

THE POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT OF PACIFIC PEOPLES IN NEW ZEALAND

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signed: *Leon C. Iusitini*

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Abstract

There is a dearth of research on the political engagement of Pacific peoples in New Zealand. To address this deficit, data from six waves of a survey conducted after each general election (the New Zealand Election Study between 1996 and 2011) were merged ($n=17,876$) and analysis was conducted to compare various aspects of political engagement between Pacific respondents and all other (mostly New Zealand European) respondents. Results showed that, compared to all other respondents, Pacific respondents had lower levels of internal and external political efficacy, comparable rates of voting and campaign activism, less engagement in political discussion or persuasion, higher attention to the election campaign in the media, and generally lower levels of non-electoral participation. They also exhibited a strong preference for the Labour Party in their partisanship and voting choices, primarily due to the party's history of engagement and mobilisation of Pacific communities and its representation of their broad interests as a socially disadvantaged, predominantly working class ethnic minority. To increase the political engagement of the relatively youthful Pacific population, civic educational programmes designed to improve political knowledge and efficacy are needed in schools and tertiary institutions, and political parties must connect with Pacific communities by mobilising them to vote, campaigning on issues important to them, and selecting Pacific representatives.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

On Saturday 16 June, 2012, a crowd of approximately 800 mostly Pacific peoples marched through central Auckland as part of the 'Advance Pasifika: March for our Future' demonstration. The purpose of the march was to draw attention to issues facing Pacific peoples in Auckland and around New Zealand, such as poor quality and unaffordable housing, low educational achievement, high unemployment, and negative health statistics. The issues raised by the marchers were broad and diverse, but they shared an underlying concern for the inequalities that disproportionately burden Pacific peoples. A further demand of the march was for Pacific peoples to have "full and fair participation in New Zealand society" (Advance Pasifika, 2012a). One of the key organisers was Reverend Uesifili Unasa, chairperson of Auckland Council's Pacific Peoples Advisory Panel. Unasa believed the council-appointed panel lacked any real power or influence, was not a truly independent voice for Pacific peoples, and was used simply to "rubber-stamp" council policies. This discontent with local politics was the instigation for a demonstration against the disparities experienced by Pacific peoples at a nation-wide level. Unasa claimed the demonstration was an "historic" event as it was "the first Pacific march" (Collins, 2012). Fellow organiser Fa'anana Efeso Collins stated that "our people are coming together to show civic and political leaders that we are a force to be reckoned with and our votes cannot be taken for granted" (Advance Pasifika, 2012b).

What factors enabled the organisers of this march to successfully mobilise several hundred Pacific peoples? What characteristics of the marchers empowered them to actively participate in such a demonstration? What lessons can be learned about increasing political engagement among Pacific peoples? Are Pacific peoples excluded from full and fair participation in New Zealand society, as the organisers claimed? This thesis begins to answer some of these questions by investigating the political engagement of Pacific peoples in New Zealand.

In accordance with previous research (Cohen, Vigoda, & Samorly, 2001; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995), I have defined 'political engagement' as comprising two distinct dimensions: *political participation* and *psychological engagement* in politics. Political participation refers to instrumental social action "that has the intent or effect of influencing governmental action – either directly by affecting the making or implementation of public policy or indirectly by influencing the selection of people who make those policies" (Verba et al., 1995, p. 38). Examples of political participation include voting, campaigning, and attending political meetings or rallies. Political participation is the subject of Chapter Six. As elaborated in that chapter, political participation can be further subdivided into electoral and non-electoral, and active and passive, forms of participation (Vowles, Aimer, Catt, Lamare, & Miller, 1995a). Political participation is to be distinguished from purely psychological engagement in politics, which refers to "the level of citizens' understanding and knowledge regarding social and political issues" (Cohen et al., 2001, p. 730) and "the degree to which citizens are interested in and concerned about politics and public affairs" (Milbrath & Goel, 1977, p. 46). While political participation focuses on *activity* and 'doing' politics, psychological engagement is concerned with *orientations* and attention to politics. Examples of psychological engagement include political efficacy and partisanship. Political efficacy is the feeling that one can competently participate in politics (internal efficacy) and that government is responsive to its citizens (external efficacy). It is the subject of Chapter Five. Partisanship is a psychological identification with a political party and is covered in Chapter Seven, along with voting choices.

The next chapter (Chapter Two) begins with a broad overview of the existing research into voter turnout, political engagement, and electoral behaviour in New Zealand, outlining the main theoretical approaches to the explanation of these phenomena. This is followed by a synthesis of the existing research and literature on Pacific peoples' political engagement in New Zealand, with a focus on their electoral participation, political efficacy, partisanship, voting preferences, and political representation. Chapter Three then details the source of the data that is utilised in this thesis, namely survey

data from the *New Zealand Election Study* (NZES), and how it was analysed. The NZES has surveyed New Zealand electors triennially (at each general election) since 1990.¹ Data from six of these elections – 1996, 1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, and 2011 – was merged to form a combined dataset containing answers from 17,876 individual respondents. Chapter Four provides a description of these respondents, focusing on an assessment of the representativeness of the merged sample and a comparison between the Pacific respondents and all other (‘non-Pacific’) respondents. As mentioned above, Chapters Five, Six, and Seven present comparisons between Pacific and non-Pacific respondents in terms of their political efficacy, political participation, and partisanship and voting choices, respectively. Finally, Chapter Eight discusses these findings in relation to the relevant extant literature reviewed in Chapter Two and draws some conclusions. It also outlines implications for public policy designed to enhance the participation of Pacific and other New Zealanders in elections and other democratic processes.

The Polynesian population of New Zealand has two components: descendants of the indigenous Māori (*tangata whenua*), who comprise approximately 15 per cent of the total population, and a population of relatively recent settlers from various Pacific islands, and their descendants, comprising 6.9 per cent of the population (Statistics New Zealand, 2012b; Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2010a). The latter population began large scale migration from the islands and settlement in the urban areas of New Zealand after World War II. This migration accelerated in the 1960s when expansion of manufacturing generated structural demand for cheap semi-skilled and unskilled labour in protected secondary industries, but declined from the late 1970s as the post-war boom receded and labour demand decreased (Ongley, 1991). These migrants came primarily from the current and

¹ While the NZES began in its present form in 1990, it was preceded by a telephone-based survey in 1987 of 1,013 eligible electors from selected cities and towns across New Zealand. However this 1987 study is not considered to be part of the full NZES programme of research conducted since 1990. See Vowles and Aimer (Appendix II, 1993d) for details of the 1987 survey.

former New Zealand territories of Western Sāmoa² (now Sāmoa), the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau, encouraged by their respective governments. Settlers also came from the independent states of Tonga, Fiji, Kiribati, Tuvalu, and French Polynesia. The Pacific population numbered just over 2,000 in 1945 but by 2006 numbered 265,974, with the seven largest Pacific ethnic groups in New Zealand being: Sāmoans (49 per cent), Cook Islands Māori (22 per cent), Tongans (19 per cent), Niueans (eight per cent), Fijians (four per cent), Tokelauans (three per cent), and Tuvaluans (one per cent; Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2010a).³ Figures from Statistics New Zealand (2010a) provide a demographic profile of these groups. The proportion of Pacific peoples identifying with multiple ethnicities has increased over time (30 per cent at the 2006 census), and is more common amongst younger Pacific peoples. Compared to the total New Zealand population, the Pacific population is relatively youthful, with a median age of 21 years (36 for the total population) and a small proportion over the age of 65. This younger age structure gives rise to comparatively low rates of mortality and high rates of fertility, producing a high rate of natural increase in the population. Over time the Pacific population has changed from a mainly migrant group to a largely New Zealand-born population. At the 2006 census, over half of the Sāmoan and Tongan populations and around three-quarters of the Cook Islands Māori, Niuean, and Tokelauan populations were born in New Zealand. Pacific peoples are highly urbanised, with 97 per cent living in urban areas and 66 per cent residing in Auckland alone. The Pacific population has been described as being “more politically significant than might be supposed” due to their spatial concentration in “a relatively small number of key urban Auckland electorates”, mainly electorates in the Manukau area (Macpherson & Anae, 2008, p. 51).

There are well-documented deficiencies associated with pan-Pacific blanket terms such as ‘Pacific Islanders’, ‘Pacific peoples’ and ‘Tagata Pasifika’

² Formerly a German colony and administered by New Zealand after World War I under a League of Nations mandate until independence in 1962.

³ Smaller populations have migrated from French Polynesia, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, and the Solomon Islands.

which inevitably collapse and conceal the national, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and historical heterogeneity that they encompass.⁴ The terms also overlook within-group diversity such as generational differences, and suggest a sense of unity and co-operation amongst Pacific peoples which has been described as largely a “myth” (Macpherson, 1996, p. 127). However these terms are politically meaningful categories in the sense that they are socially recognised and, at a population level, are used in the planning and allocation of government resources (Macpherson, 1996; Park, 2010). Therefore, despite its limitations and in accordance with the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, I will use the term ‘Pacific peoples’ to refer to that category of New Zealanders who identify with at least one of the ethnic groups mentioned above.

Pacific peoples are over-represented in a wide range of adverse economic, social, educational, and health outcomes in New Zealand. Compared with the total population, they have: higher rates of morbidity and mortality associated with chronic diseases; lower life expectancy; higher rates of infant mortality, child poverty, household overcrowding, smoking, criminal conviction, and unemployment; and lower rates of labour force participation and home ownership (Department of Labour, 2012; Expert Advisory Group on Solutions to Child Poverty, 2012; Statistics New Zealand, 2002; Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2010b, 2011). The Pacific population’s younger age structure, lower educational qualification levels, and concentration in lower-skilled occupations, is reflected in their lower annual incomes and their drastically lower levels of individual net worth (Callister & Didham, 2008; de Raad & Walton, 2008; Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2010a, 2010b). A report on living standards by the Ministry of Social Development (Jensen et al., 2006, p. 8) concluded that “Pacific peoples, on average, had the lowest living standards of all New Zealanders”, with 56 per cent living in hardship and 15 per cent in severe hardship in 2004. Beneficiaries and those born outside of New Zealand were particularly disadvantaged.

⁴ There are some common generic elements to the various Pacific cultures.

On the other hand, there are a number of positive trends occurring within the Pacific population, including declining rates of unemployment, increasing representation in 'white-collar' occupations, greater levels of self-employment, and increasing personal and household incomes. Pacific peoples are also staying in school longer, are more likely to leave with qualifications, and are increasing their participation in tertiary education. These trends are particularly evident among younger New Zealand-born Pacific peoples. However, many of these positive trends are also occurring among other groups, meaning *relative* disadvantage remains in some areas (Ministry of Social Development, 2010; Statistics New Zealand, 2002).

Among non-indigenous ethnic minority groups in New Zealand, Pacific peoples occupy a special historical and constitutional position. As the local representative of British imperial interests in the South Pacific early last century, the New Zealand Government enthusiastically adopted an expansionist policy which sought to annex a number of Pacific territories for its colonial administration. Constitutional links remain with the Cook Islands and Niue, now self-governing states in free association with New Zealand, and with Tokelau, which remains a New Zealand territory. By virtue of their belonging to the Realm of New Zealand, citizens of the Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau possess New Zealand citizenship and therefore have unrestricted access rights to New Zealand and entitlement to a full range of social services. As a consequence, these three groups are the most established in New Zealand; the median duration of residence is 29 years for Niueans, 27 years for Cook Islanders, and 23 years for Tokelauans. This compares with 18 years for Sāmoans, 13 years for Tongans, and nine years for Fijians (Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2010a). These access rights, combined with the recruitment of immigrant labour through the latter half of the twentieth century, have had the effect of creating ethnic majorities residing in New Zealand vis-à-vis some island homelands, especially Niue, the Cook Islands, and Tokelau. For example, the Niuean population living in New Zealand is 10 times greater than the population living in Niue (Statistics New

Zealand and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2010a).⁵ Many Island economies are now heavily dependent on remittances from migrants. Such historical bonds confer a special relationship between the New Zealand Government and certain Pacific peoples which is legally and constitutionally different from that of other ethnic groups, giving rise to post-colonial governmental responsibilities, both legal and moral, for the preservation of particular Pacific nations, cultures, and languages (Ministry of Justice & Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2000).

Along with the socio-economic and health disparities outlined above, there is another sense in which Pacific peoples are socially marginalised: their engagement in political life. This thesis investigates the political engagement and participation of Pacific peoples in New Zealand, an area of scant research. The research that does exist comes primarily from empirical survey data collected by New Zealand's electoral agencies (mainly the Electoral Commission) and from the NZES. There is very little analysis of this data; indeed there is very little academic commentary in general on the political engagement of Pacific peoples. For example, the latest edition of a popular introductory textbook to government and politics in New Zealand (*New Zealand Government & Politics, Fifth Edition*; Miller, 2010b) contains separate chapters devoted to the political participation of Māori, Asian peoples, and youth, but there is no equivalent chapter devoted to Pacific peoples.

This thesis attempts to address this research gap. It seeks to answer the question of whether - and if so, to what extent - Pacific peoples in New Zealand differ from other New Zealanders in their levels of political interest and understanding, confidence in government, political participation, and in their partisanship and voting choices.

⁵ Hence a gradual shift away from the term 'Pacific Islanders' to the now more relevant 'Pacific peoples'.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Political engagement in New Zealand and theories of voting

Free, regular, competitive elections are the fundamental feature of a democratic system of government and are the central political event in modern representative democracies, attracting much media attention. Given the focal prominence of elections, the study of political engagement at the national level typically concentrates on voting at general elections – both the decision to vote or to abstain (turnout), and thenceforth the choice of a particular party or candidate. Consequently, the study of electoral behaviour and voting – known as psephology when statistically analysed – has dominated academic research about politics in New Zealand (Holland, 1992) and is regarded as the most professionalised and technically sophisticated branch of political science (Mulgan & Aimer, 2004).

Following trends in the USA and Britain, psephology began in New Zealand in the early 1960s with the descriptive analysis of aggregate electoral data, but since the 1980s has primarily gathered data through individual-level sample surveys to explain and predict electoral behaviour. The aggregate methodology analyses voting statistics between particular geographic units (regions, electorates, polling booths, and so on) and compares these voting patterns with known social characteristics of the units (for example, the percentage of an electorate's population who are employers, obtained from census data) to establish correlations that may infer a potential cause or motive for voting choices. While the aggregate methodology established the basic sociology of electoral politics in New Zealand (Aimer & McAllister, 1992), it is regarded as a “blunt and inconclusive method” (Mulgan & Aimer, 2004, p. 273) because it does not take into account individual variation in social background, personal circumstances, political attitudes, and other factors. Furthermore, gross vote movements are shrouded by net swings between parties and the problem of the ‘ecological fallacy’ – where a correlation observed at the population level is assumed to apply at the individual level – is ever-present (Vowles, 2003). Seeking to go beyond cumulative vote shares, political scientists

have utilised surveys of a random sample of voters and then analysed the resulting data using multivariate statistical techniques to produce much more sophisticated and comprehensive models of voting behaviour that are able to isolate the effects of individual variables on voting and rank the predictive potency of these variables in relation to one another.

In addition to this methodological distinction, the literature on voting identifies several general theoretical approaches to explaining voting behaviour. Some focus on long-term influences (for example, social structural factors such as social class, or psychological factors such as party identification), while others focus on more short-term influences (the effects of election campaigns, issues, party policies, party leaders and candidates, and so on). The literature typically classifies the different approaches into the sociological approach, the psychological approach, and the rational choice (or economic) approach (see for example Vowles, 2003). The rational choice approach emphasises the importance of short-term influences on electoral behaviour which change from election to election. Because this thesis makes use of survey data collected across six general elections in New Zealand - each one having its own distinctive election campaign, set of prominent issues and policy debates, and set of contesting parties and party leaders - it consequently focuses on *long-term* factors that are likely to be relatively stable across these six elections. The short-term factors referred to above vary considerably from one election to the next, creating significant methodological impediments to the comparison of these factors across multiple elections. Variables throughout the NZES waves which related to these factors were not merged into my dataset for this reason, and thus they do not feature in this thesis, nor is the rational choice approach given any further attention beyond a concise delineation at the end of this chapter. I therefore focus the discussion that follows on the sociological and psychological approaches to voting choice, as these approaches largely transcend the specific historical circumstances of each election. However, before discussing theories of voting choice, I briefly review the existing research related to voter turnout and political engagement in New Zealand.

2.1.1 *Turnout and political engagement*

Research on political engagement in New Zealand has primarily focused on turnout and non-voting at general elections, due to a paucity of data on other forms of participation (Vowles et al., 1995a). A small amount of research has examined trends in party membership (Aimer & Vowles, 2004; Miller, 2005; Vowles, 1992b, 2004a) and other forms of political participation such as campaign activism (Karp, 2010; Perry & Webster, 1999; Rose et al., 2005; Vowles, 2004a; Vowles et al., 1995a). New Zealand's political culture has been characterised as "one of active interest but limited participation" and exhibits declining levels of political participation and civic engagement (Barker, 2010, p. 15; Catt, 2005; Hayward, 2006; Miller, 2005; Vowles, 2004a). There is evidence that this decline is not indicative of a satisfied electorate, but rather of a "democratic malaise" and of "political marginalisation", manifested in feelings of cynicism, distrust, and powerlessness amongst many in the New Zealand electorate (Hayward, 1997, p. 410; Lamare, 1991; Miller, 2005; Vowles & Aimer, 1993a).

In general, New Zealanders have high levels of interest in politics, a strong sense of civic duty, and see the value of voting (Perry & Webster, 1999; Vowles et al., 1995a). But New Zealanders "prefer more passive forms of political participation" and tend to only become actively involved when "it is organised by others...or when an issue affects them directly or adversely" (Hayward, 1997, p. 409). International research on participation has focused on the inequalities of participation and the effects that low participation by disadvantaged groups may have in reinforcing their relative lack of power and influence (Vowles et al., 1995a). In particular, there is evidence that voter turnout affects agenda-setting; that is, where particular groups of people are less likely to vote than others, government decisions are less likely to reflect their interests (Vowles, 2006). As turnout declines, it tends to do so more among low-income groups, and there is evidence that "[i]n jurisdictions where turnout is low, governments spend less on welfare" (Vowles, 2004a, p. 24).

High turnout rates at elections demonstrate that people believe their vote is important and that political institutions are relevant and meaningful to them. For most of the twentieth century, New Zealand had one of the highest levels of official electoral turnout in the Western world, regularly climbing above 90 per cent (Electoral Commission, 2011a). Official turnout is calculated as the proportion of registered electors who cast a vote. For reasons outlined by Nagel (1988) and Vowles (2006), a more accurate measure is voting-age population turnout, calculated as the proportion of age-eligible electors who cast a valid vote. Measured in these terms, turnout declined up until 1966, then partially recovered up until 1984, but then declined steeply again in 1987 and 1990. Small increases occurred at the 1993 and 1996 elections when electoral changes were taking place, but declined again through to the 2002 election to 72 per cent, only to increase to 76 and 75 per cent at the 2005 and 2008 elections, respectively (Aimer & Vowles, 2004; Karp, 2010; Vowles, 2006). However, 2011 marked a watershed in New Zealand's electoral history as voting-age population turnout reached a record nadir of 70 per cent and official turnout fell to 74 per cent, the lowest since 1887 (Electoral Commission, 2012).

Membership of political parties in New Zealand has been declining since the mid-1950s (Miller, 2005; Vowles, 2004a; Vowles et al., 1995a). In 2005, the New Zealand Values Survey found that four per cent of respondents were active members of a political party, 13 per cent were inactive members, and 83 per cent were not members of any political party (Rose et al., 2005). Attendance at political meetings or rallies has declined since the early 1990s, while contributing money to a campaign and working for a party or candidate have declined since the 1970s (Vowles, 2004a). Forms of non-electoral participation such as signing petitions, writing to newspapers, joining demonstrations, and phoning talkback radio have remained stable, although boycotting products and services has increased markedly (Vowles, 2004a).⁶

⁶ Although Vowles (2004a, p. 10) does not believe partaking in a boycott qualifies as political participation "as understood normally" because it does not require public action, being merely "a private decision made by consumers".

What accounts for this decline in political participation and civic engagement? Survey research has shown that the most significant predictors of non-voting in New Zealand are related to political attitudes. Specifically, non-voters are more likely than voters to be uninterested in politics, lack a sense of civic duty,⁷ have weak or no party ties, believe their vote is unimportant and valueless, lack an ideological commitment to any political ideals, and have lower political efficacy (Cavana et al., 2004; Chief Electoral Office, 2005; Electoral Commission, 2007; Karp, 2010; Vowles, 1994a, 2006; Vowles & Aimer, 1993a; Vowles et al., 1995a).

