



## Deterioration of ANC Support: Conceptual Analysis of Rural-Urban Voters Patterns in South African Elections

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### **Abstract**

The 2016 local government elections in South Africa were received as a shocking event, despite a strong belief that the African National Congress will always rule. ANC has ruled the country since the end of apartheid in 1994, but in the 2016 municipal elections, it recorded its worst result ever post-apartheid. In 2016, some scholars and analysts were already predicting that the ANC would see further decline in the next elections, especially in major cities. The ANC suffered electoral defeats that culminated in significant losses. It lost its majority in important urban metropolitan municipalities and economic centers such as Tshwane, Ekurhuleni, Johannesburg, and Nelson Mandela Bay. Only through a coalition agreement did the party retain control in Ekurhuleni. Drawing on theoretical literature and reports, the paper attempts to analyze the decline in support for ANC, particularly in metropolitan communities, and to understand the voting behavior of rural and urban voters. Despite the drastic losses of ANC in metropolitan areas, there are areas such as Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Northwest that can still be considered ANC strong holds. This calls for an examination of the voting behavior of people in rural and urban areas. The paper notes that factors such as perceived loyalty, concerns about service delivery, and voter education contribute to perceived established voting behavior and the continued decline in support for ANC. The paper recommends that ANC improve service delivery and eliminate corruption within its ranks if it wants to recapture power in major cities.

**Keywords:** *Voting Patterns; Democracy; Elections; Voter's Education; ANC*

### **1. Introduction**

According to Lannegren and Ito (2017), South Africa held municipal elections in August 2016 for the seventh time since 1995. Despite the few and isolated difficulties that the Independent Electoral

Commission of South Africa (IEC) encountered during this election, all of the competing political parties welcomed the results, and like the previous four municipal election cycles, the most recent one was regarded as transparent, credible, and democratic by both local and foreign observers. The African National Congress (ANC), the party in power, has been losing favor among voters, and the 2016 municipal elections marked a turning point in that trend. According to Paret (2016), the opposition parties, notably the Democratic Alliance (DA), Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), and other minor parties such as the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), have benefited from the ANC's loss of significant electoral victories.

Rulea (2018) claims that the ANC suffered more election setbacks that culminated in substantial losses. In important urban metropolitan municipalities and economic hubs like Johannesburg, Tshwane, Ekurhuleni, and Nelson Mandela Bay, it lost its majority. Only a coalition arrangement allowed the party to keep power in Ekurhuleni. Isike and Onapajo (2017) articulate that the decline in voter support for the African National Congress was caused in part by disputes among organisational leaders, corruption, and poor service delivery. The political party that was once a liberation movement has become a mockery to many South Africans and people around the world.

The ruling African National Congress (ANC) lost several of its historic strongholds in South Africa's 2016 municipal elections, including four large metropolitan municipalities, fuelling speculation that it may lose in national elections (Mokgosi, Shai & Ogunnubi, 2017). The African National Congress in South Africa also dominated in rural areas such as Limpopo, Mpumalanga, and Northwest, with results above 60%. Besseling (2016) asserts that the rising body of scholarship on the political function of geography has glaringly ignored the political behavior of rural populations. The advancement of reconstruction and development programs, creation of a local tax base for local government, provision of a range of essential services to communities, and aiding in the racial integration of previously segregated communities under a single authority are all legal obligations for local government (Nhlapo, Anderson, & Wentzel, 2017).

The researcher seeks to examine probable sources of South Africans' support for ANC in the 2016, 2019, and 2021 local elections using post-election public opinion data and examining the voting behaviour of citizens in different geographic locations. The study further argues that there is an emergence of voting patterns of citizens both in rural and urban areas. The study highlights that as much as there is evidence in decline of the ANC, there are some areas where it still wins with outright majority, such areas are regarded as strong hold of the ANC. The researchers argue that the deterioration of support for ANC in the 2016, 2019, and 2021 elections is the result of several reasonable assessments.

