi. Egocentric evaluations have virtually no influence in Lesotho and Namibia. In several countries, including Lesotho, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Zambia, the effect of sociotropic evaluations is greater than egocentric ones, indicating that perspective on the national economic situation are more powerful determinants of satisfaction with democracy than are those on personal economic conditions. Namibia and South Africa are significantly richer countries in sub-Saharan Africa. But in several others, the effect of egocentric evaluations is greater than sociotropic ones.

Political interest is a statistically significant and positive predictor of satisfaction with the way democracy works in a half of the ten countries (Mali, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Zambia).

Demographic variables have almost no significant or consistent effects. The one exception is education, which has a statistically significant and negative effect in Mali, Nigeria, South Africa, and Tanzania,

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<sup>8</sup> Researchers often treat ordinal dependent variables as if they were interval, numbering the dependent categories sequentially and using the Linear Regression Model, which assumes that the intervals between adjacent categories are equal. For example, the distance between strongly agreeing and agreeing is assumed to be the same as the distance between agreeing and being neutral on the survey statement. However, both McKelvey and Zavoina (1975: 117) and Winship and Mare (1984: 521-523) give examples where regression of an ordinal outcome provides misleading results.

*Table 2. Effects of Individual-Level Variables on Satisfaction with Democracy in Ten Countries*

Independent Variable	Zimbabwe	Zambia	Lesotho	Nigeria	Tanzania	Malawi	Namibia	Mali	Botswana	South Africa
Loser (minority)	-0.22 (0.134)	-0.822*** (0.162)	-1.174*** (0.121)	-0.184** (0.066)	-1.059*** (0.073)	-1.627*** (0.085)	-0.425*** (0.113)	-0.513*** (0.074)	-0.637*** (0.085)	-0.515*** (0.088)
Non-partisan	-0.181* (0.087)	-0.302*** (0.075)	-0.849*** (0.097)	-0.149** (0.049)	-0.504*** (0.069)	-0.962*** (0.095)	-0.271** (0.091)	-0.422*** (0.058)	-0.514*** (0.093)	-0.494*** (0.055)
National economic performance	0.194*** (0.054)	0.162*** (0.032)	0.17*** (0.035)	0.153*** (0.018)	0.108*** (0.152)	0.112*** (0.031)	0.251*** (0.041)	0.051* (0.022)	0.083* (0.037)	0.298*** (0.028)
Personal economic performance (egocentric)	0.199*** (0.037)	0.124*** (0.03)	0.061 (0.037)	0.143*** (0.026)	0.103*** (0.028)	0.141*** (0.032)	0.035 (0.035)	0.151*** (0.038)	0.109** (0.035)	0.111*** (0.029)
Interest in politics	-0.06 (0.035)	0.086** (0.032)	0.019 (0.037)	0.099*** (0.017)	0.103*** (0.028)	0.019 (0.035)	0.067 (0.044)	0.103*** (0.024)	-0.035 (0.034)	0.111*** (0.026)
Gender (female = 1)	-0.052 (0.076)	-0.119 (0.069)	-0.016 (0.086)	-0.018 (0.041)	0.047 (0.055)	0.007 (0.069)	-0.156* (0.076)	-0.099 (0.055)	0.015 (0.072)	0.005 (0.049)
Age	0.008 (0.099)	-0.353*** (0.098)	0.071 (0.105)	0.02 (0.055)	0.092 (0.078)	0.18 (0.099)	0.07 (0.101)	-0.169* (0.067)	0.149 (0.097)	-0.059 (0.067)
Education	-0.057 (0.055)	-0.036 (0.046)	-0.028 (0.064)	-0.191*** (0.019)	-0.213*** (0.04)	-0.045 (0.051)	0.022 (0.048)	-0.104** (0.037)	-0.013 (0.051)	-0.098* (0.039)
cut1	0.436 (0.413)	-1.82 (0.39)	-0.211 (0.431)	-0.968 (0.234)	-0.616 (0.311)	-0.556 (0.372)	-0.424 (0.432)	-1.146 (0.285)	-0.819* (0.412)	-0.541 (0.285)
cut2	1.154 (0.414)	-0.967 (0.388)	0.127 (0.432)	-0.144 (0.233)	0.112 (0.31)	0.217 (0.372)	0.549 (0.432)	-0.562 (0.284)	-0.123 (0.412)	0.41 (0.285)
cut3	1.965 (0.416)	0.378 (0.387)	0.717 (0.431)	1.661 (0.234)	1.908 (0.313)	1.368 (0.373)	1.66 (0.433)	0.746 (0.285)	1.113*** (0.412)	1.601 (0.286)
Pseudo R2	0.033	0.047	0.083	0.048	0.088	0.169	0.041	0.033	0.043	0.076
N	971	1043	760	3499	1815	1095	847	1830	991	2011