However, rates of participation are uneven and there is a strong social and demographic bias in turnout and political engagement. In general, those less likely to vote are less integrated into the community, have less commitment to the dominant structures of society, and lack “stable and society-sustaining relationships” (Vowles, 2006, p. 317). Those less integrated are said to include younger people, renters, the unmarried, and people who do not attend church (Vowles & Aimer, 1993a). In contrast, experiences such as finding full time employment, getting married, becoming a parent, and attaining residential stability and home ownership are postulated as giving individuals a greater stake and interest in the policy decisions of government.

Participation in politics tends to increase with age, peaking in the middle years (Karp, 2010; Vowles et al., 1995a). In addition, and consistent with American research by Putnam (2000) and cross-national research by Franklin (2004), there is evidence in New Zealand of a generational (or age cohort) effect on turnout, namely that younger people are less likely to develop the habit of voting than their similarly-aged counterparts in previous generations (Vowles, 2004a; Vowles & Aimer, 2004). Vowles (2004a, p. 20) has documented a generational transformation in which “the negative effect of belonging to the post-1974 generation on turnout is between 20 and 30 per cent”. Younger

⁷ While a sense of civic duty is often found to be one of the strongest predictors of turnout in New Zealand (Cavana, McMillen, & Palmer, 2004; Karp, 2010; Vowles, 2006; Vowles et al., 1995a), Vowles (2006, p. 317) believes that ‘a sense of civic duty’ is very close to the act of voting, and thus to claim that it explains voting is “close to a tautology”.

generations are also less likely to be members of political parties and attend public meetings, suggesting a more general decline in civic engagement (Vowles, 2004a).

Relative socio-economic deprivation also affects turnout: those on low-incomes, in working class occupations, or in receipt of government benefits are less likely to vote (Vowles & Aimer, 1993a). Low household income in particular has been repeatedly associated with non-voting in New Zealand (Vowles, 1994a).⁸ This may in part be because those with fewer resources lack basic information and skills to participate in politics (Vowles, 1994a).

Ethnic minorities, particularly Māori and Pacific peoples, are also less likely to vote compared to the general population (Karp, 2010; Park, 2010; Sullivan, 2010; Vowles & Aimer, 1993a; Vowles et al., 1995a). Māori turnout rates – historically high and buoyed by the pan-Māori religious and political Ratana movement and its association with the Labour Party – have been in decline since the mid-1970s and continue to lag behind the total population (Karp, 2010; Sullivan, 2010). However as Sullivan (2010) points out, the range of political activities that Māori undertake – from hui to hikoi – is considerable, and Karp (2010) has found that Māori are more likely to discuss politics and persuade others how to vote compared to non-Māori. Turnout amongst Pacific peoples is discussed further in Section 2.2.1.

Similarly, a study of the political participation of Asian New Zealanders found high levels of interest in politics but lower rates of participation – including voting, membership of a political party, and signing petitions – compared to New Zealand Europeans (Park, 2010). However, participation increased with age and length of residency in New Zealand, decreased with membership of an ethnic religious organisation, and had no association with socio-economic factors or English language fluency (Park, 2010).

It has also been suggested, most notably by Putnam (2000), that levels of ‘social capital’ also affect political participation. Briefly, social capital refers to

⁸ However, see Vowles (2002a) for an example of where no such association was found.

“connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them” (Putnam, 2000, p. 19). Social capital is said to increase political interest, knowledge, and participation because when social connections are strong, individuals feel part of society, see other people’s perspectives, and are interested and concerned about what happens to others.

Finally, institutional factors related to the type of electoral system and voting rules within a country (for example, plurality or proportional systems, access to the franchise, compulsory voting and registration, and the frequency and competitiveness of elections) also influence turnout. For example, in New Zealand it has been shown that more competitive elections are associated with higher voter turnout, especially among younger people (Vowles, 2002b, 2006; Vowles & Aimer, 1993a), because “[c]lose political contests mobilise people, drawing them in as participants, and rousing the parties to extra efforts to get voters to the polls” (Vowles & Aimer, 2004, p. 192). When competition is tight, electors are more likely to feel their vote could make a difference to the outcome. As elections have become less competitive since the 1950s, turnout has correspondingly declined; however this effect has been partly offset by the shift from plurality elections to proportional representation, which has increased turnout (Vowles, 2006).

2.1.2 The sociological approach to voting choice

Prior to the influence of sociology on political science, it was assumed that citizens based their voting decisions on salient social, economic, and political issues, as reflected in election campaigns which consisted primarily of debates between candidates over issues and policies (Aimer & McAllister, 1992). However, the first two major survey-based voting studies conducted in the USA (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1954; Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1944) uncovered two problems with this simple voting model. First, they found that most voters did not change their party choice from one election to the next and many made up their minds before the election campaign had commenced. Hence the issues raised during the campaign, and the distinctive stands that

candidates took, could not be the major determinant of how people voted. The main purpose of campaigns was to consolidate existing support, not to convert opponents or independents. Second, the research found that few voters had an accurate perception of where the candidates stood on particular issues. The evidence therefore contradicted the issues-based model and suggested other factors were at work (Aimer & McAllister, 1992).

The sociological approach or 'Columbia school', pioneered in the 1940s by American sociologist Paul Lazarsfeld and his colleagues (Lazarsfeld et al., 1944), addressed this contradiction by explicitly drawing a link between politics and society. The approach explained electoral support for political parties by reference to social groups within society whose members shared certain (presumed) common interests, such as groups related to social class, religion, residence, and ethnicity. Voters' political preferences were said to originate from within the social groups in which they live and work. The approach emphasised that people do not make voting choices as isolated individuals, but that "[t]he society we live in is structured in various ways, and where people are located within those structures can have an effect on their political behaviour" (Vowles & Aimer, 1993c, p. 27).

Research into social group membership and voting choice in New Zealand has mainly focused on social class, and 'class voting' has received considerable academic attention in New Zealand (Vowles, 1992a, 1994b; Vowles & Aimer, 1993c). Indeed, social class was said to be "the single most powerful social structural determinant of political party choice" between the 1960s and 1980s (Bean, 1988, p. 319). The sociology of class voting needs to be seen within the historical framework of industrialisation and capitalist economic expansion, which structured the development of New Zealand society and the formation of its political party system by establishing a class cleavage that divided the middle class (broadly, owners of productive property and non-manual or

white-collar employees) from the working class (broadly, manual or blue-collar employees; Bean, 1988; Vowles, 1987, 1992a).⁹

For much of its history since the foundation of its party system in the early twentieth century, New Zealand has had a system of essentially two-party competition that has articulated this socio-economic division and provided a political avenue for competing class interests¹⁰ (Aimer, 2001; Miller, 2005, 2010a). The Labour Party was formed in 1916 as the political wing of the trade union movement, aiming to represent workers in Parliament, eradicate poverty and unemployment, and advance its socialist objectives (Aimer, 2010; Gustafson, 1992). It mobilised its support among the poor and powerless, with its core support coming from unionised blue-collar workers. The National Party was founded in 1936 from an amalgamation of the conservative United and Reform parties to oppose the Labour Party's socialist creed (James, 2010). It established its core support in rural areas (especially among farmers) and amongst business and professional élites in the more affluent urban areas.

This class cleavage has been substantiated by aggregate analysis of the two major parties' safe seats which has provided a socio-economic profile of each party's core constituencies: in the main, Labour's support has historically come from urban electorates with high proportions of low-income workers and the unemployed; National's support has come from rural and wealthy electorates with high proportions of employers (McRobie, 1997; Mulgan & Aimer, 2004; Vowles & Aimer, 1993c; Vowles, Aimer, Catt, Lamare, & Miller, 1995b). Survey research has confirmed that a person is more likely to vote for Labour than National if they are a union member or manual worker or belong to a household headed by either (Aimer & McAllister, 1992; Gold, 1992; Vowles, 1998; Vowles & Aimer, 2004; Vowles et al., 1995b), and more likely to vote for

⁹ The class cleavage is usually operationalised using this occupational dichotomy but see Vowles (1992a) for a discussion of the contentious theoretical debate surrounding the definition and measurement of the concept of class in political science.

¹⁰ There also exists a second main cleavage between city and country (between urban and rural communities), but New Zealand's party system has been described as "largely one-dimensional" because of the dominance of the class cleavage in New Zealand's social structure (Miller, 2010a, p. 469).

National than Labour if they are a farmer or belong to a farming household (Gold, 1992; Vowles, 1998; Vowles & Aimer, 1993c; Vowles et al., 1995b) or live in a rural area (Aimer & Vowles, 2004; Gold, 1992; Vowles, 1998).

However, the research on class voting in New Zealand has concluded that, irrespective of how it is measured,¹¹ class voting has been in decline since the 1960s (Aimer, 1989; Bean, 1988; Vowles, 1992a). This decline accelerated during the term of the fourth Labour Government, with a small recovery between 1990 and 1999 as Labour distanced itself from the radical economic reforms of the 1980s, before ebbing to an historic low in 2002 (Aimer & Vowles, 2004; Vowles, 1992a, 2003). Moreover, since the 1960s New Zealand's party system has been 'dealigning' from its traditional class cleavage, leaving the present-day party system with only a relatively weak underpinning in social class (Vowles, 1994b, 1997). This dealignment has in part been due to demographic, social, and economic changes that have seen the relative size of the blue-collar workforce shrink¹² and unionism expand into white-collar employment (Bean, 1988; Vowles, 1987). As a result, since the 1960s Labour has sought to distance itself from its socialist heritage and working class moorings and broaden its electoral appeal by rebranding itself as a moderate social democratic party (Aimer, 2010; Vowles, 1987, 1992b). In the late 1980s it gained a more middle class, professional social base, particularly at the 1987 election when it attracted a considerable number of well-off voters, and at the 2002 election when its strategy to occupy the political centre with 'Third Way' politics proved successful¹³ (Aimer & Vowles, 2004; Vowles, 1987, 1992a).

The dealignment of the party system has revealed itself in increasing levels of vote volatility (that is, electors switching their vote choice, or moving into or out of non-voting, from one election to the next), which reached a high point in the latter years of plurality elections under the first-past-the-post (FPP)

¹¹ Studies in New Zealand have typically measured class voting using the Alford Index (see Vowles, 1992a for a discussion of this measure).

¹² See Roper (1997) for a refutation of this claim.

¹³ 'Third Way' politics is postulated as a social democratic synthesis of 'Old Left' socialist policies and 'New Right' neo-liberalism (Giddens, 1999).

system and continued at a high level throughout the three mixed-member proportional (MMP) elections to 2002, a trend in keeping with the experience of other mature democracies, regardless of their electoral systems (Aimer & Vowles, 2004). In 1993, it was becoming “considerably more difficult to predict voting choice from individuals’ social locations” and it has only become more difficult since then (Vowles & Aimer, 1993c, p. 39). Voter volatility is increasingly becoming the norm and stable party preference the exception (Mulgan & Aimer, 2004).

If social class has declined in its electoral significance, are there other social structural factors which influence voting behaviour? Survey research in New Zealand has found that ethnicity, gender, and religion are all associated with voting choice. Multivariate analysis has shown that Māori and Pacific peoples (especially the latter) are more likely to vote for Labour than other parties, even when class factors are held constant¹⁴ (Aimer & Vowles, 2004; Gold, 1989, 1992; Vowles & Aimer, 1993c; Vowles et al., 1995b). The voting choices of Pacific peoples are discussed further in Section 2.2.2.

Consistent with long-term trends in other Western democracies, women in New Zealand have been moving from support of parties on the right of the political spectrum to parties on the left (Vowles, 1993). In 1963 and 1975 women were more likely than men to vote for National, but between 1981 and 1990 there was no gender difference in support for the two major parties (Vowles, 1993, 1998). By 1993, the gap began to open up again, but in the opposite direction, and surveys covering elections between 1996 and 2002 have consistently found that women are more likely to vote for Labour compared to men (Aimer & Vowles, 2004; Levine & Roberts, 1997, 2000, 2003; Vowles, 1998, 2002c).

¹⁴ Although this varies by election and does not always hold for both ethnic groups; for example, analysis of the 2002 NZES data showed that once socio-economic variables were taken into account, Pacific peoples were more likely to vote Labour than other parties, but Māori were not (Aimer & Vowles, 2004).

Another consistent finding has been that people with no religious affiliation tend to vote Labour (or other left wing parties; Aimer & McAllister, 1992; Gold, 1992; Vowles, 1998; Vowles & Aimer, 1993c; Vowles et al., 1995b). Labour voters are also more likely to be people who rent their house rather than own it (Vowles, 1998; Vowles & Aimer, 2004; Vowles et al., 1995b); people who receive multiple government benefits (Vowles & Aimer, 1993c; Vowles et al., 1995b); and people who are employed in the public sector (Vowles, 1998; Vowles et al., 1995b). National's distinctive support stems only from the socio-economic cleavage as previously described; farmers, rural dwellers, and high income households. No other consistent social structural effects for voting National have been found.

Overall, however, the effects of social structure including class on vote choice are relatively weak and their combined influence has been declining for many decades (Gold, 1989, 1992; Vowles, 1992a, 1998, 2002c, 2003; Vowles & Aimer, 1993c). At the 1996 election, "the influence of social grouping on voting was weak" and by the 1999 election "the overall effects of social structure on vote choices remained extremely low" (Vowles, 1998, p. 41; 2002c, p. 96). Clearly electors' vote choices are not just a product of their social locations and we must turn to other theories for a fuller understanding.

2.1.3 The psychological approach to voting choice

The psychological approach, also known as the 'Michigan model', was first developed in the 1950s by researchers at the University of Michigan's Survey Research Centre (Campbell, Converse, Miller, & Stokes, 1960). Their surveys of American presidential and congressional contests found that, contrary to classical democratic theory, voters did not seem to elect governments on the basis of policy platforms; indeed many voters did not seem to be aware of the policy positions taken by the major parties. Rather, they found that the primary influence on an elector's voting choice was an underlying psychological

attachment to a political party, referred to as party identification (or partisanship).¹⁵

In many ways the psychological approach is akin to the social group model (the sociological approach) described above, in the sense that individuals may identify with political parties just as they identify with social, ethnic, or religious groups, and because party attachments commonly derive from social interactions within these groups¹⁶ (Vowles, 2003). The foremost social group, however, is the family, and it is within this context that a person is said to first develop a predisposition towards a political party. This occurs early in life through the normal processes of socialisation and social learning, during which parents shape the formation of their children's feelings, opinions, and attitudes. Interactions within other social groups such as friends, neighbours, and co-workers may also structure or condition opinions, attitudes, and electoral choices. A loyalty to a party subsequently develops that is analogous to the feelings of emotional support people have for, say, a sports team, wherein they desire to see their favoured side triumph over a traditional rival (Mulgan & Aimer, 2004). This gets reinforced by the "competitive and strongly adversarial nature of party politics [that] inevitably encourages the taking of sides" (Vowles et al., 1995b, p. 33). The Michigan model thus conceptualises party identification as a subjective, deep-seated disposition towards a political party, varying in strength and durability from individual to individual, and providing a means of filtering, interpreting, and evaluating political information. As Lamare (1992, p. 52) explains:

In adopting a party attachment a person receives a ready-made affective and cognitive road map that allows him or her to traverse the twists and turns that punctuate the electoral landscape with confidence and relative ease...Without such a reference point, many individuals are unable to impose much perceptual order on the stimuli inundating their senses from the white noise of the election campaigns.

¹⁵ Having a party identification does not require any formal organisational affiliation or membership of a party.

¹⁶ However, the psychological approach tends to define these groups subjectively, rather than objectively as typified in the sociological approach.

Party identification is also said to be a stable orientation that persists over time (often a life-long commitment), leading to predictability in voting choices and electoral outcomes and providing emotional reinforcement to the foundations of the party system (Aimer & McAllister, 1992; Lamare, 1992; Vowles, 2003). Crucially, however, party identification is distinct from actual voting behaviour, because an elector may have a general preference for a party but, for a variety of reasons, vote for a different party. For example, the 1990 NZES found that nearly a third of those who generally preferred Labour did not actually vote Labour in that election (Vowles & Aimer, 1993e). As Mulgan and Aimer (2004) point out, this illustrates two things. Firstly, that it is mistaken to claim, as critics have done, that the Michigan model is a tautological pseudo-explanation because, so the criticism goes, party identification and vote choice are essentially the same thing. Many people do have a general preference for a party *and this is not just a reflection of how they actually vote*.¹⁷ Secondly, instances of voting against one's party identification show that it is not a *determining* factor in people's voting behaviour.

New Zealanders have a history of widespread identification with political parties. Partisanship has been the dominant explanatory variable in New Zealand electoral studies and is a strong predictor of voting behaviour (Lamare, 1991; Levine & Roberts, 1992b, 2003; Vowles & Aimer, 2004). In the period encompassed by the 1975 and 2002 elections, an average of 85 per cent of the electorate expressed a preference for a political party¹⁸ (Lamare, 1992; Levine & Roberts, 2007). In 2008, two-thirds of year nine students in New Zealand who participated in the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study expressed a preference for a political party, compared to around half of all students across all 38 participating countries (Ministry of Education, 2012).

¹⁷ Levine and Roberts (1992b) estimate that between 1972 and 1987 an average of 20 per cent of the electorate voted against their self-declared party identification. See Lamare (1992) and Levine and Roberts (1992b) for discussions of this phenomenon.

¹⁸ In contrast, the NZES researchers exclude as partisans those who, after prompting, admit to feeling 'a little closer' to a political party, and thus their estimates of the proportion of party identifiers in the electorate are much lower, averaging around 60 per cent (Aimer & Vowles, 2004).

Survey data between 1972 and 1996 consistently found more voters identifying with National than with Labour, even at elections when Labour became the government, or where it won more votes, but not seats, than National (Levine & Roberts, 1992b, 2000). However, this trend was reversed for the first time at the 1999 election when more New Zealanders said they usually thought of themselves as Labour supporters than did so for any other party, a lead which Labour held until the 2005 election but which National had clawed back to parity by the 2008 election (Levine & Roberts, 2000, 2003, 2007, 2010). Multivariate analysis of data collected in separate surveys in 1990 found that party identification (Levine & Roberts, 1992a) and parental partisanship (Vowles & Aimer, 1993c) were the strongest predictors of vote choice among a decidedly limited set of regressors, while analysis of the 2002 NZES data employing a sophisticated multinomial hierarchical regression model that incorporated a comprehensive range of variables relating to social structure, attitudes, trust, partisanship, and views on the economy, leaders, and candidates, found respondents' party identification to be the single most powerful explanatory variable, explaining 16 per cent of the variation in vote choice after controlling for all other variables¹⁹ (Vowles & Aimer, 2004).

However, to the extent that the Michigan model supposes that partisan allegiances are transferred inter-generationally, this has flimsy empirical support in New Zealand, because majorities of the electorate report that they do not recall their parents' preference, deny they had a preference, or vote differently from their parents (Vowles et al., 1995b). For example, analysis of the 1990 NZES data found that 62 per cent of respondents either voted differently from one or both of their parents, or did not vote, or could not recall their parents' preferences (Vowles & Aimer, 1993e). Moreover, the prevalence and intensity of partisan attachments in New Zealand has been eroding since the early 1960s and thus the power of party identification to explain voting choice has diminished (Aimer, 1989; Aimer & Vowles, 2004; Lamare, 1992; Levine &

¹⁹ The model had an R^2 of 60 per cent; that is, it explained 60 per cent of the variation in voters' choices, a relatively high level of explanation for individual-level data in the social sciences (Vowles & Aimer, 2004).

Roberts, 1992b). Parties therefore have less reliable bases of support, and when combined with the dwindling importance of social structural factors, the waning of the two major parties' electoral duopoly, and the emergence of new minor parties within the multi-partyism of proportional representation, has resulted in a decline in turnout, increased volatility in vote choice, and elections that are less predictable and more susceptible to ephemeral forces such as issues, election campaigns, and leadership (Aimer, 1989; Aimer & Vowles, 2004; Bean, 1988; Karp, 2010; Miller, 2005; Vowles, 1997). Many of these short-term influences are relevant to the rational choice approach to explaining electoral behaviour.