## **2. Problem Statement**

It may not be long until the ANC, the main force behind the anti-apartheid movement, loses its monopoly on national power in South Africa. The ANC won five straight elections in 2014, confirming the claim, but with a diminishing percentage of the vote, particularly in metropolitan areas (Paret, 2016). The African National Congress (ANC) had its worst election performance in 20 years in 2014. The triumph, which is nevertheless significant by South African and global standards, has spurred an expanding public and academic discussion over the ANC's future. For instance, Susan Booysen contends that the ANC has been and still is regenerating its power despite challenges with performance and governance (Runciman, 2016).

Chipkin (2016) indicates that the influence of this view is deteriorating, however, and there are intellectuals who take genuinely the viewpoint that ANC will soon lose power. According to Schulz-Herzenberg (2020), the downward trend has become so normal that it is no longer surprising the rate at which ANC is steadily and consistently declining. This article examines potential origins of South

Africans' support for the ANC in the municipal elections of 2016, 2019, and 2021 using post-election public opinion data. The article underlines how two important issues, a declining degree of confidence in ANC, and perceived shortcomings in local service delivery, affect people's judgments about whether or not to support ANC. To this end, the researcher identifies voting patterns in urban and rural areas, regardless of the decline of the ANC vote, there are still some areas where it performs very well and enjoys a majority. It is safe to call and conclude that such areas are strong hold of the ANC. By analyzing and reviewing the literature, the researcher explores other factors that may contribute to such perceived patterns.

### **3. Theoretical Perspective**

Chu and Chen (2016), view a theory as a roadmap that researchers use in their search for patterns to answer research questions and solve research problems. This signifies that when a researcher advances an argument on a phenomenon such as deterioration of ANC support: conceptual analysis of rural-urban voters' patterns in south African elections, with a theory in place, researchers' argument is likely to hold ground. Be that as it may be, this paper will be premised and augmented from Goal setting theory. According to Lunenburg (2011), goal-setting theory is the practice of managing employees' performance by giving them clear objectives that they can commit to and accept. In literal sense, this implies that the government of the day, which is the ANC need to be goal orientated and set goals of service delivery and commit to them. This can only be achieved if they understand their role and their obligation as far as service delivery is concerned. The idea highlights the crucial link between objectives and achievement. Research supports predictions which seem to yield the most effective performance when detailed and rigorous goals are being used for performance assessment and outcomes feedback, and when commitment and acceptance are being created (Locke & Latham, 2012). Its choice rest on the relevance the researcher finds in terms of its definition and applicability to the study. Furthermore, with the current noticeable poor service delivery, perhaps is important to bring forth the role of the government and its obligations in serving the people of this country. This will perhaps encourage them to set goals which they will commit to and strive to achieve them.

Almost all modern organizations are oriented to some sort of goals. Programs including target management (MBO), high-performance work practices (HPWPs), information systems management (MIS), benchmarking and stretch goals, system thinking, and strategic planning are all included in the goal-setting process. Every organization aspires to be the finest service provider to the clients it serves in the modern world (Khotsa & Sebola, 2020). They also imply that performance management is the best way for organizations to position themselves and prepare for the challenge of attaining their strategic objectives, which is to serve consumers. The researcher found the theory appropriate because it places employees at the centre of improving the overall performance. It further narrates such goals should be challenging and realistic to serve as a source of motivation. Motivated employees are likely to perform exceptionally well.

### **4. Literature Review**

#### **4.1. The Dominance of the ANC in South African Political Landscape**

The historical part the ANC played in the development of the new South Africa is linked to its control (Piper & Anciano, 2015). The ANC, like many other prominent parties, enjoyed a significant electoral advantage over its rivals in 1994 because of its significance as a sign of South Africa's national liberation and a vital force in the development of the new democratic state. Isike and Onapajo (2017) observe that "history is written by the victors, and the ANC repeatedly makes the monopoly claim to have brought liberation to the masses" in this context. Another effective tool the party has to maintain support

and legitimacy among the sizable group of politically significant workers and the impoverished masses is its tripartite alliance with the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) (Piper & Nadvi, 2010). The alliance supports the idea that a government headed by the ANC and working in tandem with unions is the most effective way to represent the interests of workers. Furthermore, the ANC has been able to win the support of the non-black voters because to its dedication to democratic values founded on non-racism and political equality.