Note: Ordered Probit estimates; standard errors are in parentheses. All significant test are two-tailed: \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001. Stata assumes that  $\beta_0 = 0$  and estimates  $\tau_1$ , the first cutpoint. The choice of parameterization does not affect estimates of the slopes, but does affect the estimates of  $\beta_0$  and the  $\tau_1 s^9$ .

<sup>9</sup> Programs such as LIMDEP assume that  $\tau_1 = 0$  and estimate  $\beta_0$ , while programs such as Marcov, SAS's LOGISTIC, and Stata assume that  $\beta_0 = 0$  and estimate  $\tau_1$ .



indicating that in these countries individuals with a higher level of formal education show a lower level of satisfaction with democratic governance in their country.

### **Winners, Non-partisans, and Losers in Parliamentary and Presidential Systems: the Pooled Model**

I next estimate an identical model with the pooled sample to examine whether these relationships hold generally.<sup>10</sup> I then test whether political institutions (ENPP and parliamentary/presidential systems) have effects on citizens' political attitudes about the way democracy works in their country with a few control variables. Finally, I look at whether political institutions (parliamentary/presidential systems) mediate the relationship between political status – that is, winners, non-partisans, or losers – and satisfaction with the way democracy works. To test whether losers and non-partisans who live in parliamentary systems exhibit a higher level of satisfaction with democracy than do those who live in presidential systems, I estimate the Ordered Probit Model with interaction terms, i.e., *Losers\*Parliamentary system* and *Non-partisans\*Parliamentary system*. The results are shown in Table 3.

The substantive conclusions drawn from the three-pooled models are similar to those presented in the previous section. Both *Loser* and *Non-partisan* are strong determinants of satisfaction with democracy. Moreover, evaluations of economic performance are significantly and positively related to satisfaction with democracy, and people who are more interested in politics are more likely to be satisfied with the way democracy works in their country. Finally, more educated people are less likely to be satisfied with democracy.

So far, individual-level analyses have provided support for my argument that winners, non-partisans, and losers have systematically different attitudes about the way democracy works in their country, even when controlling for evaluations of personal and national economic conditions, interest in politics, and a number of demographic factors.

Because there are significant cross-national differences in the level of satisfaction with democracy, as shown in Figure 1 and 2, I expect that those differences should be explained by country-level variations in both political and economic factors. Model 2 has two political institution variables, i.e., a dummy variable for parliamentary system and *ENPP*, to explain institutional variations across countries. To control for cross-national differences in both political and economic development, model 2 also has two control variables, i.e., *reversed Freedom House index* and *the log of GDP per capita*.

The cross-national differences in the level of satisfaction with democracy are explained at least partially by institutional variation. I find that the structure of the party system has a significant effect on citizens' evaluations of the quality of democratic governance. The effects are powerful and consistently in the expected direction. Both *ENPP* and *ENPP*<sup>2</sup> are statistically significant and positively and negatively related with the level of satisfaction with democracy, respectively. As expected, *ENPP* and the level of system support have a bell-shaped quadratic relationship. The marginal effect of *ENPP* increases until it reaches a turning point of 1.683, and then decreases after passing that point. This result is to some extent consistent with Norris' finding. People under two-party and moderate multiparty systems have more confidence in political institutions than those under both predominant one-party government and fragmented party systems.