2.1.4 *The rational choice approach to voting choice*

The rational choice approach applies economic logic to political behaviour and is based on the assumptions of *homo economicus*, namely that voters are rational, self-interested actors whose voting choices aim to maximise their personal benefits and minimise their costs (the 'calculus of voting'). Inspired by the seminal work of Anthony Downs (1957) and developed and applied by Himmelweit, Humphreys, and Jaeger (1985), the model views party competition as a market place consisting of citizens as consumers of political information and parties as active agents selling a product and pursuing market share by adapting strategy in response to shifting market conditions. Downsian theory predicts that voters will be swayed by short-term influences that change from election to election, such as issue preferences and policy proposals (especially as conveyed by leaders during election campaigns) and government performance on economic management, assessed both retrospectively and prospectively. At each election, voters cast a ballot for the party that is closest to them on contemporary issues that matter to them, and which will further their own interests, as they perceive them. This notion is very much at odds with the view that voting is based upon an ingrained psychological disposition (party identification) or upon social group memberships, except to the extent that

these groups represent shared interests which benefit their members (Karp, 2010; Lamare, 1992; Vowles, 1992a, 2003).

It is generally recognised that most voters lack the knowledge, interest, and time to comprehensively assess and compare the alternative policy platforms of competing parties; however they can be “swayed by party discourses that mobilise their sentiments and values and, where knowledgeable about particular issues, they may be able to assess some party claims critically” (Vowles, 2004b, p. 41). Accordingly, it is now widely accepted that election campaigns can make a difference to election outcomes (Holbrook, 1996; Vowles, 2000a, 2004b) and surveys have shown that increasing proportions of voters make up their minds during the official four-to-five week campaign. For example, at the 1987 election, 28 per cent of NZES respondents reported that they made their voting decision during the campaign but by the 2002 election 61 per cent had decided during the campaign (Vowles, 2003). It is also generally accepted that there is a correlation between a voter’s perception of which party is closest to their views on issues important to them, and which party they vote for (Mulgan & Aimer, 2004; Vowles & Aimer, 1993b). The most salient issues consistently mentioned in contemporary electoral surveys in New Zealand are health, education, economic issues (growth, taxation, unemployment), and to a lesser extent law-and-order (Levine & Roberts, 1992a, 2000, 2003, 2007, 2010; Vowles, 2004b; Vowles & Aimer, 1993b). Analysis by Levine and Roberts (1992a) of surveys in New Zealand which asked respondents to nominate issues of national and personal concern, and then state which party was closest to their views on these issues, found that “respondents tended in most instances to identify the party for which they were voting as the one closest to their views”, a correspondence that was “consistently strong irrespective of party” (p. 78). The authors concluded that “there is considerable evidence to show that many voters are attracted to, remain with or leave a political party in large measure because of judgements about that party’s stance on salient policy topics” (p. 91).

There is also evidence to support the widely-held notions that elections are referendums on the economy (Crothers & Vowles, 1993; Karp, 2010; Vowles,

2003; Vowles & Aimer, 2004) and that politicians' personalities are superseding policy in people's voting decisions (Aimer & McAllister, 1992; Bean, 1992; Miller & Mintrom, 2006; Vowles, 2010; Vowles & Aimer, 2004). Aggregate and survey analysis in New Zealand has shown that 'economic voting' has a "moderate" influence on voting choice, with voters giving particular weight to retrospective evaluations of national economic performance that tend to reward incumbent regimes in good years more so than oppositions in bad years; however any interpretation of economic performance is likely to be filtered through the screen of party identification (Crothers & Vowles, 1993, p. 108).

While early studies of electoral behaviour in New Zealand generally concluded that leaders had little effect on voting decisions (Bean, 1992), more recent research has found that 'valence issues', which notably include perceptions of the qualities and attributes of leaders (especially of 'strong leadership', competence, and trustworthiness), have had a greater effect on vote choice than 'positional issues' (that is, parties' policy stances), as well as social structural factors and assessments of the economy (Banducci, 2002; Vowles, 2010; Vowles & Aimer, 2004). As leaders have increasingly been thrust into the centre of professionally-managed 'presidential-style' campaigns conducted through the mass media (especially via televised leaders' debates), and "personality-based parties" such as the Winston Peters-led New Zealand First Party and Peter Dunne-led United Future Party have emerged, the importance of leadership to contemporary elections in New Zealand has become correspondingly more critical (Miller, 2005, p. 60).

To summarise thus far, the sociological and psychological approaches postulate that socialisation processes directly or indirectly inculcate political allegiances in individuals that yield fairly stable voting behaviours. The rational choice approach proposes that voting behaviour is relatively unstable, as each election offers up a different mix of policies, personalities, and performances from which voters make their selection in order to advance their own interests. While the literature differentiates these approaches in order to clarify their distinctive arguments, in reality they frequently coincide within the intricate

decision-making of individual electors. Furthermore, the complexity of voting behaviour means that “[t]he more is known, the more scepticism is required about any single theory of political motivation” (Mulgan & Aimer, 2004, p. 274). The various causes of voting behaviour and the main theoretical approaches outlined here are not mutually exclusive. Each provides a contribution to the explanation of voting behaviour. Attention is now turned to a review of what is known about the political engagement of Pacific peoples in New Zealand.

2.2 Pacific peoples’ political engagement in New Zealand

The literature reviewed here is divided up into three sections: turnout and political efficacy; voting preferences and partisanship; and political representation.

2.2.1 Pacific peoples’ turnout and political efficacy

In assessing the civil and political rights of New Zealanders, the Ministry of Social Development’s *Social Report 2010* included voter turnout rates at general elections as “an indicator of the confidence the population has in political institutions, the importance they attach to them, and the extent to which they feel their participation can make a difference” (p. 74). Research from the NZES has shown that Pacific peoples are more prone to being non-voters than the general population (Vowles, 2002a; Vowles & Aimer, 1993d; Vowles et al., 1995a). For example, of the 79 Pacific eligible voters sampled in the 2002 NZES, 42 per cent did not vote compared to 24 per cent of the entire sample (Aimer & Vowles, 2004). In the 2010 New Zealand General Social Survey, 27 per cent of Pacific respondents reported that they did not vote in the last general election, compared to 21 per cent of all other respondents (Statistics New Zealand, 2011). The equivalent figures in the 2008 General Social Survey were 26 per cent of Pacific respondents not voting compared to 21 per cent of all other respondents (Statistics New Zealand, 2009). In the Electoral Commission’s 2011 survey (2011b) of voters and non-voters, 56 per cent of Pacific respondents said they

had voted at every general election in New Zealand for which they were eligible to vote, compared to 76 per cent of the total sample. It is also noteworthy (bearing in mind the ecological fallacy of aggregate statistics) that at both the 2008 and 2005 elections the three general electorates with the highest usually resident Pacific populations – Mangere (58.8 per cent), Manukau East (44.2 per cent), and Manurewa (31.9 per cent) – were also the three general electorates with the lowest turnout rates (Electoral Commission, 2006c, 2009b).

A small amount of research on political efficacy among Pacific peoples has been carried out by New Zealand's former three electoral agencies.²⁰ Since 1995, the Electoral Commission, the Chief Electoral Office, and the Electoral Enrolment Centre have commissioned survey research to monitor the public's knowledge and understanding of MMP, its engagement with the electoral process, its satisfaction with electoral services, and to understand barriers to voting. This research has often included a focus on 'key target groups' that have historically exhibited less understanding of MMP and lower levels of political engagement, including Pacific peoples, Māori, and youth (Electoral Commission, 2008b). Findings from those surveys that had sufficient numbers of Pacific respondents to enable valid comparisons with the total sample are summarised below. The Electoral Commission's research is discussed first, followed by that of the Chief Electoral Office and the Electoral Enrolment Centre.

The Electoral Commission's research has focused on tracking public understanding of MMP on an annual basis (twice in election years – both pre-election and post-election). Levels of knowledge and understanding tend to fluctuate depending on proximity to an election. The Commission's 2003, 2007, 2008 pre-election and 2008 post-election surveys all had sufficient numbers of Pacific respondents to allow distinct analyses to be conducted on this group.²¹

²⁰ These three agencies began merging into a single electoral agency, the Electoral Commission, on 1 October 2010 and integration was completed on 1 July 2012.

²¹ Other surveys prior to 2003 (going back to 1997) also surveyed significant numbers of Pacific respondents, but none of these are publicly available, although some historical results from these earlier surveys are reported in the more recent surveys discussed above.

The 2003 survey (Electoral Commission, 2003) and 2008 post-election survey (Electoral Commission, 2009a) were conducted by Colmar Brunton and had total sample sizes of 502 and 1,509 respectively; the 2007 survey (Electoral Commission, 2007) and 2008 pre-election survey (Electoral Commission, 2008c) were conducted by UMR and had total sample sizes of 3,000; all used CATI methodology supplemented with face-to-face 'booster' interviews with Pacific respondents.

Knowledge of MMP is usually assessed with questions about how many votes an elector gets under MMP, which vote is the more important in determining the number of members of Parliament (MPs) each party gets, and what the correct threshold is for a party to qualify for a share of seats in Parliament. Self-declared ease of understanding MMP is also asked. Pacific respondents generally score lower on all these questions (except at the 2008 pre-election where, for the first time, their scores approximated those of the rest of the sample; Electoral Commission, 2008c). For example, at the 2003 survey 37 per cent of Pacific respondents understood they had two votes under MMP compared to 56 per cent of the total sample. In the same survey, 16 per cent of Pacific respondents chose the correct threshold for a party to be allocated parliamentary seats, compared to 21 per cent of the total sample. By the 2007 survey 20 per cent of Pacific respondents chose the correct threshold (27 per cent for the total sample), rising to 36 per cent by the 2008 pre-election survey (34 per cent for the total sample) and 40 per cent by the 2008 post-election survey (30 per cent for the total sample). Pacific respondents were more likely to pick the correct threshold compared to the total sample on both of the latter occasions. At the 2003 survey, 26 per cent of Pacific respondents understood that the party vote was more important in deciding the number of MPs a party gets in Parliament, compared to 44 per cent of the total sample. This rose to 56 per cent at the 2007 survey (65 per cent for the total sample) and 70 per cent at the 2008 pre-election survey (67 per cent for the total sample). Of this last result, the Electoral Commission (2008a) said at the time:

Our latest survey showed significant improvements in understanding by Pacific peoples, a staggering 14 percentage point improvement since 2007 in the number seeing the party vote as more important, and taking this group to the highest level of any ethnic grouping.

However, by the 2008 post-election survey, only 33 per cent of Pacific respondents understood the primacy of the party vote, compared to 52 per cent of the total sample. When asked at the 2007 survey how easy MMP was to understand, Pacific respondents were significantly more likely to declare it difficult (35 per cent compared to 25 per cent for the total sample), but this difference became insignificant at the 2008 pre-election and 2008 post-election surveys.

The surveys also reveal that Pacific peoples lag behind the rest of the population in self-rated knowledge of politics and levels of interest in politics, although the gaps seem to be closing. In the 1997 survey, 42 per cent of the total sample reported having 'a great deal' or 'some knowledge' about politics in New Zealand, compared to 13 per cent of Pacific respondents. By the 2003 survey this had more than doubled to 27 per cent of Pacific respondents, compared to 40 per cent of the total sample. In 1997, 46 per cent of Pacific respondents said they were interested in politics, compared to 76 per cent of the total sample. A decade later at the 2007 survey, 70 per cent of Pacific respondents said they were interested in politics, compared to 72 per cent of the total sample. Thus, in explaining lower levels of electoral engagement amongst Pacific peoples in 2007, the Electoral Commission (2007, p. 5) concluded that

...the key driver does appear to be lack of understanding. Pacific people are much more likely to say they find MMP very difficult to understand, but are as likely to say that they are interested in politics.

Further questions related to political efficacy have also been asked. Internal efficacy was assessed at the 2008 pre-election survey by asking respondents to rate their level of agreement with the statements "*Sometimes politics seems so complicated it is hard for people like me to understand what is going on*" and "*I have a good idea about what Members of Parliament generally do*". Forty five per cent of Pacific respondents agreed that politics was sometimes too complicated to understand, compared to 39 per cent of the total sample, while

27 per cent of Pacific respondents agreed that they had a good idea about what MPs do, compared to 41 per cent of the total sample. External efficacy was assessed at the 2008 pre-election survey by asking respondents to rate their level of agreement with the statement *"Who people vote for can make a big difference to what happens in New Zealand"*. Sixty six per cent of Pacific respondents agreed with this statement, not significantly different from the 69 per cent of the total sample who agreed. At the 2003 survey, respondents were asked *"Which of the following best describes how much trust and confidence you have in the electoral system as a whole?"* and *"Do you have any concerns about any aspect of New Zealand's electoral system?"* Ninety two per cent of Pacific respondents had 'a great deal', 'quite a lot', or 'some trust' in the electoral system as a whole, compared to 88 per cent of the total sample, while only eight per cent of Pacific respondents had a concern about an aspect of the electoral system, compared to 45 per cent of the total sample.

Since 2002 the Chief Electoral Office has commissioned research with both voters and non-voters to assess satisfaction with electoral services and to understand what the barriers to voting are. Four surveys have been conducted in 2002, 2005, 2008, and 2011. Only the 2008 and 2011 surveys, conducted by Colmar Brunton, had sufficient numbers of Pacific respondents to enable separate analyses (Electoral Commission, 2009a, 2011b). Both surveys asked a battery of detailed questions related to satisfaction with electoral advertising and information and electors' voting experiences; the 2011 survey also asked questions about the referendum on the voting system held concurrently with the general election. Asked in 2011 whether they had voted at every general election in New Zealand in which they were eligible to vote, 56 per cent of Pacific respondents said they had done this, compared to 76 per cent of the total sample. Asked whether they had received and read their 'EasyVote' pack, 75 per cent of Pacific respondents had received it and 28 per cent had read it, compared to 96 and 54 per cent of the total sample, respectively. Pacific respondents were significantly more likely to report problems with their polling place and give lower ratings to aspects of their voting experience (for example, layout of ballot paper, clarity of referendum instructions, and pleasantness of

staff). When asked to rate their overall satisfaction with their voting experience, 70 per cent of Pacific respondents were satisfied, compared to 88 per cent of the total sample. Knowledge about the 2011 referendum was also lower amongst Pacific respondents, who were significantly less likely to: be aware of the forthcoming referendum in 2011; know that it would be held concurrently with the election; be aware of advertising about it; be able to name different voting systems; and know the consequences of the outcome of the referendum (independent review if MMP retained; second referendum if MMP not retained). Pacific respondents were also less likely to say they would vote online (15 per cent compared to 32 per cent of the total sample), mostly because they reported having less access to the internet at home (53 per cent had access, compared to 83 per cent of the total sample).

In early 2008 the Electoral Enrolment Centre commissioned Research New Zealand to conduct a survey on awareness of the impending 2008 general election among four targeted groups: Māori, Pacific, Asian, and young people (18-24 years of age). Awareness of the fact that an election was scheduled for 2008 was lowest amongst Pacific peoples at 45 per cent, compared to Māori (59 per cent), Asian (55 per cent), and young people (47 per cent; Electoral Enrolment Centre, 2008).

This then represents all of the published research to date conducted by New Zealand's electoral agencies that incorporated separate Pacific analyses. In summary it shows that, compared to the rest of the population, Pacific peoples in general have lower rates of electoral participation (they are more likely to be non-voters), have less understanding of MMP, and declare less interest in politics, resulting in lower internal political efficacy. However these trends all seem to be improving and the disparities with the rest of the New Zealand population are closing. Pacific peoples appear to have *higher* external political efficacy compared to the rest of the population, although the evidence for this is ambiguous and sometimes incongruous. And at the most recent election in 2011 Pacific voters were more likely to be dissatisfied with their voting experience and lack knowledge about the concurrent referendum.

2.2.2 *Pacific peoples' partisanship and voting preferences*

Research from the NZES has shown that Pacific peoples are far more likely to vote for Labour than any other party (Aimer & Vowles, 2004; Gold, 1989, 1992; Vowles, 1992a, 1994b; Vowles & Aimer, 1993d; Vowles et al., 1995b). For example, of the 79 Pacific eligible voters sampled in the 2002 NZES, 42 per cent did not vote, 45 per cent voted for Labour, four per cent for National, and the remaining nine per cent for other parties. In comparison, overall figures for the entire sample were 24 per cent not voting, 31 per cent voting for Labour, and 18 per cent voting for National (Aimer & Vowles, 2004). Digipoll, who conduct surveys for Television New Zealand's *Tagata Pasifika* programme, conducted a poll in 2004 of 577 Pacific peoples about their views on a variety of political issues. It found that 72 per cent of the sample had voted for Labour at the last election; the next largest vote share was National with seven per cent. Labour leader Helen Clark was the most preferred Prime Minister at 67 per cent; the next closest candidate was Winston Peters at five per cent (Television New Zealand, 2005).

This overwhelming support for Labour is not unexpected given Pacific peoples' relative socio-economic deprivation and Labour's historical beginnings in the industrial labour movement, its affiliation with trade unions, and its reputation as a voice for the working class. However, Pacific peoples' support for Labour is not just a consequence of their concentration in lower socio-economic groups, because when class factors are held constant, a Pacific voter is more likely to vote for Labour than a Pākehā in the same class position (Gold, 1992; Vowles, 1994b; Vowles & Aimer, 1993c). As Gold's (1992, p. 484) analysis found:

The pro-Labour, anti-National bias of Maori and Pacific Islanders is most definitely not a reflection just of their generally lower socioeconomic standing...the pro-Labour bias shows up clearly even when the occupational standing of the respondent is held constant. For both Maori and Pacific Islanders, other factors operate as well to favour Labour, such as widely perceived group voting norms, consciousness of past group-party links (e.g. the Ratana-Labour alliance), and continuing perceptions both of Labour, as relatively attuned to Maori and Pacific Islander interests, and of National as considerably less sympathetic to their special concerns.

According to the former National MP and the first Pacific MP in government, Anae Arthur Anae, Labour was “the only party that actually made an attempt to encourage [Pacific peoples] to become politically involved in New Zealand” (A. A. Anae, 2001, p. 263). Labour, in contrast to other party organisations, has achieved this by establishing institutional structures and support mechanisms to recruit and select Pacific candidates²² and mobilise Pacific voters, as described by Cook (2008, pp. 78-79):

The Labour Party has demonstrated that minority representation is important to how it operates as a political party. It appears to be ideologically sympathetic to the ideals of minority representation, it has the structures in place to ensure that groups such as Pacific Islanders have a voice on policy and candidate selection, and in return, it has the voting support of much of the Pacific Island community. The Party has demonstrated that it is prepared to stand Pacific candidates in “safe” electoral seats and has the highest number of Pacific MPs of any political party in New Zealand.

Furthermore, Loomis (1991, p. 46) has noted that Labour’s engagement with Pacific peoples dates back much earlier to when the first waves of Pacific migrants were arriving in New Zealand, noting that the post-war Fraser Labour Government “was quick to see the advantage of providing funding to newly established Pacific Islands’ churches to help meet the welfare needs of their people”. This early experience greatly assisted Labour in attracting the support of many Pacific migrants (Loomis, 1991).

According to Luamanuvao Winnie Laban (former Minister of Pacific Island Affairs and the first Pacific woman MP), this early support was consolidated by “Norman Kirk’s Labour Government [who] acknowledged the value that Pacific people were adding to New Zealand’s economy and our social, cultural and sporting contributions” (Laban, 2007). Laban claims that Kirk saw South Pacific nations as neighbours and kin, but that “[l]ater governments, of a different shade, did not share Kirk’s inclusive worldview”, viewing Pacific peoples as “expendable economic units” and subjecting them to

²² Compare this with Anae Arthur Anae’s criticism of National’s treatment of Pacific voters with the low list ranking it gave him at the 2002 election (Tunnah, 2002) and his subsequent call for Pacific peoples to vote Labour at the 2005 election due to National’s race policies (Collins, 2005a).

“Robert Muldoon’s dawn raids”²³ (Laban, 2007). Under Kirk’s Government, the Department of Māori and Island Affairs established a Pacific Island Advisory Council under the guidance of Phil Amos, the Minister of Island Affairs. In 1984, the fourth Labour Government appointed Richard Prebble as the Minister of Pacific Island Affairs, a new cabinet portfolio, and the following year established a Pacific Island Affairs Unit within the Department of Internal Affairs. In 1990, a stand-alone Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs was established to provide policy advice to the government on issues affecting Pacific peoples (Macpherson & Anae, 2003, 2008; McCarthy, 2001; Whimp, 2012). This history of long unchallenged engagement with Pacific peoples by Labour has engendered a particularly strong loyalty towards the party. A former president of the party, Mike Williams, has described the traditional support received from Pacific voters as “the strongest and most reliable” segment of the party’s highly pluralistic constituency (Pamatatau, 2008).