Despite the contradictions these messages may occasionally reflect, Ferim (2013) claims that the party's identification with messages like unity in diversity, national reconciliation, non-racism, and black advancement, along with its emphasis on equality and democracy, provided a foundation for a shared society. The majority of South Africans now view the party as the only one capable of bringing the nation together and preserving political stability, giving it some moral legitimacy (Isike & Onapajo, 2017). In the 1994 national elections, the party received 62.65% of the vote, defeating the New National Party (NNP), the former ruling National Party (NP), and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), which received 20.39% and 10.54% of the vote, respectively. With 66.35% of the vote in the national elections of 1999, the ANC significantly increased its support while the opposition suffered defeats. The IFP came in third with 8.58%, much behind the Democratic Party (DP), currently known as the Democratic Alliance (DA), in second place with 9.56%. With 69.89% of the vote in the 2004 elections, the ANC's dominance was cemented (Piper & Anciano, 2015). With 65.9% of the vote, the party retained an absolute majority despite a modest dip in the 2009 elections. With 62.15% of the vote, the party maintained its dominance in South African politics even if its majority continued to shrink in 2014 (Piper & Nadvi, 2010). At the geographical level of provinces and municipalities, the ANC first gained control of the political landscape of the country. Seven of South Africa's nine provinces have seen the party gain a majority since 1994. The party earned an average of 56.2% of the vote in the 2000 municipal elections; this number rose to 65.67% in 2006. Despite a minor drop in 2011, the party nonetheless retained its lead with 62.93% Ferim (2013). But the party's performance in 2016—53.91%—represents a substantial fall that raises grave questions about the party's viability. Nelson Mandela Bay, City of Tshwane, and City of Johannesburg were all taken over by the DA in the election, which has been dubbed the ANC's worst defeat since 1994 (Du Toit & de Jager, 2014).

25% of South Africa's wealth is concentrated in five municipalities, including the historic metropolis of Cape Town, giving the DA authority over them ([www.elections.org.za](http://www.elections.org.za)). The polarized opinions on how the ANC's rule has affected South Africa's democracy are illuminating for this essay. On the one hand, some academics contend that South Africa's socio-political progress and democratic consolidation are clearly endangered by a dominating ANC. First, proponents of this viewpoint contend that the ANC's hegemony inhibits opposition politics, which are essential to advancing democracy (Ferim, 2013).

#### 4.2. Voters Education

Among some of the concepts emerging from this research is voters' education. Although there is no universal definition of voter education, there are few commonalities in the way different organisations and countries define it (Rauh, 2017). The researcher notes that voter education appears to be a concept that also requires attention. This involves informing voters on their rights, the election process, and the candidates. Even while civic education may be more extensive and comprehensive than voter education, the terms voter education and civic education are sometimes used interchangeably. The current IEC conceptualization of voter education is wide and suits the requirements of an ongoing civic education process extremely well. Voter education may be one factor contributing to the drop-in ANC support (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2014). It is argued that there is existence of the voter's education in rural areas and in urban. The researcher argues that voters in urban areas vote based on what they see and service delivery level of the government of the day. One would say they are literate in the sense that they do not

believe that they owe a certain political party loyalty. It is safe to conclude that they are judging political party based on what is providing. Additionally, looking at service delivery level in urban is of better standard than in rural areas, yet government of the day do find comfort and assured support of the voters in rural Areas.

In as much as there is no stability for political parties or government of the day in urban areas, the same government enjoys stability and comfort in rural areas where every citizen can see its failures by lack of service delivery. This in literal sense draws a distinction between the voter's education of the citizens in rural areas and those in urban areas. It is safe to indicate that voters in rural who are in extreme poverty, lack of basic needs for survival and highest levels of lack of service delivery remains loyal to the ruling party and government of the regardless of service delivery levels.