I find that the type of constitutional structure has no significant effects on citizens' satisfaction with democracy. While the coefficient for *Parliamentary system* is positive, it is not statistically significant in model 2. We cannot argue that people who live in parliamentary systems feel more satisfaction with

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<sup>10</sup> To control for heteroskedasticity across 10 countries in the data, I estimate the model with robust standard error adjusted for clustering on country.

**Table 3. Effects of Individual-Level Variables on Satisfaction with Democracy: Pooled Model Estimates**

Independent Variables	Model		
	1	2	3
Loser (minority)	-0.475** (0.167)	-0.518** (0.174)	-0.498* (0.215)
Loser * Parliamentary system			-0.081 (0.245)
Non-partisan	-0.273** (0.094)	-0.321*** (0.075)	-0.259*** (0.071)
Non-partisan * Parliamentary system			-0.288** (0.108)
National economic performance (sociotropic)	0.214*** (0.028)	0.175*** (0.019)	0.174*** (0.018)
Personal economic performance (egocentric)	0.233*** (0.03)	0.167*** (0.006)	0.165*** (0.006)
Interest in politics	0.087*** (0.015)	0.088*** (0.013)	0.092*** (0.012)
Gender (female = 1)	-0.056*** (0.015)	-0.051** (0.017)	-0.054*** (0.016)
Age	-0.096** (0.037)	-0.065 (0.056)	-0.058 (0.053)
Education	-0.121** (0.039)	-0.126*** (0.037)	-0.126*** (0.036)
Parliamentary system		0.348 (0.257)	0.505 (0.293)
ENPP		2.961*** (0.755)	2.922*** (0.769)
ENPP^2		-0.639*** (0.174)	-0.631*** (0.177)
Democratization (reversed Freedom House Index)		-0.144** (0.06)	-0.134* (0.062)
Log of GDP per capita (PPP US\$)		-0.084 (0.106)	-0.091 (0.103)
Cut 1	-0.486 (0.219)	1.347 (1.118)	1.354 (1.108)
Cut 2	0.232 (0.186)	2.088 (1.115)	2.098 (1.103)
Cut 3	1.715 (0.253)	3.588 (1.202)	3.599 (1.194)
Pseudo R2	0.0825	0.0944	0.0953
Log pseudo-likelihood	-19753.864	-19494.382	-19476.988
N	17256	17256	17256

Note: Ordered Probit estimates; robust standard errors (standard errors adjusted for clustering on country) are in parentheses. All significance tests are two-tailed: \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

democratic governance than do those who live in presidential systems. This contrasts to some extent with Norris' (1999) finding that institutional confidence proves to be slightly higher in parliamentary than in presidential systems.

I find no support for Norris' (1999: 232) finding that "citizens express more confidence in countries where, according to the Freedom House classification, there are widespread opportunities for civic

participation and protection of human rights.” The coefficient for the Freedom House index variable is negative and statistically significant in model 2. The results show that more democratization is associated with lower levels of citizens’ satisfaction with the way democracy works in these countries.

### Losers and Non-Partisans in Parliamentary Systems

Because both losers and non-partisans are less likely to be satisfied with the way democracy works than are winners, and because, as shown in both Figures 1 and 2 and Table 2, there are significant cross-national differences in the level of the satisfaction, I expect that the differences in satisfaction among winners, non-partisans, and losers can be explained by government structure (presidential/parliamentary system). I argue that the difference in satisfaction among winners, non-partisans, and losers is influenced by the relationship between the executive and legislature in a country. The results are shown in model 3, which includes two interaction terms.