However, Labour’s grip on the ‘Pacific vote’ may be loosening as Pacific peoples, especially those who are younger, educated, and New Zealand-born, experience greater upward social mobility through increases in educational, occupational, and income levels (Macpherson, 2004). In 2008, National leader John Key stated that this would be the segment of the Pacific electorate that National’s 2008 election campaign would target (Pamatatau, 2008). That campaign has been described as having “opened the first chinks in Labour’s grip on Pacific voters” with endorsements from high-profile Pacific ex-All Blacks Michael Jones and Va’aiga Tuigamala (Collins, 2010). In an interview after the 2008 election, Michael Jones recounted how the John Key-led National Party recognised “the strategic value of the Pacific vote” and “wanted to change the face of the party [and] be the party that best represents Pacific aspirations” (Rees, 2009, p. 15). Key has also stated in interviews with Television New Zealand’s *Tagata Pasifika* that National holds similar values to many Pacific peoples, including a conservative morality and entrepreneurial, hard-working

²³ However, the dawn raids (discussed further in Section 8.4) began under Kirk’s third Labour Government (M. Anae, 2012; M. Anae, Iuli, & Burgoyne, 2006).

ethic (Tagata Pasifika, 2007, 2011). Key's remark about a "conservative morality" was likely an attempt to exploit the reported dissatisfaction of some Pacific voters with certain legislation passed under previous Labour-led Governments (Collins, 2005b; Cumming, 2008; Gregory, 2005). This legislation related to moral issues such as the smacking of children (repeal of section 59 of the *Crimes Act 1961*), civil unions (which, among other things, legally recognised homosexual relationships), and prostitution law reform (which decriminalised prostitution).²⁴ More recently, a private member's bill drafted by Labour MP Louisa Wall to legalise marriage between partners of the same sex led to fellow Labour MP Su'a William Sio stating he would not be voting for the bill, claiming there was widespread opposition to it within his Pacific-dominated electorate of Mangere. He also claimed the bill could cost Labour in excess of 30,000 votes (Levy, 2012; Trevett & Davison, 2012). These socially liberal policies are at odds with the conservative religious beliefs of many in the Pacific communities. Religious affiliation is strong in Pacific communities, with at least 86 per cent of Sāmoan, Tongan, Tokelauan, and Tuvaluan peoples, and at least 70 per cent of Cook Islands Māori, Niuean, and Fijian peoples, affiliating with mostly Christian denominations at the 2006 census (Statistics New Zealand, 2007a).

The publicised discontent underlined the importance of Christian values to many Pacific peoples and their voting decisions. It had been suggested during past electoral cycles that several Christian-based parties were well-placed to take advantage of this dissatisfaction, but none of the strongest candidates – the Destiny New Zealand Party, the Family Party, and the Taito Phillip Field-led New Zealand Pacific Party, all of whom specifically targeted Māori and Pacific voters – made it into Parliament and all had dissolved by late 2010. Field was expelled from Labour in 2007 following bribery, corruption, and obstruction charges²⁵ but stood as an independent candidate for Mangere in the

²⁴ The civil union and prostitution reform legislation was passed in a conscience vote while Labour was in coalition government, however some parties retained the whip or exerted informal pressure on members to vote a particular way (Miller, 2005).

²⁵ Field was found guilty and in October 2009 was sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

2008 election, at which he lost his seat to the Labour candidate Su'a William Sio. Field finished with 5,525 votes (23 per cent of the vote) compared to Sio's 12,651 votes (52 per cent of the vote), and his New Zealand Pacific Party took 11 per cent of the party vote (Labour took 62 per cent, down from 71 per cent in 2005), which undoubtedly came mostly at the expense of Labour (Parliamentary Library, 2009). However, Anae Arthur Anae has suggested that a significant portion of the Pacific voting bloc either vote for Labour or do not vote at all (A. A. Anae, 2008). Thus, any discontent with Labour leads to increases in non-voting among Pacific peoples, rather than a transfer of support to other parties. However there is no firm evidence to support this. In any case, the suggestions of the diversification or withdrawal of the Pacific vote are focused on the margins, with strong support for Labour expected to continue.

2.2.3 Pacific peoples' political representation

Under MMP, electorate MPs represent a geographical constituency but list MPs do not, so the latter may adopt a particular social group, such as an ethnic or occupational community, to represent.²⁶ For example, when she was a list MP, Luamanuvao Winnie Laban stated that she "did not have a geographical constituency" and so "the Pacific Island community became [her] constituency" (Laban, 2004, cited in McLeay & Vowles, 2007, p. 89). It was hoped that the introduction of the list member would increase representation among under-represented groups such as women, Māori, and non-indigenous ethnic minorities. This would occur because, under proportional representation, parties had an incentive to select a diverse range of candidates to appeal to as many voters as possible. In particular, placing ethnic minorities high on the list, as opposed to standing them in electorates, advanced equity concerns while 'playing it safe' in electorate seats. Likewise, many parties defended their highly centralised control over the crucial candidate selection and ranking

²⁶ Although this is not a necessity and depends on other factors including the size of the party to which the list MP belongs. List MPs may represent a geographical (local or regional) constituency where this is perceived as legitimising their role as an MP (see McLeay & Vowles, 2007).

processes partly on equity grounds, maintaining that while the involvement of the extra-parliamentary party membership in these processes would be more democratic, the party élite had to balance this with the need for fair representation. Consequently, as was argued by the Royal Commission on the Electoral System, MMP has led to increased descriptive representation in Parliament by women, Māori, and ethnic minorities. For example, by the 2002 election Māori had a higher proportion of MPs in Parliament than their prevalence in the population, becoming even higher in 2005 at 17.3 per cent of MPs (21 seats) compared with 14.7 per cent of the population (Electoral Commission, 2006a).

Descriptive (or social) representation is one of two forms of representation usually identified in democratic theory of minority groups and refers to the election of representatives who share similar personal characteristics to a minority group, for example physical and cultural traits. The second is substantive (or virtual) representation which refers to representatives who propose policies that reflect the interests and views of minority groups, regardless of their individual characteristics. Proponents of the former type of representation believe that Parliament should be, as close as possible, a microcosm of the society it represents. The Royal Commission on the Electoral System (1986, p. 11) considered that “membership of the House should not only be proportional to the level of party support but should also reflect other significant characteristics of the electorate, such as gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, locality and age”. Thus, members of minority groups should be present in the legislature in proportion to their numbers in society. Proponents also adhere to the minority empowerment thesis, which proposes that descriptive representation of minority groups may foster more positive attitudes towards government (such as trust in government and politicians), increase political engagement such as voting and contacting one’s local MP, and cultivate greater levels of political knowledge and efficacy. Without descriptive representation some constituents may face barriers communicating and identifying with their representative. In New Zealand, for example, it has been

found that Māori are more likely to vote when their candidate is of Māori descent (Banducci, Donovan, & Karp, 2004).

Pacific peoples have always been, and remain, descriptively under-represented in Parliament (Miller, 2005; Ministry of Social Development, 2010). In total, there have been 11 members of New Zealand's Parliament with Pacific heritage. Election of a Pacific person to Parliament did not occur until 1993, when Taito Phillip Field was elected in the seat of Otara. He then succeeded David Lange in the Mangere electorate in 1996. That year saw the first election under MMP, heralding the addition of two other Pacific MPs, Vui Mark Gosche and Anae Arthur Anae. These three MPs accounted for 2.5 per cent of all MPs, yet Pacific peoples at the time accounted for 5.8 per cent of the population. This discrepancy has widened since 1996 as the Pacific population grew to 6.6 per cent of the population by 2005 yet the number of Pacific MPs had remained static at three, still 2.5 per cent of Parliament (Electoral Commission, 2006a). At approximately seven per cent of the current population, this would translate proportionally into almost nine seats for Pacific peoples. But with only six MPs of Pacific heritage in the current 2012 Parliament (five per cent of seats), they remain descriptively under-represented in the House of Representatives. These six MPs are listed in Table 2.1, along with the five other former members of Parliament of Pacific heritage.²⁷

Table 2.1 shows that eight of the 11 Pacific MPs relied on the party list to enter the House. The remaining three entered Parliament by successful electorate bids. Consequently, as contended by Chauvel (2011), MMP can be said to have assisted in increasing Pacific representation in Parliament. However, at the 1999, 2002, and 2005 elections, Pacific representation came predominantly (*solely* in 2002 and 2005) from successful electorate bids, leading McLeay and Vowles (2007, p. 88) to state, correctly at the time, that "lists have

²⁷ In his chapter on Pacific politicians in New Zealand, Whimp (2012) includes Labour list MP Rajen Prasad, of Fijian Indian descent. However, I have followed Statistics New Zealand (2005) in treating 'Fijian Indian' as a sub-category of the 'Asian' ethnic group. Whimp (2012) and Raganivatu (1997) also note that Tukoroirangi Morgan, a NZ First MP from 1996 to 1998 and Mauri Pacific Party member from 1998 to 1999 (representing the Te Tai Hauāuru electorate), has Cook Islands heritage, but primarily identifies with his Tainui heritage.

made little apparent impact” on Pacific representation. It also led Vowles, Banducci and Karp (2006, p. 275) to state “[r]epresentation of those of Pacific Island origins has been most successful through electorate seats, due to the spatial concentration of those groups and their successful political mobilization by the Labour Party”. In comparison, the 1996, 2008, and 2011 elections saw a much greater reliance on lists to achieve Pacific representation.

Table 2.1. Pacific MPs that have served in the New Zealand Parliament

Member of Parliament	Term	Ethnic heritage	Political party	Electorate or list MP
Taito Phillip Field	1993-2008	Sāmoan/ Cook Islands	Labour/ Independent	Otara 1993-1996, Mangere 1996-2008
Vui Mark Gosche	1996-2008	Sāmoan	Labour	List 1996-1999, Maungakiekie 1999-2008
Anae Arthur Anae	1996-1999, 2000-2002	Sāmoan	National	List
Luamanuvao Winnie Laban	1999-2010	Sāmoan	Labour	List 1999-2002, Mana 2002-2010
Carmel Sepuloni	2008-2011	Tongan/ Sāmoan	Labour	List
Charles Chauvel ^a	2006 - current	Tahitian	Labour	List
Su’a William Sio	2008 - current	Sāmoan	Labour	List 2008, Mangere 2008-current
Peseta Sam Lotu-Iiga	2008 - current	Sāmoan	National	Maungakiekie
Kris Faafoi	2010 - current	Tokelauan	Labour	Mana
Asenati Lole-Taylor	2011 - current	Sāmoan	NZ First	List
Alfred Ngaro	2011 - current	Cook Islands	National	List

a. On 19 February 2013, Chauvel announced his resignation from Parliament, effective from 11 March 2013 (Trevett, 2013). At the time of writing, he was still an MP, and thus is included in this Table.

The main conclusions from this section of the literature review can be summarised as follows. Pacific peoples have consistently lower voter turnout than the rest of the population. They also have consistently lower electoral understanding and interest in politics, although this is improving. External political efficacy is probably higher compared to the general population. They have traditionally shown strong support for Labour, the party who have put the most effort into mobilising their vote. Some commentators believe the Pacific vote will increasingly diversify beyond the customary support for Labour as many Pacific peoples become increasingly upwardly mobile. Pacific representation in Parliament remains disproportionately low compared with their population prevalence. MMP has bolstered Pacific representation in Parliament through the list, although successful electorate bids have secured this representation at several elections.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This thesis makes use of data collected as part of the *New Zealand Election Study* (NZES). The NZES began surveying New Zealand electors at the 1990 election and has continued to do so triennially (at each general election). The quantitative surveys cover a broad range of issues related to political opinions, attitudes, and behaviours, as well as social and demographic characteristics. The study is based at the Universities of Waikato and Auckland and its funding has mainly come from the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology, the New Zealand Electoral Commission, and the universities themselves. At the time of writing, the NZES had conducted surveys at the following general elections in New Zealand: 1990, 1993, 1996, 1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, and 2011. Each of these eight years is referred to as an individual 'wave' of the NZES. I have merged data from the six surveys conducted between 1996 and 2011, inclusive. The questionnaires and datasets from these surveys are made publicly available and free of charge on the NZES website (<http://www.nzes.org>), the latter in *IBM SPSS Statistics* format (hereafter referred to as 'SPSS'). Individual respondents cannot be identified in the datasets.

The NZES's main source of data is self-completion questionnaires posted to a random sample of registered electors across New Zealand immediately following each election. Samples are randomly selected on an interval basis from electoral rolls. At the 1993, 1996, 1999, and 2002 waves, the mailout questionnaires were supplemented with telephone interviews with a random national sample of households with telephones (using random digit dialling and randomly selecting respondents within households). Where possible, telephone interviews were also administered with non-respondents to the mailout questionnaire. The telephone interviews could not ask the full battery of questions asked in the mailout questionnaire due to their short length of between seven and 15 minutes. Responses to these omitted questions are designated as 'missing' in the SPSS datasets for telephone respondents. At the 2005, 2008, and 2011 waves, a small proportion of respondents completed an

online version of the survey. Māori respondents, randomly selected from the Māori electoral rolls, were over-sampled at every wave except 1990, 1993, and 1999 when no over-sampling was conducted (although a separate study with Māori was conducted in 1999 utilising face-to-face interviews). Youth were over-sampled in 2011. Response rates to the post-election mailout questionnaires for newly-sampled individuals at each wave were: 63 per cent in 1996; 64 per cent in 1999; 52 per cent in 2002; and 40 per cent in 2008. Response rates for the 2005 and 2011 waves have not been published. For further information on the NZES and additional details of its research design, implementation, and methodology, see Vowles and Aimer (1993d), Vowles, Aimer, Catt, Lamare, and Miller (1995c), Vowles, Aimer, Banducci, and Karp (1998), Vowles et al. (2002), Vowles, Aimer, Banducci, Karp, and Miller (2004), Vowles (2000b), and the NZES website.

3.1 Rationale for merging NZES datasets

Despite the random sampling method, the number of NZES respondents who have identified as belonging to a Pacific ethnic group has been disproportionately small compared to their population prevalence at every wave of the NZES. Once ‘panellists’ are excluded (see below for the definition of a panellist), the largest number of Pacific respondents sampled in any wave of the NZES was 67 in the 2002 wave (1.5 per cent of the total 2002 sample) and the smallest was 31 in the 2011 wave (1.8 per cent of the total 2011 sample), with an average of 42 across the six merged waves (the Pacific respondents are discussed further in Section 3.3). These small numbers would mean that a secondary analysis at any one wave would lack the statistical power to make any meaningful generalisations about the political engagement of all Pacific peoples in New Zealand. I therefore decided to merge the datasets of (some of) the NZES waves in order to *maximise the number of Pacific respondents available for analysis*. This was possible because a substantial proportion of the questions asked in the NZES are asked consistently at every wave. While there have been eight waves of the NZES dating back to the 1990 election, this thesis only

utilises data from the six waves since 1996. Specifically, I have merged data from the 1996, 1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, and 2011 datasets. The 1990 and 1993 waves were not included in my merged dataset because the questions they contained were too different from the post-1993 surveys (partly due to the change of electoral system from FPP to MMP at the 1996 election) and thus were unsuited to merging with the rest. Merging of variables (survey questions) from the six post-1993 waves occurred where two conditions were met. Firstly, a survey question had to have been asked across *at least five of the six post-1993 waves of the NZES*; and secondly, I had to consider a survey question to be relevant to the investigation of Pacific peoples' political engagement.

There are some important provisos to these merging conditions. The first point to note is that each of the post-1993 waves included a subsample of respondents who had participated in previous waves of the NZES. These participants are referred to as 'panellists'. The panellists varied in their length of participation across waves of the NZES - some participated in only two consecutive waves, others up to five waves. Prior to merging, panellists were removed from all datasets *except for the wave in which they initially participated* so that no respondent appeared twice in my merged dataset. As a result, each case in my merged dataset represents a unique respondent who is statistically independent of all others.

Secondly, the condition that a question had to have been asked at (at least) five of the six waves is an arbitrary prerequisite that I deemed to be a sensible compromise between maximising the number of Pacific respondents on the one hand, and not excluding questions and variables that were relevant and important to my investigation on the other. For example, the survey question that asked respondents to rate their agreement with the statement "*Sometimes politics seems so complicated people like me can't understand what goes on*" on a five-point Likert scale was included in all waves of the NZES except for the 2011 wave. This question relates to internal political efficacy, an issue I wanted to investigate because efficacy has been found to be a crucial determinant of an individual's level of political engagement (Catt, 2005;

Electoral Commission, 2008b). As a result, I felt it was necessary to include this question in my merged dataset despite its omission from one wave. Conversely, many questions were only asked at a few waves and some were only asked at one. For example, the 2011 and 1999 surveys included wave-specific questions relating to referenda held concurrently with those elections. These types of questions were not included in my merged dataset because they did not overcome the problem of small response numbers, which was the whole rationale for merging. Consequently, an inclusion criterion of five of six waves was chosen. As a result of this criterion, some variables have large numbers of 'missing' data, mainly reflecting the absence of an entire wave of potential cases.

Thirdly, many questions that met the 'at least five of six waves' condition were worded differently at some (or all) of the waves. Typically they differed in one of two ways: either the wording of the question itself varied, or the response options to the question varied.²⁸ The extent to which they differed ranged from very minor differences in question wording that were inconsequential to subsequent analysis, to more notable differences in response options which required recoding of variables in the SPSS datasets before they could be merged with the other waves. However in all cases of differences in questions, the overriding principle for inclusion in my merged dataset was that a question (and its response options) had to be either identical or virtually identical (that is, differences were trivial and immaterial), or more-than-trivially different in wording or response options but so similar in meaning or tapping the same underlying construct that it was *in essence* equivalent. In other words, questions that were the same, or were worded slightly differently but were asking the same thing, were included in my merged dataset.

²⁸ Virtually all questions also differed in their *placement* within each survey as well (i.e. the order in which they appeared).

3.2 Method for merging NZES datasets

To merge the datasets of the six post-1993 waves of the NZES, I did the following:

1. Firstly, I used a spreadsheet to create a 'matrix grid' of survey questions by NZES wave, with survey questions as rows in the spreadsheet and the six waves as columns. This template would assist me in determining which of the relevant questions in the surveys had been asked on a consistent basis (remembering that 'consistency' for my purposes meant at least five of the six waves).
2. I began filling out this template by typing in any questions from all six of the surveys that I felt were relevant to my investigation.
3. I then recorded in the columns of the spreadsheet at which waves each particular question had been asked. If a question *was asked* at a particular wave, I typed into the corresponding cell its question number from that year's survey. If the question was not asked at that wave, I left the cell blank. Where a question was asked but was worded differently, I noted this difference with the acronym 'DQW', meaning "different question wording".

Figure 3.1 shows an example from this spreadsheet. The spreadsheet has the survey question recorded verbatim (using the *most common* wording from the six waves); it shows the waves at which the question was asked (in this case, all six); and it notes their respective question numbers and any differences in wording.

Figure 3.1 Excerpt from Methodology Spreadsheet of Example NZES Survey Question

Question	NZES waves and question numbers					
	1996	1999	2002	2005	2008	2011
<i>In politics, people sometimes talk about the 'left' and the 'right'. If you can, where would you place yourself on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means the most left and 10 means the most right?</i>	B16	B6	B11 (DQW)	B9 (DQW)	C17	A19

4. I also made a note in the spreadsheet where differences in response options would necessitate recoding of variables in order to make them consistent with all other waves, so that they could be merged. For example, the following question was included in all waves of the NZES except the 1999 wave and was worded as follows in the 2011 survey: *"Where 1 means that it doesn't make any difference who is in power and 5 means that it makes a big difference who is in power, where would you place yourself on this scale?"* However, in the 1996, 2002, and 2005 waves, the five-point Likert response scale was *reversed*, such that one meant 'it makes a big difference who is in power' and five meant 'it doesn't make any difference who is in power' (that is, the reverse of the scale used in 2011). Such differences in response options were noted in my spreadsheet, as well as the steps that would be required to recode responses in the SPSS datasets to make all waves 'merge-able'.