### 4.3. Identity and Voting Behaviour

The outcomes of the local elections in 2014 lead to a number of withdrawals. With the exception of KZN, which showed an uptick, support for the ANC has decreased in eight of South Africa's nine provinces (Olayode, 2015). It raises important questions about the nature of South Africa's developing political culture, in which a party gains influence in the incumbent's home region simply by virtue of its leader hailing from or having roots in a particular province (OR Tambo, Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki from the Eastern Cape, Jacob Zuma from KZN). This trend raises troubling questions about an evolving political culture that reflects the politicization of ethnicity and regionalism as tools of political capital that seem rooted in other parts of the African continent, without excessively fetishizing ethnicity and regionalism (something ANC has always been careful to avoid). In a place like KwaZulu-Natal, where the ANC won both the 2009 national elections and the 2011 local government elections, this topic is relevant. This is taking place in a situation where the ANC, led by Jacob Zuma, has lost political support in other regions of the nation (as evidenced by the proportion of votes cast in both the national elections of 2009 and the municipal elections of 2011) (Nyiyayana, 2019).

Because Zuma is from KwaZulu-Natal, the question is whether the Zulu nationalist urge is migrating from the defunct Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) to the ANC or dividing between the ANC, which still provides some support for the IFP, and the National Freedom Party (NFP), an IFP offshoot. Although it has not been a widespread issue in South African politics, the politicization of ethnicity and regionalism is a concern given the patterns mentioned. Second, it's possible to speculate on the reasons why the DA has seen a rise in support and voter turnout while the ANC has had a mostly stable level of support. It seems that the ANC's traditional base of support has not shifted its allegiance to other parties. Support for ANC-led communities has stayed mostly unchanged, even in regions where there have been violent demonstrations, with a modest uptick in support for independent candidates, for instance, in a location like Balfour in Mpumalanga. In places like Khayeletha and Alexandra, where ANC support remained stable but the DA saw an increase in votes where it had previously received virtually none, it is obvious that the DA achieved only modest gains among black voters.

Leduc (2002) claims that the decline in support for minor parties, coupled with an increase in support for the DA and a relatively stable level of support for the ANC, indicates that either one (ANC or DA) was able to win the support of this constituency, reinforcing the perception that the two major parties are beginning to control more and more of the political landscape. Smaller parties continue to play a significant role in politics but given the limited political and regulatory influence (control of the ruling party, control over how the city government is run), the fetishization of plurality and diversity promoted by proportional representation cannot be sustained. Even worse is the political influence of the other parties on several issues at the municipal council level. The absence of political influence in the creation of service delivery models, integrated development planning, and local economic growth is particularly pertinent.

#### 4.4. Fluctuating Voting Patterns

Millions of South Africans have been forced out of conventional, long-term employment (as agricultural laborers, miners, factory employees, or service workers) and into a grey area of "piecework" and temporary contracts. Even if those who experience insecurity do not always belong to an "underclass," the rate at which work instability has become worse since the 1970s has increased noticeably during the past 20 years. According to election outcomes, those in this condition are reportedly quitting the ANC in large numbers (Roberts, Struwig, Gordon & Davids, 2020). Think at the Northwest Province's voting trends, for instance. Support for ANC decreased by 13% in the region between 2004 and 2014. Rustenburg, where it decreased by 23.36 percent within the same time period, had the most drastic decline. This region is the centre of the platinum sector, and since the Labour Relations Act was passed there in 1995, a growing number of key mining operations have been farmed out to outside labour brokers.

Accordingly, Schulz-Herzenberg (2009) this is known as "externalization" by sociologists and is a direct cause of less secure employment and lower pay. 14 percent of the workforce in the gold sector was externalized in 2005. It was 36% in the platinum industry. Additionally, it was particularly high in the coal and iron ore mines. In the Waterberg, home to Anglo-American's Kumba iron ore mine, ANC support fell sharply. The party saw some of its biggest setbacks in Mpumalanga's coal mining regions. It is important to understand how increasing social and economic vulnerability relates to the founding of the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) in 1998, the degradation of labour relations in the area, and eventually the Marikana killing of striking workers.

With this group of voters, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) have found political success. For instance, EFF support peaked in Rustenburg, where it won more over 20% of the vote, and was extremely strong across the platinum belt. Kumba's location in Thabazimbi, Limpopo, where EFF also performed well. The new party earned more than 40% of the vote at polling places close to residential areas and received a respectable 14% of the vote overall. EFF also performed strongly in neighboring Lephalale, where the Medupi power plant is being built, particularly at voting places that construction workers frequently use. For instance, the party won over a quarter of the votes cast in the contractor's hamlet. Given that many migratory workers were probably registered to vote elsewhere, Finn (2020) hypothesizes that these election figures likely underestimate EFF support. There are several motivations for individuals who remain ANC supporters throughout the election to back the liberation cause.