I find that political institutions (parliamentary/presidential systems) mediate the relationship between political status as winners, non-partisans, or losers, and satisfaction with the way democracy works. To test the hypothesis that there is an interactive effect between political system and individual political status, I use the *F*-statistics for a joint hypothesis (Wooldridge, 2000).<sup>11</sup> To estimate the effects of loser in parliamentary system I look at both *Loser* and *Loser\*Parliamentary System*. The *F*-statistic is statistically significant. The joint hypothesis that *Loser* and *Loser\*Parliamentary System* have no effect on the satisfaction with democratic governance can be rejected at the level of 0.01 %. Thus, the interaction term of *Loser\*Parliamentary System* needs to be included in the model. The *F*-statistic for *Non-partisan* and *Non-partisan\*Parliamentary System* is also statistically significant. The *p*-value for the *F*-test of this joint hypothesis is less than 0.001. Thus, we can argue that losers and non-partisans who live in parliamentary systems express a different level of satisfaction with the way democracy works than those who live in presidential systems.

For substantive interpretation, I calculate predicted probabilities of citizen satisfaction with democratic governance for different categories of political status and different political systems. Table 4 contains predicted probabilities for winners, non-partisans and losers by political structure, i.e., parliamentary and presidential systems, across four outcome categories, holding all other factors constant based on Model 3.

**Table 4. Predicted Probabilities of Satisfaction with Democracy**

Political status	Political structure	Outcome category			
		Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Winners	Parliamentary system	0.042	0.120	0.534	0.304
	Presidential system	0.114	0.208	0.528	0.151
Non-partisans	Parliamentary system	0.119	0.212	0.525	0.145
	Presidential system	0.177	0.250	0.479	0.095
Losers	Parliamentary system	0.125	0.217	0.521	0.138
	Presidential system	0.239	0.274	0.424	0.063

<sup>11</sup> We must take care not to look separately at the coefficients of *Loser* and *Loser\*Parliamentary System*. We cannot conclude that, because the coefficient of *Loser\*Parliamentary System* is insignificant, we cannot reject the null hypothesis, i.e., that the coefficients for both of the two interesting independent variables should be zero. The coefficient of *Loser* is only expressing the effects of loser in presidential system.

The results reported in Table 4 provide largely consistent support for my hypothesis. Losers in parliamentary systems are likely to show higher levels of satisfaction with the way democracy works than losers in presidential systems. As Table 4 shows, there is a relatively clear gap in predicted probabilities of the level of democratic satisfaction between winners, non-partisans, and losers between the two political structures. Winners' predicted probability of satisfaction with democratic governance is the highest, and non-partisans' is somewhere between winners and losers.

In summary, people who live in parliamentary systems are more likely to be satisfied with democratic governance than those who live in presidential systems regardless of their political status as winners, non-partisans, or losers in these 10 sub-Saharan Africa countries. More particularly, losers who live in presidential systems feel relatively more dissatisfied with democratic governance than do losers in parliamentary systems. In other words, this result suggests that parliamentary systems should attenuate minority's level of dissatisfaction with the way democracy works. This result is consistent with Anderson and Guillory's (1997) empirical study. But the converse is not true; that is, presidential systems do not reinforce levels of satisfaction with among winners. The predicted probabilities of the level of satisfaction with democratic governance for winners in presidential systems are lower than those for winners in parliamentary systems.

## **CONCLUSION**

Political institutions affect citizens' political attitudes about the way democracy works in their country. Based on both individual- and country-level evidence from 10 sub-Saharan African countries, I empirically demonstrate that the structure of the party system has systematic effects on individual satisfaction with democratic governance, as do attitudinal differences and an individual's political status as a winner, non-partisan, or loser.

In particular, citizens who live under two-party systems are more satisfied with the way democracy works than those who live under both predominant one-party systems and fragmented party systems. On the other hand, the type of political structure does not have direct effects on citizens' satisfaction with democracy.

The findings also indicate that those who have a party affiliation with the incumbent government are likely to be significantly more satisfied with the way democracy works than are those who do not. Those who do not have any party affiliation fall somewhere between winners and losers.

I also find that the nature of the relationship between the executive and the legislature mediates the relationship between political status and satisfaction with democracy. Losers in parliamentary systems show lower levels of dissatisfaction with democratic governance than do losers in presidential systems.

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