Response options varied the most where questions related to voting choices and preferences, because the response options naturally varied depending on which political parties were standing at each general election. Unsurprisingly, Labour and National contested every general election under consideration and thus were *named* response options at every wave (that is, their party names were specifically identified in the surveys and had designated tick boxes), as were NZ First and ACT. The Alliance also contested every election under consideration but were a named response option in the 1996 and 1999 surveys only; thereafter they were not specifically named but fell under the open-ended category of 'Another party', in which respondents could write in their party of choice if it was not specifically listed. The Green Party contested the 1996 election under the Alliance umbrella but thereafter they contested every election as their own independent party and were a named response option from the 2002 survey onwards. These six parties – Labour, National, NZ First, ACT, Alliance, and the Greens – represent both the majority of voting preferences since the 1996 election and the majority of named response options across all the post-1993 surveys. Consequently, they are the six named response options in my merged dataset; all other responses at all waves were merged into a residual

category called 'Another Party' (this category includes United Future, the Māori Party, and the Progressive Party). An 'I did not vote' option was also available at each wave and preserved in my merged dataset.

5. Once completely filled in, the spreadsheet gave a full list of relevant survey questions, the waves at which they were asked, and any differences that would need to be standardised before merging. The spreadsheet enabled me to easily see which questions did not meet the 'five of six waves' criterion (namely those with more than one blank cell in the wave columns). Questions that did not meet this condition were deleted from the spreadsheet.
6. I then recoded in each wave's dataset all variables that I had identified as needing recoding due to differences in response options. Usually, the *most common* response option across all the waves was taken as 'the standard' to which all others had to be recoded to match. Occasionally, however, response options had to be collapsed to the *simplest or most parsimonious* of the variations. For example, a question that listed various forms of political action (such as signing a petition, writing to a newspaper, boycotting a product or service), had the following response options at the majority of waves:²⁹ "Actually done it during the last 5 years", "Actually done it more than 5 years ago", "Might do it", "Would never", and "Don't know". However, in the 1999 survey the response options were: "Actually done it", "Might do it", "Would never", and "Don't know"; that is, the first two options in the former variation were condensed into just one, "Actually done it". To be able to merge this question across all the waves, all the datasets that used the former variation had to have their first two response options combined – or collapsed down – to that of the 1999 survey.
7. The final step before merging proper could occur was to standardise the variable names, labels, values, and other characteristics assigned to them in SPSS (such as type, width, level of measurement, and so on). Merging could

²⁹ In SPSS parlance, these response options are called *value labels* and usually correspond to numeric *values*.

only occur once each variable was called the same name and given the same properties across all datasets. These names and properties were decided in advance by the author. The ordering of the variables in the datasets was also standardised, based on a predetermined set of groupings which clustered related variables with each other.

8. The six datasets were then merged one by one in chronological order (earliest to most recent) by adding cases using the 'Merge Files' function in version 19.0 of SPSS.

3.3 Determination of 'Pacific respondents' and their participation rates

At each of the six waves, respondents were asked about their ethnic identification. With the exception of the 1996 wave, all surveys asked respondents, firstly, to select which ethnic group or groups they identify with (multiple answers were possible), and secondly, if multiple ethnic groups were selected, to choose which ethnic group they identified with *the most*. A 'Pacific' option was selectable for both parts of the question; in the 1999 and 2002 surveys this option was listed as "*As someone from a particular Pacific Island*", while in the 2005, 2008, and 2011 surveys it was listed as "*Samoan, Cook Island Maori, Tongan, or other Pacific*". In the 1996 survey, there was only one ethnic identification question: "*Do you identify yourself mainly as: A New Zealand European/A Pakeha/A New Zealand Maori/As someone from a particular Pacific Island/Or with some other ethnic group?*" In all surveys there was space to write in an ethnic group where it was not a listed response option. Accordingly, a respondent was classified as a "Pacific respondent" for the purpose of this thesis if they:

- Selected only the 'Pacific' option in the first part of the ethnicity question, or
- Selected the 'Pacific' option and another option in the first part, but chose the 'Pacific' option in the second part as being the ethnic group they *most identified with*, or

- Selected the 'Pacific' option in the one-part ethnicity question used in 1996, or
- Did not select any of the above, but wrote a specific Pacific ethnic group in the open-ended option, for example, "Tokelauan".

The total number of respondents, number of Pacific respondents, and their proportion of the total sample at each of the six waves is listed in Table 3.1 (these figures exclude panellists as described in Section 3.1).

*Table 3.1. Pacific Respondents in New Zealand Election Study 1996-2011
(Excludes Panellists)*

NZES Wave	Total N	N of Pacific respondents	%
2011	1,762	31	1.8
2008	1,495	34	2.3
2005	1,956	34	1.7
2002	4,608	67	1.5
1999	3,544	34	1.0
1996	4,511	49	1.1
Total	17,876	249	1.4

As shown in Table 3.1, my merged dataset included 249 Pacific respondents from a total sample of 17,876 respondents, equating to 1.4 per cent of the merged sample. Across all six waves, the participation of Pacific peoples in the NZES has varied between 1 per cent and 2.3 per cent, despite having a population prevalence of 4.8 per cent at the 1996 census and 6.9 per cent at the most recent census in 2006 (Statistics New Zealand, 1998, 2007b). This under-representation may be explained by the sampling method used by the NZES; all respondents are registered electors on the electoral roll who were willing to complete a written (or online) survey. This suggests respondents are more likely to be those who are interested in, and familiar with, New Zealand politics. Indeed, non-voters are under-represented in the NZES (see Appendix II in Vowles & Aimer, 1993d). Given their lower levels of electoral enrolment and turnout, and their more general political marginalisation, the under-representation of Pacific peoples in the NZES is not unexpected.

3.4 Recoding of variables

My merged dataset contained variables that fell under four broad categories: those related to political efficacy; political participation; partisanship and voting choices; and demographic and socio-economic characteristics. As stated earlier, many of these variables required recoding in order to standardise them across the six waves so they could be merged, or in order to make them more suitable for my analysis. All the recoding performed on variables related to political efficacy, political participation, and partisanship and voting choices is documented in their corresponding chapters (Chapters Five, Six, and Seven, respectively). The variables related to demographic and socio-economic characteristics feature in all these chapters (usually as independent variables in logistic regression models), and their distributions are discussed in Chapter Four. Because of their dispersion throughout this thesis, I discuss these variables in this section, describing what they were, what recoding was performed, and why it was performed. Where recoding was relatively elaborate or extensive, it is documented further in Appendix Table 3.4 in Appendix 1. All of the variables that follow were included in all six of the waves that have been merged.

Pacific ethnic status: This is the main independent variable in this thesis and simply dichotomises responses to the ethnicity question into 'Pacific respondents' (see definition in Section 3.3) and 'Non-Pacific respondents', the latter encompassing all respondents who did not meet my definition of a 'Pacific respondent'.

Gender: This variable was coded in my merged dataset as 'Female' = 0, 'Male' = 1.

Age: At all waves this variable was determined with the question "*In what year were you born?*" except in 2005 when full date of birth was asked and in 2011 when both year and month of birth were asked. Age in years at the time of the survey was calculated by subtracting the respondent's year of birth from the year the survey was administered. This was then recoded into the following six age brackets: 18-24 years, 25-34 years, 35-44 years, 45-54 years, 55-64 years,

and 65 years and over. This transformation from a continuous variable to a categorical variable was performed to make the interpretation of odds ratios in logistic regression models easier.

Education: This variable was determined with the question “Which of the following indicates your highest formal educational qualification?” Across the six waves the number of response options varied between six and eight and there were minor variations in wording. These response categories were unnecessarily detailed for the purpose of this thesis and thus were condensed into the following four categories: ‘Primary’, ‘Secondary’, ‘Tertiary’, and ‘University degree’ (see Appendix 1 for further details of how this was done).

Marital status: This variable derived from the question “What is your [current] marital status?” with the response options “Married or living as married”, “Widowed”, “Divorced or separated”, and “Single, never married”. At the 2008 and 2011 waves, the first response option was reworded to “Married, in a civil union, or living with partner”. This response set was retained in my merged dataset. However an additional variable was created which dichotomised marital status into ‘Married’ (the first response option) and ‘Not married’ (the remaining three response options), because this differentiates between the former who are theorised as having more stable relationships which in turn are conducive to political engagement, and the latter who are theorised as lacking this stability leading to lower political engagement (Vowles & Aimer, 1993a; see Section 2.1.1).

Housing tenure: This variable had seven response options that differed slightly in wording at some waves. These seven categories were condensed into three: ‘Own freehold’, ‘Own mortgaged’, and ‘Rent or board’ (see Appendix 1).

Religion: This variable was determined with the question “What is your religion, if you have one?” At all waves there were 11 response options (except for 1996 when there were nine) and there was space to write in a specific answer where “Other Christian” and “Non-Christian” were chosen. Following Aimer and Vowles (2004), these were condensed into the following four categories: ‘None’,

'Traditional Christian', 'Non-traditional Christian', and 'Non-Christian' (see Appendix 1).

Sector of employment: This variable derived from the question "*Who do you now work for or, if you are not working now, who did you work for in your last job in paid employment?*" The response options were condensed into five: 'Self-employed', 'Private', 'Public', 'Mixed/Non-profit', and 'Never worked' (see Appendix 1).

Occupation: This variable was assessed with the question "*What kind of paid work do you do, or did you do in your last paid job? Remember, if you are retired or not working for pay now, please describe your last regular paid job*". Respondents wrote their job or occupation into an open-ended answer box, and these had been coded and entered into the original NZES datasets based on the *International Standard Classification of Occupations 1988* (ISCO-88; International Labour Organization, 2012). Codes had been entered to one, two, three, or four digits (levels of specification) depending on the wave. In my merged dataset these codes were first reduced to one digit, denoting the ten major occupational groups, and were then condensed into the following three categories: 'Managers, professionals, technicians', 'Clerical, service, sales', and 'Manual' (see Appendix 1). This categorisation starts with the manual/non-manual occupational dichotomy discussed in Section 2.1.2 (and footnote 8) but then divides the non-manual category into "salaried professionals and managers" (managers, professionals, technicians) and "those in routine non-manual jobs" (clerical, service, sales) to reflect their differing levels of autonomy, control, skills, and income (Vowles, 1992a, p. 101).

Employer or supervisor: This variable derived from the question "*In your present or last paid job do/did you directly employ or supervise any employee responsible to you?*" Responses were "Yes" or "No". These were coded in my merged dataset as 'No' = 0, 'Yes' = 1.

Personal income and household income: This variable was determined with the question "*What was your personal income before tax between 1 April [year prior to survey] and 31 March [year of survey]? What about the total income before tax of all*

members of your household in the same year?" At the 2011 wave, only household income was solicited. Seven income brackets were listed as response options for both personal and household income at all waves except 1996 when eight brackets were used. The monetary values of the brackets increased in line with inflation as the year of the survey increased. At the 2011 wave, the brackets ranged from "*Less than \$20,000*" (the lowest) to "*\$147,700 and over*" (the highest). The middle bracket was "*\$51,400 - \$76,099*". Respondents could also choose "*No income*" and "*Don't know*" at every wave. These response options were categorised into incomes that were relatively 'Low', 'Middle', and 'High' at each wave (see Appendix 1).

The income questions had a high rate of missing data. Across the six waves, an average of 22 per cent and 35 per cent of respondents had 'missing' responses (refused to answer, did not know, or were not asked) to the personal income and household income questions, respectively. The proportion of missing data reached a high of 62 per cent for household income in 1996. In addition, personal income was not asked at the 2011 wave, which substantially increased the amount of missing data for this variable after merging. This amount of missing data proved problematic for multivariate logistic regression, which handles missing data on a casewise basis; that is, a respondent is excluded from analysis if any single value is missing on any one variable in the model. Consequently, despite income being postulated as an important influence on political engagement, I decided to omit it from logistic regression analyses in order to maximise the number of cases available for inclusion in the models. To compensate, other socio-economic indicators with fewer missing responses such as level of education and occupation were included in the regression models.

Beneficiary in household: This variable derived from the question "*Do you or anyone in your household receive any one or more of the following government benefits or assistance?*" Respondents were instructed to tick all that apply from a list of eight types of benefit (seven in 1996 and 1999). These responses were recoded into a binary 'Yes' (coded as 1) if the respondent ticked yes to any one

benefit, and 'No' (coded as 0) if the respondent did not tick yes to any benefit (see Appendix 1).

3.5 Analysis

All analysis was undertaken with version 19.0 of the statistical software package *IBM SPSS Statistics* ('SPSS'). Bivariate relationships were explored using contingency tables ('cross-tabulations' in SPSS), employing chi-square as a test of statistical significance and Goodman and Kruskal's gamma as a test of strength of association. Multivariate analysis is employed where a statistically significant bivariate relationship was found, using the method of logistic regression. This is a statistical technique that allows a researcher to predict a discrete outcome such as group membership from information the researcher has about other variables that may be continuous, discrete, dichotomous, or a mix. Specifically, it tests models consisting of a set of independent variables (IVs, also known as 'predictors', 'regressors', or 'covariates') to see how well they predict a categorical dependent variable (DV). Logistic regression seeks to exploit any associations between the IVs and DV to predict category membership of the DV from knowledge of one or more IVs, using an iterative procedure to achieve the greatest possible predictive accuracy. As a form of multivariate analysis, it allows the researcher who has employed a survey or correlational study design to isolate the effects of individual IVs upon the DV through the imposition of statistical controls that 'hold constant' potentially confounding factors. In particular, the multivariate analysis used in this thesis attempts to identify differences in political engagement between Pacific and non-Pacific respondents *net of the effects of other potentially confounding factors*, such as age and socio-economic indicators. As a result, discussion of logistic regression results in this thesis focuses primarily on the extent to which ethnicity is or is not confounded by other explanatory variables. I note at the outset that demonstration that a set of predictors is related to a DV does not imply that any or all of those predictors *cause* the DV.

The logistic regression used in this thesis is binary (or binomial), meaning the DV has two categories. For all logistic regressions I have used the forced entry method, in which all IVs are entered simultaneously into the model. IVs are included in the regression models on theoretical grounds based on predictors identified in the literature, rather than on statistical grounds (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). As previously mentioned, missing values are necessarily excluded casewise. Unless otherwise stated, 'don't know' responses to all questions (where it was a response option) have been treated as missing and identified as such in my merged dataset.

All tables presenting the results of logistic regressions show the regression coefficients (*B*) and their standard errors (S.E.). Negative *B*s indicate a negative or inverse relationship between the IV and DV, whereas positive *B*s indicate a positive relationship. Also shown are Wald statistics, which test the regression coefficients for significance. The tables also present odds ratios (OR), and their 95 per cent confidence intervals (CI) with lower limits (LL) and upper limits (UL), for each IV. Logistic regression uses the natural logarithm of the odds (or 'log odds') to calculate odds ratios. Odds ratios represent the change in odds of being in one of the categories of the DV when the value of the IV increases by one unit. An odds of 1 is equivalent to a log odds of 0; both signify no relation of the IV to the DV. The reference category for ORs is the first category listed under each variable. Nagelkerke R^2 was used to estimate the variability in the DV explained by the model and the Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test was used to assess how well each model fitted the observed data. An assumption of logistic regression is that the IVs do not, as far as possible, exhibit multicollinearity, which is where two or more IVs are highly correlated with each other. This was checked with the 'collinearity diagnostics' statistics function within SPSS, with specific reference to very low tolerance values. A significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ was used to determine statistical significance for all calculations. Those who carried out the original collection of NZES data and the original analysis bear no responsibility for the further secondary analysis and interpretations thereof made in this thesis.

CHAPTER 4: THE SAMPLE

4.1 Socio-demographic factors

As discussed in Section 3.3, 249 of the total sample of 17,876 respondents (1.4 per cent) identified with a Pacific ethnic group. The remaining 17,566 non-Pacific respondents identified as follows: 69.8 per cent New Zealand European; 14.9 per cent New Zealand Māori; 2.1 per cent Asian; 4.9 per cent 'Other'; and 6.9 per cent had missing responses to the ethnicity question. Compared to the ethnic makeup of the national population at the 2006 census (Statistics New Zealand, 2012a), Pacific peoples were under-represented in the sample (6.9 per cent of the population), as were New Zealand Europeans (77 per cent of the population) and Asian peoples (9.7 per cent of the population). New Zealand Māori were accurately represented in the sample. Females (54.8 per cent) outnumbered males (45.2 per cent). People between the ages of 18 and 25 years were under-represented in the sample, while people 25 years and older were over-represented, especially those 35 years and older, with those 65 years and older being the most over-represented (19.3 per cent of the sample compared to 12.2 per cent of the population). Married people were vastly over-represented in the sample (64.4 per cent compared to 44.8 per cent of the population), while single people were vastly under-represented (17.8 per cent compared to 31.4 per cent of the population; Statistics New Zealand, 2012a).

Also over-represented in the sample were home-owners, mortgaged or freehold (72.7 per cent compared to 66.9 per cent of the population); people with a religious affiliation (74.6 per cent compared to 67.8 per cent of the population), especially Anglicans and Presbyterians; and people with a university education (25.1 per cent compared to 14.2 per cent of the population; Statistics New Zealand, 2012a). Table 4.1 presents the distribution of socio-demographic factors among the sample and compares the distribution of these factors between Pacific and non-Pacific respondents.

Table 4.1 Numbers (Column Percentages) of Socio-Demographic Factors Among Pacific and Non-Pacific NZES Respondents

Variable	Values	Total	Respondent		Overall <i>p</i> value
			Non-Pacific	Pacific	
Age	18-24	1,501 (8.6)	1,462 (8.5)	39 (16.0)	<0.001
	25-34	2,718 (15.5)	2,665 (15.4)	53 (21.8)	
	35-44	3,652 (20.8)	3,589 (20.8)	63 (25.9)	
	45-54	3,422 (19.5)	3,385 (19.6)	37 (15.2)	
	55-64	2,848 (16.3)	2,820 (16.3)	28 (11.5)	
	65+	3,377 (19.3)	3,354 (19.4)	23 (9.5)	
Gender	Male	7,999 (45.2)	7,896 (45.2)	103 (41.7)	.267
	Female	9,701 (54.8)	9,557 (54.8)	144 (58.3)	
Education	Primary	1,238 (7.2)	1,206 (7.1)	32 (13.8)	<0.001
	Secondary	8,142 (47.4)	8,022 (47.3)	120 (51.7)	
	Tertiary	3,490 (20.3)	3,453 (20.4)	37 (15.9)	
	University	4,308 (25.1)	4,265 (25.2)	43 (18.5)	
Marital status	Married	11,212 (64.4)	11,069 (64.5)	143 (57.4)	<0.001
	Widowed	1,292 (7.4)	1,282 (7.5)	10 (4.0)	
	Divorced or separated	1,822 (10.5)	1,801 (10.5)	21 (8.4)	
	Single	3,093 (17.8)	3,018 (17.6)	75 (30.1)	
Housing tenure	Own freehold	6,185 (37.9)	6,165 (38.3)	20 (9.3)	<0.001
	Own mortgaged	5,674 (34.8)	5,615 (34.9)	59 (27.3)	
	Rent, board, live with family	3,400 (22.3)	3,303 (21.9)	97 (55.1)	
Religion	No religion	4,063 (25.4)	4,043 (25.6)	20 (9.3)	<0.001
	Traditional Christian	9,571 (59.8)	9,447 (59.8)	124 (57.4)	
	Non-traditional Christian	1,838 (11.5)	1,779 (11.3)	59 (27.3)	
	Non-Christian	531 (3.3)	518 (3.3)	13 (6.0)	

Consistent with census data, Table 4.1 shows that, compared to non-Pacific respondents, Pacific respondents were generally younger, less educated, less likely to be married and more likely to be single, far less likely to own their home and more likely to rent or live with family, and more likely to be religious (particularly of a non-traditional Christian denomination). Differences in gender were not statistically significant.

Census data also shows that, compared to the total *Pacific* population in New Zealand, the Pacific respondents were older, more female, more educated, and more religious (Statistics New Zealand, 2012a).

4.2 Work and income-related factors

Census data (Statistics New Zealand, 2012a) also shows that clerical, service, and sales workers were under-represented in the sample (23.2 per cent compared to 29.4 per cent of the population), while manual workers were over-represented (28.9 per cent compared to 16.8 per cent of the population). Also over-represented were public sector employees (23.8 per cent compared to 15.3 per cent of the population), while private sector employees and the self-employed were collectively under-represented (a combined 67.5 per cent of the sample compared to 79 per cent of the population). Given the literature outlined in Section 2.1.2, these figures may indicate the potential for a slight bias towards Labour in responses to questions about partisanship and voting choices.