Booyesen claims that ANC supporters live in "two universes. Elections are the first world, in which ANC supporters and strongholds set aside their disagreements to assist one another. The fundamental reason for this is because "elections remain essentially the period of mobilizing against a political adversary of the election.<sup>19</sup> But in the interim—what Booyesen refers to as the "other times"<sup>20</sup>—disgruntled party members express their unhappiness with how the administration is doing its duties. Booyesen's overall assessment of the ANC's resilience and capacity for self-regeneration leads him to the conclusion that the ANC finally manages to strike a fine balance between these two worlds that "reaffirms" allegiance to its movement despite its flaws.

### 5. The Battle for ANC Support in Selected Provinces

#### 5.1. Gauteng Province

The biggest change at the provincial level may have happened in Gauteng, where the ANC's vote share decreased from 64.0% to 53.6%, giving the province a narrow majority. The EFF earned 10.3% of the vote, while the DA saw a gain in support from 21.9% to 30.8%. Gauteng is South Africa's economic hub, according to Joubert and Axhausen (2011). Although it is the smallest of the nine provinces, it is also

the most populated, urban, and diversified. Nearly 25% of South Africa's population and 24% of all voters who are eligible and registered reside there. In South African politics, the party that wins Gauteng unquestionably holds the psychological advantage. Although the ANC has controlled Gauteng politics since 1994, there were indications that the ANC, the DA, and the EFF will be in a close race in the 2014 elections.

According to Senekal (2014), the contest for Gauteng became more intense in the months preceding the election as the two major parties emphasized their accomplishments in service delivery and governance in the province (the DA oversees the significant municipality of Midvaal). Reddy (2016) notes that none of the candidates in the three metropolitan municipalities of Ekurhuleni, the City of Tshwane, and Johannesburg got the necessary 50% plus 1 votes in the 2016 local government elections in South Africa. In order to fulfill the prerequisites for the creation of the municipal executive council, the parties agreed to form coalitions and/or agree to support a certain mayoral candidate (Essop, 2016; Mathekgwa & Malala, 2016).

The majority of political parties seem to have been less prepared for the outcomes that resulted in the extraordinary loss of an absolute majority for the ANC in the three Gauteng metropolitan municipalities. This exposed the absence of a well-coordinated emergency strategy for forming political alliances. The extent of the decline in voter support for the ANC was not anticipated, despite the fact that similar commentary and polling were common in the lead-up to the 2014 national elections (Niang, 2016; Ipsos, 2016), which suggested the possibility of coalitions due to a lack of analysis. However, voter support for the ANC barely marginally decreased.

## 5.2. Limpopo Province

While support for ANC has plummeted in many provinces, Limpopo is still one of the provinces considered a stronghold of the party, despite a slight decline. In Limpopo province, where EFF is based, ANC lost nearly 12%. The decline of ANC was offset by a rise of DA in Limpopo, where the party gained 1.6% support. The EFF, which many had expected to spread its support with a new record, increased its support by 16.7%, which is considered significant even though the party participated in general elections for the first time in 2014. The party continues to lose power in many provinces, although it has brought about change in South Africa. Internal political struggles continue to be a nightmare for the political party. Butler, (2005) suggested that internal democracy was limited as a result, but there was some political stability. The loss of 12.53% between the 2011 and 2016 municipal elections highlights the paradoxical reality of whether or not the province is a stronghold for the party. Although not all election results consistently reflect this, ANC is gradually losing strength.

The constant ANC support of over 69% in Limpopo is a cause of concern for many political analysts due to the lack of service delivery in the province. Corruption and maladministration are other factors contributing to the 12% decline in the province. In the merged municipalities in Capricorn and Waterberg, a huge decline of 20.52% and 21.38% respectively was recorded. The municipality of Aganang, which was known as the smallest municipality in Capricorn district, was dissolved in 2016 and merged with the municipalities of Polokwane and Blouberg. On the other hand, the merger of the municipalities of Modimolle and Mookgopong in Waterberg District recorded a decrease of 18%, while Thabazimbi lost 17.41% of support. The two municipalities of Modimolle-Mookgopong and Thabazimbi were taken over from DA by a coalition government of ANC after the ANC failed to obtain a majority of more than 50 votes. In Polokwane, the centre of Limpopo and home to the Economic Freedom Party, the results of the 2016 local elections were shocking after the EFF received 28.21% of the electoral vote despite holding the local elections for the first time. According to Laterza and Van Wyk's election poll, many people expected a majority of votes for EFF, as its founder and commander-in-chief, President Julius Malema, is from Limpopo and was expected to receive more support in his homeland.

