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IDASA Local Election Study, 1995

Public Opinion Service: IDASA

CODEBOOK

SADA 0047

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Mattes, Robert. *IDASA Local Election Study, 1995* [Computer file]. S0047. Cape Town: Institute for Democracy in South Africa. Public Opinion Service [producer], 1995. Pretoria: South African Data Archive, National Research Foundation [distributor], 2000.

DEPOSIT OF PUBLICATIONS

At least one copy of any published work or report based in whole or part on the dataset will be deposited with the South African Data Archive. Please indicate the title and number of the study utilized.

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STUDY DESCRIPTION

SADA 0047

TITLE: IDASA Local Election Study, 1995

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Dr. Robert Mattes

DEPOSITOR: Public Opinion Centre (IDASA)

ORGANISATION HOUSING THE DATA:

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FUNDING AGENCY: United States Agency for International Development

ABSTRACT:

The 1995 Community elections were widely seen to be the closing chapter in South Africa's transition to democracy. These elections would provide citizens with a direct and equal voice in government at the most basic level. They were also seen as the vehicle, which would restore to local government the legitimacy necessary to begin the process of reconstruction and development, as well as the authority to bring about law and order in areas where it had broken down.

Until these elections, local government in towns and metropolitan areas had been fragmented, based on racially determined, apartheid "group areas". There were virtually no formal structures of local government in rural areas. Whites (except those in rural areas) elected fully democratic councils to govern themselves. Since 1983, Coloured and Indian citizens were able to vote for local councils with limited powers under the Tricameral parliamentary structures. Africans living in Black townships inside "white" South Africa were legally able to vote for councillors to the "Black Local Authorities". Local government in the "Black Local Authorities" and the local Tricameral structures in Coloured and Indian communities were constantly challenged. Rent and service boycotts, election stay-aways and physical intimidation of councillors left these governments barren of leaders, bankrupt and illegitimate. For Africans in the "national states" or "self-governing territories", local government was even in greater disarray, with some urban areas having nominal local councils, and most rural areas being governed by a mixture of traditional leaders, regional service councils or development corporations.

The Idasa survey would provide first systematic evidence about individual attitudes toward the local government system. The examination of the legitimacy of local government focused on four key areas: whether people felt local councils were in touch with public opinion; whether they felt able to influence local government; whether they trusted local councils to govern well; and whether they thought local councils were able to address the key problems effectively.

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION: South Africa

IMPORTANT VARIABLES: This study focused on issues such as voting intentions, knowledge of voting procedures and party identification. It also examined attitudes towards democracy, evaluations of government performance, views of local councils and economic evaluations.

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES: age, occupation, highest level of qualification, monthly household income, language, type of living area, population group and gender.

UNIVERSE: All adult South Africans who were eligible to vote in the 1995 Local Election.

SAMPLING: This study consisted of a sample which nationally representative. The sample was drawn using a multi-stage, clustered random probability sample disproportionately stratified by province, population group and community size (metro, city, large town, small town, village and rural).

FIELDWORK: Fieldwork was conducted between September and November 1995. Interviews were conducted countrywide by Market and Opinion Surveys (Pty) Ltd.

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION: Semi-structured personal interviews were used as method of data collection.

UNITS OF OBSERVATION: Persons were used as units of analysis.

WEIGHTING:

Due to disproportionate sample, it was necessary to weight the data up to the universe, i.e. the South African voting public. The sample was weighted according to province, age, gender, type of area, language, income and education and projected onto the universe. The results were then weighted to reflect an electorate estimated at 24.3 million voters. A weight variable has been included in the dataset.

EXTENT OF DATA COLLECTION

- ❖ 1 data file in SPSS and machine-readable documentation and questionnaire.
- ❖ Number of cases : 2 674
- ❖ Number of records : 2 674
- ❖ Number of records per case : 1
- ❖ Logical record length : 80+
- ❖ Number of variables : 196
- ❖ Number of Kilobytes : 601 KB

PUBLICATIONS:

- ❖ The Election Book: Judgement and Choice in South Africa's 1994 Election. IDASA: Cape Town, 1995.
- ❖ "The Public's View of Parliament", POS Reports 1 (February 1996).
- ❖ "The Location of Parliament", POS Reports 2 (February 1996).
- ❖ "Parliamentary Ethics and Corruption: Playing with the Public Trust", POS Reports 3 (February 1996).