The sample was fairly accurate in its representation of the main categories of work status (full-time, part-time, unemployed, and retired). In terms of personal income, while it is difficult to determine the representativeness of the sample due to Statistics New Zealand's use of different income brackets (and the single time-point captured by the census as compared with the multiple years captured in my merged dataset), analyses which compared the distribution of personal income at each wave with data from the temporally closest census to that wave indicated a noticeable over-representation of 'middle' and 'high' income earners and an under-representation of 'low' income earners. This may have offset any pro-Labour bias present in the sample.

Compared to the total Pacific population, the Pacific respondents were more likely to be full-time employees, retirees, and manual workers, and less likely to be part-time employees and white-collar workers (Statistics New Zealand, 2012a).

Table 4.2 shows the distribution of work-related and income-related factors among the sample, and compares the distribution of these factors between the Pacific and non-Pacific respondents. Compared to non-Pacific respondents, Pacific respondents were more likely to work full-time or be students or unemployed, and were less likely to work part-time or be retired (the latter may in part be due to the younger age structure of the Pacific respondents). They were less likely to work in white-collar jobs and more likely to work in blue-collar occupations; less likely to be self-employed and more likely to work for a private employer or have never worked; less likely to directly employ or supervise others;³⁰ and less likely to earn 'middle' and 'high' incomes and more likely to not know their personal income. Pacific respondents were also less likely to have 'middle' or 'high' household incomes (and more likely to not know their household income) and were more likely to have a beneficiary within the household.

In summary, compared to the total New Zealand population, the merged sample is older, slightly more female, more educated, more married, more religious, more likely to own their own home, more likely to be employed in blue-collar occupations and in the public sector, and more likely to be middle and high income earners. Compared to the total Pacific population, the Pacific respondents were older, more female, more educated, more religious, and more likely to be in full-time employment in manual occupations or retired. Research has identified non-voters as more likely to be Pacific peoples, younger people, those on lower incomes, those in working class occupations, and those with lower integration into the community (such as renters, non-married people, non-attendees of church, and so on; Vowles & Aimer, 1993a; Vowles et al., 1995a) . This suggests that, with the exception of church attendance, the Pacific respondents in my sample are more likely to be non-voters compared to the rest of the sample, and are therefore likely to exhibit lower levels of political engagement generally.

³⁰ Although this result was just above the five per cent level of statistical significance ($p=0.051$).

Table 4.2 Numbers (Column Percentages) of Work and Income Factors Among Pacific and Non-Pacific NZES Respondents

Variable	Values	Total	Respondent		Overall <i>p</i> value
			Non-Pacific	Pacific	
Work status	Full-time	7,650 (46.3)	7,540 (46.3)	110 (51.4)	<0.001
	Part-time	2,769 (16.8)	2,750 (16.9)	19 (8.9)	
	Unemployed	563 (3.4)	543 (3.3)	20 (9.3)	
	Retired	3,330 (20.2)	3,310 (20.3)	20 (9.3)	
	Disabled	494 (3.0)	487 (3.0)	7 (3.3)	
	Student	635 (3.8)	616 (3.8)	19 (8.9)	
	Unpaid outside home	178 (1.1)	176 (1.1)	2 (0.9)	
	Unpaid within home	897 (5.4)	880 (5.4)	17 (7.9)	
Occupation	Managers, professionals, technicians	7,257 (47.9)	7,201 (48.1)	56 (26.9)	<0.001
	Clerical, service, sales	3,520 (23.2)	3,467 (23.2)	53 (25.5)	
	Manual	4,389 (28.9)	4,290 (28.7)	99 (47.6)	
Sector of employment	Self-employed	2,939 (17.4)	2,926 (17.5)	13 (5.8)	<0.001
	Private	8,468 (50.1)	8,339 (50.0)	129 (57.1)	
	Public	4,024 (23.8)	3,971 (23.8)	53 (23.5)	
	Mixed/Non-profit	1,070 (6.3)	1,061 (6.4)	9 (4.0)	
	Never worked	196 (1.2)	182 (1.1)	14 (6.2)	
	Don't know	208 (1.2)	200 (1.2)	8 (3.5)	
Employer or supervisor	No	8,771 (55.9)	8,645 (55.8)	126 (62.7)	0.051
	Yes	6,919 (44.1)	6,844 (44.2)	75 (37.3)	
Personal income	Low	7,355 (56.5)	7,258 (56.5)	97 (58.1)	<0.001
	Middle	4,241 (32.6)	4,205 (32.7)	36 (21.6)	
	High	610 (4.7)	609 (4.7)	1 (0.6)	
	Don't know	801 (6.2)	768 (6.0)	33 (19.8)	
Household income	Low	3,452 (29.0)	3,399 (28.9)	53 (32.9)	<0.001
	Middle	4,298 (36.1)	4,256 (36.2)	42 (26.1)	
	High	2,741 (23.0)	2,722 (23.2)	19 (11.8)	
	Don't know	1,414 (11.9)	1,367 (11.6)	47 (29.2)	
Beneficiary in household	No	10,430 (58.5)	10,311 (58.7)	119 (47.8)	0.001
	Yes	7,385 (41.5)	7,255 (41.3)	130 (52.2)	

CHAPTER 5: POLITICAL EFFICACY

Political efficacy is a theoretical construct used in political science to explain political behaviour. Studied extensively since the 1950s, it is one of the most theoretically important and frequently used concepts in political research and is regarded as a key indicator of the health of a democracy (Niemi, Craig, & Mattei, 1991). Empirical analysis has led researchers to conclude the construct is bi-dimensional with the following two components: (1) *internal efficacy*, referring to beliefs about one's own competence to understand, and to participate effectively in, politics, and (2), *external efficacy*, referring to beliefs about the responsiveness of government and its institutions to citizen's demands (Niemi et al., 1991). Together they tap a perception of powerfulness (or powerlessness) in the political realm (Morrell, 2003). Political efficacy has been described by the Electoral Commission (2008b, p. 6) as "a state of mind, a habit and a self-fulfilling prophecy", high levels of which encourage involvement in politics, while low levels discourage involvement (Cohen et al., 2001; Verba et al., 1995; Vowles et al., 1995a). The Electoral Commission (2008b) also states that people with high levels of internal and external efficacy have three inter-related beliefs:

- I understand politics
- I am interested in politics
- I can be heard and make an impact on political decisions

This chapter analyses the responses to questions in my merged dataset that tap a sense of political efficacy, beginning with internal efficacy and followed by external efficacy. Many of these questions come from widely-used, psychometrically robust scales with demonstrated validity and reliability (Morrell, 2003).

5.1 Internal political efficacy

5.1.1 Bivariate analysis

As previously described, one aspect of internal efficacy is the possession of knowledge and understanding about politics. The NZES contained the following question to assess understanding of MMP and in particular the role that each of the two votes plays: “New Zealanders have two votes, one for a party, and one for a candidate in their electorate. From what you know and have heard, which is the most important in deciding which party will get the largest number of MPs in Parliament?”³¹ Results from this question are displayed in Table 5.1a.

Table 5.1a Understanding of MMP by Pacific Ethnic Status^a

		Respondent					
		Non-Pacific		Pacific		Total	
		N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Which vote most important	Party vote	9429	(55.0)	79	(32.1)	9508	(54.7)
	Both equally important	5161	(30.1)	105	(42.7)	5266	(30.3)
	Electorate vote	1582	(9.2)	32	(13.0)	1614	(9.3)
	Don't know	965	(5.6)	30	(12.2)	995	(5.7)
	Total	17137	(100.0)	246	(100.0)	17383	(100.0)

a. Pearson chi-square=57.89, df=3, $p<0.001$; Goodman and Kruskal's gamma=0.363.

The results show that a majority of respondents (54.7 per cent) understood the primacy of the party vote in determining the number of MPs a party receives in Parliament. However this was significantly lower amongst Pacific respondents (32.1 per cent), who were more likely to think both votes were equally important (42.7 per cent),³² or the electorate vote was more important (13.0 per cent), or did not know the answer (12.2 per cent).

³¹ At the 1996, 1999, and 2002 waves the question was: “With MMP New Zealanders have two votes, one for a party, and one for a candidate in their electorate. Which do you think is the most important in deciding which party will get the largest number of seats in Parliament?”

³² Seeing the two votes as equally important could be a sophisticated response, and under some electoral outcomes may be a valid answer (Electoral Commission, 2006b; Vowles et al., 1998);

The second aspect of internal efficacy is the extent to which one is interested in political affairs. The NZES assessed this with the question “Generally speaking, how much interest do you usually have in what’s going on in politics?” Respondents rated their level of interest on a four-point Likert scale: “Very interested”, “Fairly interested”, “Slightly interested”, and “Not at all interested”. Given the very small proportion of respondents who answered “Not at all interested”, this response category was combined with “Slightly interested” and the resulting three-point Likert scale was used for this variable throughout this thesis. The results from this question are shown in Table 5.1b.

Table 5.1b Interest in Politics by Pacific Ethnic Status^a

		Respondent					
		Non-Pacific		Pacific		Total	
		N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Interest in politics	Slightly/not at all interested	4941	(28.4)	95	(38.5)	5036	(28.5)
	Fairly interested	8723	(50.1)	98	(39.7)	8821	(50.0)
	Very interested	3743	(21.5)	54	(21.9)	3797	(21.5)
	Total	17407	(100.0)	247	(100.0)	17654	(100.0)

a. Pearson chi-square=13.99, df=2, $p=0.001$; Goodman and Kruskal’s gamma=-0.119.

Exactly half of respondents stated they were fairly interested in politics, with just over one-in-five stating they were very interested and the remaining 29 per cent stating they were slightly or not at all interested. Pacific respondents were just as likely to say they were very interested, but were less likely to say they were fairly interested and more likely to say they were slightly or not at all interested.

Internal efficacy is also related to whether people feel they have a good understanding of politics or whether they find politics difficult to understand. In the NZES this has been measured with self-rated responses to the statement “Sometimes politics seems so complicated people like me can’t understand what goes

however, in general, the party vote is more important in deciding a party’s share of seats in Parliament.

on.”³³ The original responses were on the following five-point scale: “*Strongly agree*”, “*Agree*”, “*Neither*”, “*Disagree*”, “*Strongly disagree*”. However, in the interests of clarity they have been collapsed down to ‘agree’ (the first two response options), ‘neutral’ (neither), and ‘disagree’ (the last two options). The responses are detailed in Table 5.1c.

Table 5.1c Is Politics Too Complicated by Pacific Ethnic Status^a

		Respondent					
		Non-Pacific		Pacific		Total	
		N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Politics too complicated	Agree	6505	(48.3)	111	(67.7)	6616	(48.6)
	Neutral	2108	(15.7)	22	(13.4)	2130	(15.6)
	Disagree	4841	(36.0)	31	(18.9)	4872	(35.8)
	Total	13454	(100.0)	164	(100.0)	13618	(100.0)

a. Pearson chi-square=26.2, df=2, $p < 0.001$; Goodman and Kruskal’s gamma=-0.363.

Just under half (48.6 per cent) of all respondents agreed that politics was sometimes too complicated to understand, with 15.6 per cent neutral and 35.8 per cent disagreeing with the statement. Compared to the rest of the sample, Pacific respondents were significantly more likely to agree with the statement (67.7 per cent) and less likely to disagree (18.9 per cent).

5.1.2 Multivariate analysis

A binary logistic regression analysis was performed to predict understanding of MMP (correct identification of the most important vote). Responses to the understanding of MMP question were dichotomised into those who answered with “*Party vote*” (‘correct answer’, coded as 1) and all other responses including “*Don’t know*” (‘incorrect answer’, coded as 0). The model included nine psychological, behavioural, and socio-demographic predictors: interest in politics, individual turnout, opinion on whether it is a citizen’s duty to vote,³⁴ whether the campaign was followed in the media (television, newspapers, or

³³ Not asked at the 2011 wave.

³⁴ Exactly as with the ‘Is politics too complicated’ question (Table 5.1c), the original responses to this statement were collapsed down from a five-point to a three-point Likert scale of agreement.

radio), incidence (but not direction) of partisanship,³⁵ gender, age, highest educational qualification, and Pacific ethnic status. After deletion of missing values on a casewise basis, 13,680 cases were included in the analysis. A test of the full model against a constant-only model was statistically significant, χ^2 (17, $N=13,680$) = 829.97, $p<0.001$, indicating that the predictors as a set reliably distinguish between those who answered the MMP understanding question correctly and those who answered it incorrectly. However, the Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test gave χ^2 (8, $N=13,680$) = 21.13, $p=0.007$, indicating the model is a poor fit. Further, the model as a whole explained only 7.9 per cent of the variation in understanding of MMP (Nagelkerke R^2) and predictive success was 60.7 per cent of cases.

Table 5.1d shows regression coefficients (B), Wald statistics, odds ratios (OR), and their 95 per cent confidence intervals (CI) with lower limits (LL) and upper limits (UL), for each of the nine predictors. The Wald criterion demonstrates that interest in politics, turnout, opinion on whether it is a citizen's duty to vote, following the campaign in the media, gender, education, and Pacific ethnic status all made a statistically significant contribution to the prediction of understanding of MMP, after adjusting for confounding factors. Partisanship and age were not statistically significant.

Comparing with those slightly or not at all interested in politics, those who were fairly interested in politics had an OR of 1.25, 95% CI [1.14, 1.36], while those very interested in politics had an OR of 1.52, 95% CI [1.34, 1.71]. Those who had voted had 2.27 times the odds of showing an understanding of MMP, 95% CI [1.90, 2.72], compared to those who had not voted. Those who were neutral on whether it is a citizen's duty to vote had an OR of 0.75, 95% CI [0.65, 0.86] compared to those who agreed. Curiously, those who disagreed were not significantly different from those who agreed in terms of understanding of MMP. Respondents who followed the campaign in the media

³⁵ Incidence of partisanship refers to whether a respondent was a partisan (that is, they identified with any party) or was an independent (they did not identify with any party). Direction of partisanship refers to which particular party a respondent identified with.

Table 5.1d Binary Logistic Regression Predicting Understanding of MMP as a Function of Psychological, Behavioural, and Socio-Demographic Variables^{a,b}

Variable	Category	B	S.E.	Wald χ^2	p	OR	95% CI	
							LL	UL
Interest in politics	Slightly/not at all interested			52.45	<0.001	1.00		
	Fairly interested	0.22	0.05	22.52	<0.001	1.25	1.14	1.36
	Very interested	0.42	0.06	52.30	<0.001	1.52	1.34	1.71
Turnout	Did not vote					1.00		
	Voted	0.82	0.09	79.89	<0.001	2.27	1.90	2.72
Citizen's duty to vote	Agree			17.16	<0.001	1.00		
	Neutral	-0.29	0.07	16.58	<0.001	0.75	0.65	0.86
	Disagree	-0.12	0.09	1.68	0.195	0.89	0.75	1.06
Followed campaign in media	No					1.00		
	Yes	0.18	0.05	13.11	<0.001	1.20	1.09	1.33
Partisanship	Independent					1.00		
	Partisan	0.07	0.04	3.34	0.068	1.07	1.00	1.15
Gender	Female					1.00		
	Male	0.20	0.04	30.88	<0.001	1.22	1.14	1.31
Age	18-24			4.65	0.461	1.00		
	25-34	0.06	0.08	0.64	0.423	1.07	0.91	1.24
	35-44	0.01	0.08	0.02	0.890	1.01	0.87	1.17
	45-54	-0.04	0.08	0.31	0.579	0.96	0.82	1.11
	55-64	-0.06	0.08	0.59	0.442	0.94	0.80	1.10
	65+	-0.03	0.08	0.15	0.700	0.97	0.83	1.14
Education	Primary			346.47	<0.001	1.00		
	Secondary	0.37	0.08	24.02	<0.001	1.45	1.25	1.68
	Tertiary	0.68	0.08	68.84	<0.001	1.96	1.67	2.30
	University degree	1.15	0.08	196.35	<0.001	3.16	2.69	3.71
Pacific ethnic status	Non-Pacific					1.00		
	Pacific	-0.91	0.17	28.95	<0.001	0.40	0.29	0.56

a. The method was forced entry.

b. Nagelkerke $R^2=0.079$; Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test gave $\chi^2 (8, N=13,680) = 21.13, p=0.007$.

had 1.20 times the odds, 95% CI [1.09, 1.33], compared to those who had not. Males had an OR of 1.22, 95% CI [1.14, 1.31], compared to females. Education displayed a positive relationship with understanding of MMP; the odds of

correctly identifying the most important vote increased as educational qualification increased, peaking at an OR of 3.16, 95% CI [2.69, 3.71] for those with a university degree compared to those with only a primary education. Finally, Pacific respondents had 0.40 times the odds of correctly identifying the most important vote, 95% CI [0.29, 0.56], compared to all other respondents.

5.2 External political efficacy

5.2.1 Bivariate analysis

The NZES measured external efficacy with self-rated responses to the following statements: “*People like me don’t have any say about what the government does*” and “*I don’t think politicians and public servants care much about what people like me think*”. As with the internal efficacy question in Table 5.1c, responses to these two external efficacy statements have been condensed from a five-point to a three-point Likert scale of agreement. The responses are shown in Tables 5.2a and 5.2b.

Table 5.2a People Have No Say by Pacific Ethnic Status^a

		Respondent					
		Non-Pacific		Pacific		Total	
		N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
People like me have no say	Agree	7702	(53.0)	96	(53.3)	7798	(53.0)
	Neutral	2293	(15.8)	28	(15.6)	2321	(15.8)
	Disagree	4549	(31.3)	56	(31.1)	4605	(31.3)
	Total	14544	(100.0)	180	(100.0)	14724	(100.0)

a. Pearson chi-square=0.01, df=2, $p=0.994$; Goodman and Kruskal’s gamma=-0.006.

Table 5.2b Do Political Elites Care by Pacific Ethnic Status^a

		Respondent					
		Non-Pacific		Pacific		Total	
		N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Politicians and public servants don't care	Agree	8121	(52.2)	126	(60.3)	8247	(52.3)
	Neutral	3252	(20.9)	51	(24.4)	3303	(21.0)
	Disagree	4177	(26.9)	32	(15.3)	4209	(26.7)
	Total	15550	(100.0)	209	(100.0)	15759	(100.0)

a. Pearson chi-square=14.06, df=2, $p=0.001$; Goodman and Kruskal's gamma=-0.192.

Over half of respondents agreed with the two statements, showing that a majority of the voting public believe people like themselves have little say in government decision-making and that their political wishes are not given consideration by political élites. The views of Pacific respondents did not differ significantly from other respondents on the former statement, however they were significantly more likely to agree (60.3 per cent) that political élites do not care about what people like themselves think, compared to non-Pacific respondents (52.2 per cent).

5.2.2 Multivariate analysis

A binary logistic regression was conducted to predict external efficacy, as measured by responses to the statement "*I don't think politicians and public servants care much about what people like me think*". To satisfy the requirement for a binary DV, responses to this question were dichotomised into 'agree' (coded as 1) and 'neutral or disagree' (coded as 0). For the purpose of this particular regression analysis, those who agreed with the statement are referred to as having relatively 'low external efficacy' and those who were neutral or disagreed as having relatively 'high external efficacy'. This DV was regressed against 10 psychological and socio-demographic predictors: understanding of MMP (as measured in Section 5.1), opinion on the statement "*The New Zealand government is largely run by a few big interests*",³⁶ incidence of partisanship,

³⁶ As with other variables in this chapter, responses to this statement were collapsed down from a five-point to a three-point Likert scale of agreement.

gender, age, education, whether the respondent was an employer or supervisor, occupation, and Pacific ethnic status. After deletion of missing data on a casewise basis, 10,716 cases were included in the analysis. A test of the full model against a constant-only model was statistically significant, χ^2 (17, $N=10,716$) = 2,331.82, $p<0.001$, indicating that the predictors as a set reliably distinguish between those with low external efficacy and those with high external efficacy. The model as a whole explained 26.1 per cent of the variation in external efficacy (Nagelkerke R^2) and correctly classified 70.4 per cent of cases. The results are presented in Table 5.2c.

The Wald statistic shows that understanding of MMP, opinion on whether the government is run by a few big interests, partisanship, gender, age, education, and occupation were all significantly associated with external efficacy, after adjusting for confounding factors. Whether a respondent was an employer or supervisor, and whether they were a Pacific or non-Pacific respondent, was not significantly associated with external efficacy after controlling for other factors.