Electoral loyalty remains the order of the day, although rural areas in Limpopo still suffer from service delivery such as adequate road infrastructure, sufficient clean water, electricity, and poor health facilities among other challenges. Twala (2010) believes that improving service delivery is the most important factor in improving community well-being, especially in rural areas.

The above therefore supports the researcher's view that although the general conclusion is that support for ANC is declining, there is also an emerging voting pattern where overall support for ANC is declining but there are areas in selected provinces such as Limpopo that can be considered ANC strongholds.

## ***6. Forecasting the Future of the ANC's Declining Dominance***

As this research has explored the emergence of voting habits among residents in both urban and rural regions, it has been stated that the ANC's control of South Africa's political landscape is waning and is at risk of losing power totally in the coming years. The paper also discussed voter education, making the argument that voters in urban areas, where living conditions are better than those in rural areas, where people live in abject poverty and lack basic necessities like access to water, electricity, and medical care, appear to have more knowledge and information about voting. Voters in metropolitan areas tend to be allegiant to any political party and instead focus their decisions on how services are currently being provided.

This is due to the ANC's history of self-evaluation and self-correction, which confounds its critics. For instance, many pundits predicted that the ANC would lose a sizable portion of the vote to COPE in the 2009 elections following the divisions in 2007 that led to the establishment of COPE. However, the ANC came together and gained more votes (65.09%) than it did in the 1999 elections (62.65%), and only slightly fewer than it did in the 2004 elections (69.89%), which marked the ANC's highest vote total in national elections since 1994. After President Zuma departed the scene, there is a chance that the new party leader, who would then unite supporters and neutrals in the party anew, may reach some sort of agreement. Because of its resiliency, the ANC is expected to be rebuilt under the new leadership in time for 2019 and beyond. Second, it is conceivable that successful DA/EFF coalitions in the metropolitan municipalities of Johannesburg, Tshwane, and Nelson Mandela Bay would portend well for a potential national opposition coalition against the ANC, which might provide it (ANC) with a major electoral challenge. However, it is unclear that this will occur in time to have a substantial influence on the results of the 2019 election and subsequent elections. Above and beyond all of them, the sentiment for the battle is still strong, especially among rural people who support the ANC the most out of all opposition groups.

## ***7. Methodological Approach***

According to Blaxter, Hughes, and Tight (2010), the word "research" is made up of the phrases "re+search." To re-search is what it literally implies. This means that the term "research" denotes a methodical examination or action to learn new information in respect to the facts that currently exist.

### **7.1 Research Design**

According to Bal, Siddiq, Mukherjee and Meikap (2019), the purpose of a research design is to provide a framework for the various tasks that are performed in the research process. A descriptive research design was used in conducting the study. In this study, using a content analysis technique and a qualitative research methodology (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). According to Cavanagh (1997), content analysis is a versatile technique for analysing textual material. Rosengren (1981) claims that content



analysis refers to a range of analytical philosophies that includes impressionistic, intuitive, and interpretative analyses as well as methodical, exacting textual analyses. Despite its adaptability, content analysis was the most suitable method for this investigation because, according to Downe-Wamboldt (1992), it aims to "provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under study". The goal of content analysis is to produce a concise yet thorough description of the phenomena. The analysis's output are the ideas or categories that best capture the phenomenon (Elo & Kyng, 2008).

With an emphasis on the text's content or context, research utilizing qualitative content analysis examines how language functions as a means of communication (Lindkvist, 1981; McTavish & Pirro, 1990). Text data can originate from narratives, open-ended surveys, interviews, focus groups, observations, print media like articles, books, or manuals, as well as spoken, written, or electronic sources (Kondracki & Wellman, 2002). Additionally, qualitative content analysis goes beyond merely counting words and carefully analyses language in order to divide enormous volumes of text into a manageable number of groups that correspond to comparable meanings (Weber, 1990). There are no distinct or established limits in this study, according to Auriacombe (2011).