Respondents who demonstrated they understood MMP by correctly identifying the most important vote were significantly less likely to have low external efficacy (that is, less likely to agree that political élites do not care what people think), OR = 0.90, 95% CI [0.83, 0.99]. Those who believed the government is largely run by a few big interests had almost seven times the odds of having low external efficacy (OR = 6.95, 95% CI [6.25, 7.73]) compared to those who did not believe this. Partisans had an OR of 0.85, 95% CI [0.79, 0.93] compared to independents and males had an OR of 1.10, 95% CI [1.00, 1.20] compared to females. With the exception of 25 to 34 year-olds who were not significantly different from those aged 18 to 24 years, the odds of having low external efficacy increased as age increased. Compared to 18 to 24 year-olds, those aged 65 and over had an OR of 2.11, 95% CI [1.73, 2.58]. The odds of having low external efficacy decreased with education; respondents with a university degree had an OR of 0.44, 95% CI [0.36, 0.55] compared to those with a primary education only. Manual workers and those with clerical, service, or

sales jobs were significantly more likely to have low external efficacy compared to managers, professionals, and technicians.

Table 5.2c Binary Logistic Regression Predicting External Efficacy as a Function of Psychological and Socio-Demographic Variables^{a,b}

Variable	Category	B	S.E.	Wald χ^2	p	OR	95% CI	
							LL	UL
Understanding of MMP	Incorrect answer					1.00		
	Correct answer	-0.10	0.04	5.16	0.023	0.90	0.83	0.99
Government run by a few big interests	Disagree			1499.70	<0.001	1.00		
	Neutral	0.57	0.06	81.78	<0.001	1.77	1.56	2.00
	Agree	1.94	0.05	1279.93	<0.001	6.95	6.25	7.73
Partisanship	Independent					1.00		
	Partisan	-0.16	0.04	13.65	<0.001	0.85	0.78	0.93
Gender	Female					1.00		
	Male	0.10	0.05	4.21	0.040	1.10	1.00	1.20
Age	18-24			81.17	<0.001	1.00		
	25-34	0.19	0.10	3.79	0.052	1.21	1.00	1.47
	35-44	0.42	0.10	19.12	<0.001	1.52	1.26	1.84
	45-54	0.51	0.10	27.88	<0.001	1.66	1.38	2.01
	55-64	0.59	0.10	34.23	<0.001	1.80	1.48	2.18
	65+	0.75	0.10	53.78	<0.001	2.11	1.73	2.58
Education	Primary			112.50	<0.001	1.00		
	Secondary	-0.23	0.10	4.82	0.028	0.80	0.65	0.98
	Tertiary	-0.42	0.11	14.07	<0.001	0.66	0.53	0.82
	University degree	-0.81	0.11	51.92	<0.001	0.44	0.36	0.55
Employer or supervisor	No					1.00		
	Yes	-0.08	0.05	3.41	0.065	0.92	0.84	1.01
Occupation	Managers, professionals			40.98	<0.001	1.00		
	Clerical, service, sales	0.25	0.06	18.45	<0.001	1.28	1.14	1.43
	Manual	0.34	0.06	36.22	<0.001	1.41	1.26	1.58
Pacific ethnic status	Non-Pacific					1.00		
	Pacific	0.10	0.21	0.20	0.654	1.10	0.72	1.67

a. The method was forced entry.

b. Nagelkerke $R^2=0.261$; Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test gave $\chi^2 (8, N=10,716) = 4.36, p=0.824$.

The significant difference found in the bivariate analysis that cross-tabulated opinion on whether political élites care about what people think by Pacific ethnic status (Table 5.2b) disappeared after adjusting for confounding factors in multivariate analysis. This demonstrates that the differences in external efficacy observed between Pacific and non-Pacific respondents is mainly explained by differences in opinions on whether or not the government is run by a few big interests.

5.3 Conclusion

To summarise this chapter, Pacific respondents had lower internal efficacy compared to all other respondents, evidenced by lower understanding of MMP (even after controlling for other relevant variables), lower overall interest in politics, and higher agreement that politics is complicated. Pacific respondents were more likely to think political élites do not care what people like themselves think, suggesting their levels of external efficacy are relatively low, primarily on account of a more prevalent belief that government is run by a few big interests and not by and for the people.

CHAPTER 6: POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Analysis of political participation in New Zealand has drawn a distinction between *electoral* participation and *non-electoral* participation (Vowles et al., 1995a). The former refers to political activities primarily carried out during an election campaign aimed at directly influencing electoral outcomes. Electoral participation can then be further subdivided into *active* forms of electoral participation and *passive* forms of electoral participation. Active electoral participation most notably includes voting, but also campaign activities such as attending political meetings or rallies and contributing money to a party or candidate. Passive electoral participation refers to more inert, low-cost forms of involvement such as discussing politics with others and following the election campaign in the media.³⁷ Non-electoral participation refers to activities mostly conducted outside of an election campaign that are not necessarily directly related to electoral politics but nevertheless denote forms of purposeful participation in public debate of socio-political issues and civic affairs.³⁸ Non-electoral participation also includes activities involved with membership of “voluntary associations that do not have specific political objectives, or, at least, for which political objectives are secondary” (Vowles, 2004a, p. 1). Examples include signing a petition, writing to a newspaper, and participating in a protest, march or demonstration. Active electoral participation, passive electoral participation, and non-electoral participation are all distinguishable from purely psychological dispositions such as interest in politics, political efficacy, and political attitudes, which have been collectively summed up as “civic-mindedness” (Vowles et al., 1995a, p. 137) or, as in this thesis, “psychological engagement” (Verba et al., 1995, p. 344).

³⁷ Verba et al. (1995) consider these forms of passive electoral participation to be ‘psychological engagement’, as defined in Chapter One. However, I have followed Vowles et al. (1995a) in treating them as forms of political participation (albeit passive forms) rather than as merely psychological orientations.

³⁸ Norris (2002, p. 195) refers to these forms of non-electoral participation as “protest activism” and documents their dramatic rise in Western democracies since the mid-1970s (the ‘democratic phoenix’), contrasting it with the fall in conventional forms of political participation such as voting, and thereby challenging claims of pervasive political disengagement.

6.1 Active electoral participation

6.1.1 Bivariate analysis

The most common form of active electoral participation is voting. The NZES asked respondents whether they voted in the most recent election.³⁹ The results for turnout are displayed in Table 6.1a.

Table 6.1a Turnout by Pacific Ethnic Status^a

		Respondent					
		Non-Pacific		Pacific		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Turnout	Did not vote	900	(5.3)	18	(7.8)	918	(5.4)
	Voted	15979	(94.7)	214	(92.2)	16193	(94.6)
	Total	16879	(100.0)	232	(100.0)	17111	(100.0)

a. Pearson chi-square=2.65, df=1, $p=0.103$; Goodman and Kruskal's gamma=-0.198.

The figures show that Pacific peoples are more likely to be non-voters (7.8 per cent) compared to all other respondents (5.3 per cent); however the difference did not reach statistical significance.

Contributing money to an election campaign is also considered an active form of electoral participation, and this was assessed in the NZES with the question “During the election campaign, did you contribute money to a political party or candidate?” At the 1996 and 1999 waves, the original response options were “Yes” or “No”. At the 2002, 2005, 2008, and 2011 waves, the original response options were “Yes, frequently”, “Yes, occasionally”, “Yes, rarely”, and “No”. The latter four waves had their responses collapsed down to the ‘yes/no’ dichotomy of the earlier waves. Table 6.1b presents these responses.

³⁹ Individual turnout has been determined from the original, non-validated ‘party vote’ question in the NZES (see Section 7.2 for the wording of this question).

Table 6.1b Contributed Money to Party or Candidate by Pacific Ethnic Status^a

		Respondent					
		Non-Pacific		Pacific		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Contribute money to a political party or candidate	No	14772	(93.7)	191	(95.5)	14963	(93.7)
	Yes	998	(6.3)	9	(4.5)	1007	(6.3)
	Total	15770	(100.0)	200	(100.0)	15970	(100.0)

a. Pearson chi-square=1.12, df=1, $p=0.290$; Goodman and Kruskal's gamma=-0.178.

Only a small proportion (6.3 per cent) of all respondents contributed money to a party or candidate during the election campaign, with Pacific respondents less likely to contribute (4.5 per cent), but not significantly so ($p=0.290$). Active electoral participation was also assessed with the question “*During the election campaign, did you go to any political meetings or rallies?*” As with the previous question, the responses at the latter four waves were collapsed down to the ‘yes/no’ dichotomy used in 1996 and 1999. These responses are shown in Table 6.1c. Bucking the general trend, Pacific respondents were significantly *more* likely to participate in this electoral activity compared to other respondents.

Table 6.1c Attended Meetings or Rallies by Pacific Ethnic Status^a

		Respondent					
		Non-Pacific		Pacific		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Attend any political meetings or rallies	No	13798	(85.9)	179	(79.9)	13977	(85.8)
	Yes	2266	(14.1)	45	(20.1)	2311	(14.2)
	Total	16064	(100.0)	224	(100.0)	16288	(100.0)

a. Pearson chi-square=6.50, df=1, $p=0.011$; Goodman and Kruskal's gamma=0.210.

6.1.2 Multivariate analysis

A binary logistic regression was performed to predict individual turnout from 10 predictors: interest in politics, opinion about whether it is a citizen's duty to vote, incidence of partisanship, gender, age, education, Pacific ethnic status, whether someone in the household receives a government benefit, marital status, and housing tenure. The DV was coded as 1 for ‘voted’ and 0 for ‘did not vote’. After exclusion of missing values on a casewise basis, 12,629 cases were

included in the analysis. A test of the full model against a constant-only model was statistically significant, $\chi^2 (19, N=12,629) = 1,072.88, p<0.001$, indicating that the predictors as a set reliably differentiate between voters and non-voters. However, the model as a whole explained only 26.2 per cent of the variation in turnout (Nagelkerke R^2) and correctly classified 95.5 per cent of cases. Table 6.1d presented the results of this logistic regression.

The Wald criterion shows that interest in politics, opinion about whether it is a citizen's duty to vote, partisanship, age, education, and housing tenure all made a statistically significant contribution to prediction of turnout, net of the effects of all other variables in the model. Gender, Pacific ethnic status, whether someone in the household receives a benefit, and marital status were not statistically significant.

Respondents who stated they were very interested in politics were significantly more likely to vote, OR = 2.57, 95% CI [1.84, 3.58], compared to those slightly or not at all interested. Those who were neutral about whether it is a citizen's duty to vote had 12 times the odds of voting (OR = 12.06, 95% CI [9.47, 15.36]) compared to those who disagreed with the statement. Curiously, these odds were much higher than for those who agreed with the statement (OR = 1.84, 95% CI [1.41, 2.41]) compared to those who disagreed. Those who declared a partisan attachment had an OR of 2.19, 95% CI [1.80, 2.67] compared to independents. Respondents aged 45 years and older were significantly more likely to vote compared to those aged 18 to 24 years; those aged between 25 and 44 years did not differ significantly from those aged 18 to 24 years in their turnout rates. Those with a tertiary education or university degree were significantly more likely to vote compared to those with a primary education only, while those who rent or board were significantly less likely to vote compared to freehold home owners

Table 6.1d Binary Logistic Regression Predicting Turnout as a Function of Psychological and Socio-Demographic Variables^{a,b}

Variable	Category	B	S.E.	Wald χ^2	p	OR	95% CI	
							LL	UL
Interest in politics	Slightly/not at all interested			50.77	<0.001	1.00		
	Fairly interested	0.61	0.10	36.08	<0.001	1.85	1.51	2.25
	Very interested	0.94	0.17	30.70	<0.001	2.57	1.84	3.58
Citizen's duty to vote	Disagree			510.50	<0.001	1.00		
	Neutral	2.49	0.12	406.78	<0.001	12.06	9.47	15.36
	Agree	0.61	0.14	19.99	<0.001	1.84	1.41	2.41
Partisanship	Independent					1.00		
	Partisan	0.78	0.10	61.54	<0.001	2.19	1.80	2.67
Gender	Female					1.00		
	Male	0.04	0.10	0.15	0.699	1.04	0.86	1.25
Age	18-24			14.75	0.011	1.00		
	25-34	0.00	0.17	0.00	1.000	1.00	0.72	1.40
	35-44	0.23	0.18	1.60	0.206	1.26	0.88	1.79
	45-54	0.48	0.20	5.79	0.016	1.61	1.09	2.38
	55-64	0.58	0.23	6.24	0.013	1.78	1.13	2.79
	65+	0.52	0.25	4.43	0.035	1.68	1.04	2.72
Education	Primary			27.30	<0.001	1.00		
	Secondary	0.22	0.18	1.38	0.239	1.24	0.87	1.78
	Tertiary	0.45	0.20	4.98	0.026	1.57	1.06	2.34
	University degree	0.82	0.21	15.76	<0.001	2.28	1.52	3.43
Pacific ethnic status	Non-Pacific					1.00		
	Pacific	-0.61	0.32	3.57	0.059	0.55	0.29	1.02
Household receives benefit	No					1.00		
	Yes	-0.98	0.10	0.91	0.340	0.91	0.74	1.12
Marital status	Not married					1.00		
	Married	0.15	0.11	2.16	0.142	1.12	0.95	1.43
Housing tenure	Own freehold			16.23	<0.001	1.00		
	Own mortgaged	-0.01	0.14	0.01	0.939	0.99	0.75	1.30
	Rent or board	-0.48	0.15	9.74	0.002	0.62	0.46	0.84

a. The method was forced entry.

b. Nagelkerke $R^2=0.262$; Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test gave $\chi^2 (8, N=12,629) = 3.93, p=0.863$.

A similar logistic regression was run to predict attendance at political meetings or rallies from 10 psychological and socio-demographic variables: understanding of MMP, interest in politics, external efficacy (as measured by level of agreement with the statement “*I don’t think politicians and public servants care much about what people like me think*”), opinion on whether it is a citizen’s duty to vote, direction of partisanship, gender, age, education, occupation, and Pacific ethnic status. The analysis included 12,415 respondents after casewise deletion of missing values. A test of the full model against a constant-only model was statistically significant, $\chi^2 (22, N=12,415) = 482.66, p<0.001$, demonstrating that the independent variables as a group reliably predict attendance at political meetings or rallies. However, the Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test gave $\chi^2 (8, N=12,415) = 22.31, p=0.004$, indicating the model is a poor fit. The model as a whole explained a mere 6.6 per cent of the variation in attendance at political meetings (Nagelkerke R^2) but correctly classified 84.7 per cent of cases. The results are presented in Table 6.1e.

The significant predictors were understanding of MMP, interest in politics, external efficacy, opinion on whether it is a citizen’s duty to vote, partisanship, age, education, and occupation. Gender and Pacific ethnic status were not significantly associated with attendance at political meetings, after controlling for confounders.

Respondents who correctly identified the most important vote were significantly less likely to have attended political meetings or rallies, OR = 0.89, 95% CI [0.80, 0.99]. Those who were very interested in politics had an OR of 3.22, 95% CI [2.75, 3.78] compared to those who were slightly or not at all interested. Those who were neutral about whether it is a citizen’s duty to vote were less likely to attend political meetings than those who disagreed. Labour and minor party identifiers were more likely to attend political meetings compared to independents, while all those aged over 25 years were significantly less likely to do so compared to those aged 18 to 24 years. Respondents with a university degree were more likely to attend meetings than those with a

primary education only, as were manual workers compared to managers, professionals, and technicians.

The significant bivariate difference in attendance at political meetings between Pacific and non-Pacific respondents (Table 6.1c) was reduced to insignificance in the logistic regression, mainly due to the confounding effects of external efficacy, partisanship, and age. In other words, Pacific peoples were more likely to attend political meetings and rallies compared to non-Pacific peoples because they had lower external efficacy, were more likely to be Labour identifiers, were more likely to be manual workers, and were a younger population.

Table 6.1e Binary Logistic Regression Predicting Attendance at Political Meetings as a Function of Psychological and Socio-Demographic Variables^{a,b}

Variable	Category	B	S.E.	Wald χ^2	p	OR	95% CI	
							LL	UL
Understanding of MMP	Incorrect answer					1.00		
	Correct answer	-0.12	0.05	4.72	0.030	0.89	0.80	0.99
Interest in politics	Slightly/not at all interested			229.42	<0.001	1.00		
	Fairly interested	0.48	0.07	44.01	<0.001	1.62	1.40	1.86
	Very interested	1.17	0.08	205.93	<0.001	3.22	2.75	3.78
Political élites don't care what people think	Disagree			99.55	<0.001	1.00		
	Neutral	0.66	0.08	74.49	<0.001	1.94	1.67	2.25
	Agree	0.63	0.07	86.08	<0.001	1.87	1.64	2.14
Citizen's duty to vote	Disagree			7.90	0.019	1.00		
	Neutral	-0.42	0.16	7.33	0.007	0.66	0.48	0.89
	Agree	-0.16	0.12	1.82	0.178	0.85	0.68	1.08
Partisanship	None			48.68	<0.001	1.00		
	Labour	0.21	0.07	10.37	0.001	1.24	1.09	1.41
	National	-0.09	0.07	1.56	0.212	0.91	0.79	1.05
	Other party	0.44	0.08	32.46	<0.001	1.55	1.33	1.81
Gender	Female					1.00		
	Male	-0.01	0.05	0.04	0.848	0.99	0.89	1.10
Age	18-24			16.25	0.006	1.00		
	25-34	-0.35	0.11	9.94	0.002	0.70	0.57	0.88
	35-44	-0.37	0.11	12.06	0.001	0.69	0.56	0.85
	45-54	-0.32	0.11	9.16	0.002	0.72	0.59	0.89
	55-64	-0.40	0.11	12.69	<0.001	0.67	0.54	0.83
	65+	-0.42	0.12	13.43	<0.001	0.65	0.52	0.82
Education	Primary			24.89	<0.001	1.00		
	Secondary	-0.05	0.12	0.22	0.636	0.95	0.76	1.19
	Tertiary	0.11	0.12	0.75	0.385	1.11	0.87	1.42
	University degree	0.29	0.13	5.24	0.022	1.34	1.04	1.71
Occupation	Manual			7.90	0.019	1.00		
	Clerical, service, sales	-0.09	0.07	1.93	0.164	0.91	0.80	1.04
	Managers, professionals	-0.22	0.08	7.89	0.005	0.81	0.69	0.94
Pacific ethnic status	Non-Pacific					1.00		
	Pacific	0.18	0.21	0.72	0.395	1.20	0.79	1.83

a. The method was forced entry.

b. Nagelkerke $R^2=0.066$; Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test gave $\chi^2 (8, N=12,415) = 22.31, p=0.004$.

6.2 Passive electoral participation

6.2.1 Bivariate analysis

The NZES inquired into various forms of passive electoral participation with the following questions: *"During the election campaign, did you discuss politics with others?"*, *"During the election campaign, did you talk to other people to persuade them to vote for a particular party or candidate?"*,⁴⁰ and *"During the election campaign, how often did you follow political news, discussions, and advertising on television, newspapers, and radio?"*⁴¹ The responses to these questions are shown in Tables 6.2a, 6.2b, and 6.2c, respectively. As with the variables in Section 6.1.1, the former two questions had the following response options at four of the waves: *"Yes, frequently"*, *"Yes, occasionally"*, *"Yes, rarely"*, *"No"*. These responses were recoded to the 'yes/no' binary response used in 1996 and 1999. The latter question regarding following of the campaign was answered on a four-point scale that was used consistently across all waves: *"Often"*, *"Sometimes"*, *"Rarely"*, *"Not at all"*. However, Table 6.2c presents the percentage of respondents who answered either *"Often"* or *"Sometimes"* to each form of media. The forms of media have also been collapsed: the 'Television' category includes responses to the original NZES items of *"TV One"* and *"TV3"* (all waves), plus *"Maori TV"*, *"TVNZ 7"*, and *"Sky or Prime"* (2008 and 2011 waves); the 'Radio' category includes responses to *"National Radio"*, *"Talkback Radio"*, and *"Talkback Radio (ZB or Live)"*; the 'Newspapers' category required no recoding as the label *"Newspapers"* was the only response, used consistently across all waves.