## **7.2. Data Collection**

This study is mostly qualitative in character and draws on a survey of secondary sources' literature and materials. The secondary sources led to the secondary data that was gathered from regulatory and policy papers, academic books and scientific journal articles, prior annual, quarterly, and monthly reports, as well as pertinent reading materials and news in the media. The nature and quality of objects are the main topics of qualitative research. It represents subjective opinions more frequently stated in the language of research subjects (Mouton, 2001). Unobtrusive research methods were applied for this goal.

According to Auriacombe (2007), the notion of "qualitative research" typically refers to any form of research that yields conclusions that are not supported by statistical methods or other types of quantification. According to Auriacombe (2007), qualitative research examines knowledge by means of the application of certain methodological inquiry traditions that focus on social or human concerns. In addition, the research produced a "complex, holistic picture in which words or concepts were analysed that led to obtaining detailed views of informants" (Auriacombe, 2007). According to Yadav (2022), qualitative research offers thorough descriptions of the social context under investigation. Data were continuously analysed in accordance with the fundamentals of qualitative research design.

In order to satisfy the paper's goal and purpose and to provide a solution to the defined research topic, the data was also inductively analysed. As Nieuwenhuis (2015) said, "Qualitative data analysis tends to be an ongoing and iterative process, implying that data collection, processing, analysis and reporting are intertwined, and not necessarily a successive process". Also, Gibbs (2002) enhanced that "qualitative data analysis is a process of transformation of collecting qualitative data, done employing analytic procedures, into a clear, understandable, insightful, trustworthy and even original analysis". Equally, Marshall and Rossman (2014) claimed that qualitative information analysis is a "search for general statements about relationships among categories of data". This indicates that the data was continuously examined in an effort to find statements that contributed to resolving the research question, objective, and aim of this work.

## ***Conclusion and Recommendations***

To determine if the claim that the ANC's dominance in South Africa's political environment is decreasing is true, this article has sought to utilize markers of the collapse of powerful parties. The party's defeats in the 2016 and 2019 municipal elections are a more obvious evidence of the party's declining

hegemony than the indicators of decline (corruption, bad governance, and factionalism). The ANC would suffer more losses in next elections, which would eventually threaten its hegemony and have implications for its survival if the tide of corruption charges, perceived bad governance, and factional coercion were not turned.

Also, the question of service delivery continues to be posed, it cannot be ignored that the ANC is still failing citizens with regard to provision of basic services. Services delivery protest for provision of water and sanitation, electricity and proper roads became part of everyday life.

In light of the above, it is safe to conclude that we are likely to see situations where ANC is still in power with ought to right majority and becoming an opposition in other areas of the country, especial in metropolitan municipalities. As indicated in the discussion, the researchers note this established pattern where ANC is still enjoying majority of support and loyalty form voters, this are voters who are loyal and votes ANC irrespective of its ability to provide basic service to the society.

Also, the researchers notes the emergence of the concept “voters’ education” which seems to be charactering this study and was discussed above. Researchers indicates that among some of the importance concepts that seems to be influencing the voting patterns noted in the literature is voters’ education. The researcher argues that voters in urban areas vote based on what they see and service delivery level of the government of the day. One would say they are literate in the sense that they do not believe that they owe a certain political party loyalty. It is safe to conclude that they are judging political party based on what is providing. Additionally, looking at service delivery level in urban is of better standard than in rural areas, yet government of the day do find comfort and assured support of the voters in rural Areas.

To enhance the support for the ANC, the paper recommends the following;

- The ANC should improve service delivery and eliminate corruption within its ranks if it wants to recapture power in major cities.
- The ANC should move from cadre deployment policy and adopt deployment on basis of merit.
- Eradicate factionalism within the party and re-establish united front for common good of serving the citizens.
- Government should consider expanding the scope of IEC which will include educating citizens voting rights and choice of party to vote for.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare no conflict of interest

### **Supplementary Materials**

The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding authors

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