⁴⁰ At the 1996 and 1999 waves, the question was worded *"During the election campaign, did you talk to any people about how they should vote?"* and at the 2011 wave was worded *"During the 2011 election and referendum campaign, did you talk to anyone to persuade them how to vote?"*

⁴¹ At the 1996 wave, the question was worded *"During the election campaign, how often did you follow the election news and political advertising on the television, newspapers and the radio, or didn't you follow it at all?"*

Table 6.2a Discussed Politics by Pacific Ethnic Status^a

		Respondent					
		Non-Pacific		Pacific		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Discuss politics with others	No	1344	(8.2)	52	(22.2)	1396	(8.4)
	Yes	15135	(91.8)	182	(77.8)	15317	(91.6)
	Total	16479	(100.0)	234	(100.0)	16713	(100.0)

a. Pearson chi-square=59.64, df=1, $p<0.001$; Goodman and Kruskal's gamma=-0.526.

Table 6.2b Persuaded Others How to Vote by Pacific Ethnic Status^a

		Respondent					
		Non-Pacific		Pacific		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Talked to persuade others how to vote	No	10631	(66.1)	123	(54.9)	10754	(65.9)
	Yes	5464	(33.9)	101	(45.1)	5565	(34.1)
	Total	16095	(100.0)	224	(100.0)	16319	(100.0)

a. Pearson chi-square=12.20, df=1, $p<0.001$; Goodman and Kruskal's gamma=0.230.

Table 6.2c Followed Campaign in Media by Pacific Ethnic Status^a

	Respondent					Pearson chi-square			
	Non-Pacific		Pacific		Total N	χ^2	df	p	G ^b
	N	%	N	%	Total N				
Followed campaign on									
Television	8828	53.7	154	69.7	16670	22.51	1	<0.001	0.330
Newspapers	10470	69.3	127	66.5	15291	0.72	1	0.397	-0.065
Radio	4406	31.4	55	32.0	14206	0.03	1	0.870	0.013

a. Percentages are the proportion of respondents who answered 'Often' or 'Sometimes'.

b. Goodman and Kruskal's gamma.

These figures show that over 90 per cent of respondents discussed politics with others during the campaign, while just over one-third tried to persuade others in their voting decision. Pacific respondents were significantly less likely (77.8 per cent) to have discussed politics with others, the size of gamma (0.526) suggesting a strong association here. However, perhaps puzzlingly, they were significantly more likely (45.1 per cent) to have attempted to persuade others how to vote. Majorities of all respondents followed the campaign on television or in the newspapers at least sometimes, but fewer followed it on radio. Pacific respondents were significantly more likely to watch television coverage, but

their attention to the campaign in newspapers and on radio was not significantly different from other respondents.

6.2.2 Multivariate analysis

Two separate binary logistic regressions were conducted to predict passive electoral participation. The first used a DV that combined the responses to the questions “*During the election campaign, did you discuss politics with others?*” and “*During the election campaign, did you talk to other people to persuade them to vote for a particular party or candidate?*” Responses to these two questions were combined because the behaviours they were measuring are very similar; attempting to persuade other people how to vote is clearly an instance of political discussion. The binary “*Yes/No*” response was retained such that a “*Yes*” to *either* question was coded as ‘Yes’ (with a value of 1) on the new combined variable, and a “*No*” on both questions coded as ‘No’ (with a value of 0). Nine predictors were included in the model: understanding of MMP, interest in politics, whether the respondent had followed the campaign in the media, incidence of partisanship, gender, age, education, occupation, and Pacific ethnic status. A total of 12,654 cases were included in the analysis after casewise deletion of missing data. A test of the full model against a constant-only model was statistically significant, $\chi^2 (17, N=12,654) = 1,034.08, p < 0.001$, indicating that the predictors as a set reliably distinguish between those who engaged in political discussion or persuasion and those who did not. The model explained 20.8 per cent of the variation in the DV (Nagelkerke R^2) and correctly classified 93.8 per cent of cases. The results are presented in Table 6.2d.

The Wald statistic indicates that all predictors contributed significantly to the prediction of the DV except for gender. Respondents who correctly identified the most important vote were more likely to engage in political discussion or persuasion compared to those who answered incorrectly. Compared to those with slight or no interest in politics, those very interested (OR = 5.84, 95% CI [4.35, 7.84]) and fairly interested (OR = 3.47, 95% CI [2.89, 4.17]) were more likely to engage in political discussion and persuasion, as were

those who had followed the campaign in the media compared to those who had not.

Table 6.2d Binary Logistic Regression Predicting Political Discussion or Persuasion as a Function of Psychological and Socio-Demographic Variables^{a,b}

Variable	Category	B	S.E.	Wald χ^2	p	OR	95% CI	
							LL	UL
Understanding of MMP	Incorrect answer					1.00		
	Correct answer	0.61	0.08	55.31	<0.001	1.83	1.56	2.15
Interest in politics	Slightly/not at all interested			230.07	<0.001	1.00		
	Fairly interested	1.24	0.09	175.90	<0.001	3.47	2.89	4.17
	Very interested	1.76	0.15	137.64	<0.001	5.84	4.35	7.84
Followed campaign in media	No					1.00		
	Yes	1.03	0.09	134.11	<0.001	2.80	2.35	3.33
Partisanship	Independent					1.00		
	Partisan	0.17	0.08	4.58	0.032	1.19	1.01	1.39
Gender	Female					1.00		
	Male	-0.03	0.08	0.14	0.713	0.97	0.83	1.14
Age	18-24			160.11	<0.001	1.00		
	25-34	0.05	0.18	0.07	0.795	1.05	0.73	1.51
	35-44	-0.25	0.17	1.99	0.158	0.78	0.56	1.10
	45-54	-0.53	0.17	9.15	0.002	0.59	0.42	0.83
	55-64	-0.83	0.18	21.30	<0.001	0.44	0.31	0.62
	65+	-1.50	0.18	72.19	<0.001	0.22	0.16	0.32
Education	Primary			53.05	<0.001	1.00		
	Secondary	0.46	0.12	14.10	<0.001	1.58	1.24	2.00
	Tertiary	0.81	0.15	29.54	<0.001	2.25	1.68	3.01
	University degree	1.14	0.17	45.24	<0.001	3.14	2.25	4.39
Occupation	Managers, professionals			10.51	0.005	1.00		
	Clerical, service, sales	-0.02	0.11	0.03	0.871	0.98	0.80	1.21
	Manual	-0.29	0.10	8.58	0.003	0.75	0.62	0.91
Pacific ethnic status	Non-Pacific					1.00		
	Pacific	-1.21	0.23	26.74	<0.001	0.30	0.19	0.47

a. The method was forced entry.

b. Nagelkerke $R^2=0.208$; Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test gave $\chi^2 (8, N=12,654) = 6.50, p=0.592$.

Partisans were more likely to engage in this behaviour compared to independents, as were those aged 45 and older compared to respondents under the age of 25. The odds of engaging in political discussion and persuasion increased as level of education increased, peaking at an OR of 3.14, 95% CI [2.25, 4.39] for the university-educated compared to those with only a primary education. Manual workers were significantly less likely to engage in this behaviour compared to managers, professionals, and technicians. Finally, Pacific respondents were also significantly less likely to partake in passive electoral participation, OR = 0.30, 95% CI [0.19, 0.47], compared to non-Pacific respondents.

A second logistic regression was performed using a DV that combined responses to the three individual media items in the question *“During the election campaign, how often did you follow political news, discussions, and advertising on television, newspapers, and radio?”* An answer of *“Often”* or *“Sometimes”* to at least one of these media was coded as ‘Yes’ (with a value of 1) for the new combined variable, while an answer of *“Rarely”* or *“Not at all”* to all of these media was coded as ‘No’ (with a value of 0). This combining of question items and dichotomising of response options split the valid (non-missing) sample into the 81 per cent who had often or sometimes followed the campaign on television, newspapers, or radio, and the 19 per cent who rarely or did not follow the campaign via any of these media.

The model included the following nine regressors: understanding of MMP, interest in politics, external efficacy (as measured in Section 5.2.1), incidence of partisanship, gender, age, education, occupation, and Pacific ethnic status. Missing values were deleted casewise, leaving 12,077 cases for inclusion in the model. A test of the full model against a constant-only model was statistically significant, $\chi^2(18, N=12,077) = 1,976.06, p < 0.001$, indicating that the regressors as a group reliably distinguish between those who followed the campaign in the media and those who did not. The model explained 24.9 per cent of the variation in the DV (Nagelkerke R^2) and correctly classified 82.8 per cent of cases. The results are presented in Table 6.2e.

The Wald statistic shows that understanding of MMP, interest in politics, external efficacy, partisanship, age, and Pacific ethnic status all made a statistically significant contribution to the model. Gender, education, and occupation were not significant. Respondents who correctly identified the most important vote were significantly more likely to have followed the campaign in the media, OR = 1.20, 95% CI [1.08, 1.33] compared to those who answered incorrectly. The most significant association was with interest in politics, with those very interested having an OR of 15.43, 95% CI [12.33, 19.30] compared to those slightly or not at all interested, the largest odds ratio found in this thesis. Those who agreed with, or were neutral about, the idea that political élites do not care what people think were less likely to have followed the campaign in the media compared to those who disagreed. Partisans were significantly more likely to have followed the campaign in the media compared to independents (OR = 1.48, 95% CI [1.34, 1.65]). The odds of following the campaign in the media increased significantly with each increase in age bracket, peaking at an OR of 2.30, 95% CI [1.82, 2.91] for those aged 65 years and older compared to those aged 18 to 24 years.

The bivariate analysis cross-tabulating following of the campaign by Pacific ethnic status found Pacific respondents were significantly more likely to have followed the campaign on television, but no significant difference was found for newspapers or radio. When the three media were combined into one DV for multivariate analysis, Pacific respondents were significantly more likely to have followed the campaign in at least one of these media compared to non-Pacific respondents, OR = 1.75, 95% CI [1.07, 2.85].

Table 6.2e Binary Logistic Regression Predicting Following of Campaign in Media as a Function of Psychological and Socio-Demographic Variables^{a,b}

Variable	Category	B	S.E.	Wald χ^2	p	OR	95% CI	
							LL	UL
Understanding of MMP	Incorrect answer					1.00		
	Correct answer	0.18	0.05	11.60	0.001	1.20	1.08	1.33
Interest in politics	Slightly/not at all interested			1114.55	<0.001	1.00		
	Fairly interested	1.61	0.06	821.94	<0.001	4.98	4.46	5.56
	Very interested	2.74	0.11	572.86	<0.001	15.43	12.33	19.30
Political élites don't care what people think	Disagree			12.00	0.002	1.00		
	Neutral	-0.20	0.08	6.98	0.008	0.82	0.70	0.95
	Agree	-0.22	0.07	11.29	0.001	0.80	0.70	0.91
Partisanship	Independent					1.00		
	Partisan	0.39	0.05	54.66	<0.001	1.48	1.34	1.65
Gender	Female					1.00		
	Male	-0.08	0.06	2.03	0.154	0.92	0.83	1.03
Age	18-24			65.44	<0.001	1.00		
	25-34	0.21	0.10	4.11	0.043	1.23	1.01	1.50
	35-44	0.34	0.10	11.52	0.001	1.40	1.15	1.70
	45-54	0.48	0.10	21.38	<0.001	1.61	1.32	1.97
	55-64	0.60	0.11	28.85	<0.001	1.83	1.47	2.28
	65+	0.83	0.12	48.32	<0.001	2.30	1.82	2.91
Education	Primary			4.71	0.194	1.00		
	Secondary	0.13	0.12	1.23	0.268	1.14	0.91	1.43
	Tertiary	0.19	0.13	2.22	0.136	1.21	0.94	1.55
	University degree	0.25	0.13	3.75	0.053	1.29	1.00	1.67
Occupation	Managers, professionals			1.40	0.496	1.00		
	Clerical, service, sales	-0.07	0.07	1.10	0.294	0.93	0.81	1.06
	Manual	-0.06	0.07	0.88	0.349	0.94	0.82	1.07
Pacific ethnic status	Non-Pacific					1.00		
	Pacific	0.56	0.25	5.01	0.025	1.75	1.07	2.85

a. The method was forced entry.

b. Nagelkerke $R^2=0.249$; Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test gave $\chi^2 (8, N=12,077) = 7.79, p=0.454$.

6.3 Non-electoral participation

6.3.1 Bivariate analysis

Participation in various forms of non-electoral activities was ascertained with the question “*There are various forms of political action that people take to express their views about something the government should or should not do. For each one, have you actually done it during the last five years, or more than five years ago, might you do it, or would you never?: Signed a petition; Written to a newspaper; Gone on a protest, march, or demonstration; Phoned a talkback radio show; Boycotted a product or service?*”⁴² For the majority of waves, the response options were “*Actually done it during the last 5 years*”, “*Actually done it more than 5 years ago*”, “*Might do it*”, “*Would never*”. Consistent with Norris (2002), responses were dichotomised into whether each respondent had actually done the activity (the first two response options) or had not (the last two response options). The responses are displayed in Table 6.3a.

Table 6.3a Non-Electoral Participation by Pacific Ethnic Status^a

	Respondent					Pearson chi-square			
	Non-Pacific		Pacific		Total N	χ^2	df	p	G ^b
Political activity	N	%	N	%	Total N				
Signed a petition	10902	81.3	80	57.1	13552	52.55	1	<0.001	-0.530
Written to a newspaper	2289	18.0	14	9.9	12884	6.28	1	0.012	-0.334
Gone on a protest	3239	25.2	33	22.3	13017	0.64	1	0.423	-0.079
Phoned talkback radio	1386	10.9	12	8.5	12883	0.81	1	0.369	-0.135
Boycotted product	3357	36.8	20	20.0	9231	11.98	1	0.001	-0.399

a. Percentages are the proportion of respondents who have ‘actually done’ the activity.

b. Goodman and Kruskal’s gamma.

Over 80 per cent of all respondents had signed a petition, however much smaller proportions had written to a newspaper, gone on a protest, march, or demonstration, boycotted a product or service, and phoned a talkback radio show. These figures are broadly consistent with findings from the New Zealand Values Survey which employed identical questions (Rose et al., 2005).

⁴² This question was not asked at the 2011 wave. The 1996 and 1999 surveys did not differentiate between having ‘actually done it during the last five years’ and ‘actually done it more than five years ago’, instead having just one ‘actually done it’ response, while the ‘protest’ item read “*Go[ing] on a protest march, so long as it was legal*”. The ‘boycott’ item was not included in the 1996 survey.

Compared to all other respondents, Pacific respondents were significantly less likely to have signed a petition ($\gamma=-0.530$, indicating a strong association), written to a newspaper, or boycotted a product or service. There was no significant difference between Pacific and non-Pacific respondents when it came to protesting and phoning talkback radio.

6.3.2 *Multivariate analysis*

For the purposes of multivariate analysis, responses to the five forms of non-electoral participation listed in Table 6.3a were combined into a new dichotomous DV, such that participation in any one of these activities scored a 1 ('Yes' to non-electoral participation) and participation in none of these activities scored a 0 ('No' to non-electoral participation). This divided the valid sample into the 83 per cent who had partaken in some form of non-electoral participation and the 17 per cent who had not. A binary logistic regression was performed to predict non-electoral participation from 10 predictors: understanding of MMP, interest in politics, external efficacy, individual turnout, incidence of partisanship, gender, age, education, occupation, and Pacific ethnic status. A test of the full model against a constant-only model was statistically significant, $\chi^2 (19, N=10,438) = 537.37, p<0.001$, indicating that the predictors as a set reliably differentiate between those who had participated in a non-electoral activity and those who had not. The model explained only 8.8 per cent of the variation in non-electoral participation (Nagelkerke R^2) and correctly classified 85.1 per cent of cases.

The Wald statistic shows that understanding of MMP, interest in politics, turnout, gender, age, education, occupation, and Pacific ethnic status all made a statistically significant contribution to the model, net of the effects of all other variables in the model. External efficacy and partisanship made no such contribution. Respondents who correctly identified the most important vote were significantly more likely to have engaged in non-electoral activities compared to those who answered incorrectly. As interest in politics increased, the odds of participating in non-electoral activities increased; for example, the very interested had an OR of 2.34, 95% CI [1.96, 2.79] compared to those who

were slightly or not at all interested. Respondents who voted were more likely to participate in non-electoral activities compared to who did not vote, while males were less likely to do so compared to females, OR = 0.76, 95% CI [0.68, 0.86]. Respondents aged between 25 and 64 years were all significantly more likely to engage in non-electoral participation compared to those under the age of 25. A secondary education or higher increased the likelihood of non-electoral participation compared to a primary education only, while a manual occupation decreased the likelihood compared to managers, professionals, and technicians. Pacific respondents were significantly less likely to engage in non-electoral political activities, OR = 0.21, 95% CI [0.14, 0.31] compared to non-Pacific respondents, net of the effects of all other variables in the model.

6.4 Conclusion

In sum, Pacific respondents had comparable rates of voting and contributing money to election campaigns (differences were statistically insignificant), but significantly higher rates of attendance at political meetings or rallies, compared to all other respondents. This suggests they are an electorally active population, although caution is required in interpreting these results because of the likely presence of sampling bias, discussed in Chapter Eight. They were less likely to engage in political discussion or persuasion (when the two were combined),⁴³ but showed comparable levels of interest in press and radio coverage of the campaign, and were more likely to follow the campaign on television. Their levels of non-electoral participation were uniformly lower, although some differences were not statistically significant. However, when the various forms of non-electoral activism were combined and predicted in a logistic regression model, Pacific respondents had significantly lower odds of engaging in such activities, primarily due to their lower levels of interest in politics, younger age structure, and lower levels of education.

⁴³ Bivariate analysis cross-tabulating 'persuading others how to vote' by Pacific ethnic status (Table 6.2b) found Pacific respondents were *more* likely than other respondents to engage in this behaviour; however, when this behaviour was combined with the 'political discussion' variable in a multivariate logistic regression analysis (Table 6.2d), they became *less* likely to engage in this combined behavioural dependent variable.

Table 6.3b Binary Logistic Regression Predicting Non-Electoral Participation as a Function of Psychological and Socio-Demographic Variables^{a,b}

Variable	Category	B	S.E.	Wald χ^2	p	OR	95% CI	
							LL	UL
Understanding of MMP	Incorrect answer					1.00		
	Correct answer	0.21	0.06	12.68	<0.001	1.23	1.10	1.38
Interest in politics	Slightly/not at all interested			97.97	<0.001	1.00		
	Fairly interested	0.51	0.07	56.85	<0.001	1.66	1.46	1.90
	Very interested	0.85	0.09	88.66	<0.001	2.34	1.96	2.79
Political élites don't care what people think	Disagree			3.59	0.166	1.00		
	Neutral	0.01	0.08	0.01	0.909	1.01	0.86	1.19
	Agree	0.12	0.07	2.74	0.098	1.12	0.98	1.29
Turnout	Did not vote					1.00		
	Voted	0.43	0.12	13.25	<0.001	1.54	1.22	1.94
Partisanship	Independent					1.00		
	Partisan	0.02	0.06	0.11	0.739	1.02	0.91	1.15
Gender	Female					1.00		
	Male	-0.27	0.06	20.83	<0.001	0.76	0.68	0.86
Age	18-24			161.87	<0.001	1.00		
	25-34	0.79	0.12	45.39	<0.001	2.21	1.76	2.79
	35-44	1.04	0.12	79.31	<0.001	2.83	2.25	3.56
	45-54	0.80	0.12	47.69	<0.001	2.23	1.78	2.81
	55-64	0.58	0.12	23.49	<0.001	1.79	1.41	2.26
	65+	0.09	0.12	0.60	0.440	1.10	0.87	1.38
Education	Primary			65.79	<0.001	1.00		
	Secondary	0.44	0.10	17.43	<0.001	1.55	1.26	1.90
	Tertiary	0.87	0.12	51.40	<0.001	2.40	1.89	3.05
	University degree	0.81	0.13	41.09	<0.001	2.24	1.75	2.87
Occupation	Managers, professionals			9.65	0.008	1.00		
	Clerical, service, sales	0.00	0.08	0.00	0.950	1.00	0.86	1.17
	Manual	-0.20	0.07	7.65	0.006	0.82	0.71	0.94
Pacific ethnic status	Non-Pacific					1.00		
	Pacific	-1.57	0.21	57.79	<0.001	0.21	0.14	0.31

a. The method was forced entry.

b. Nagelkerke $R^2=0.088$; Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test gave $\chi^2 (8, N=10,438) = 7.53, p=0.480$.

CHAPTER 7: PARTISANSHIP AND VOTING CHOICES

7.1 Partisanship

The NZES has always employed some variation of the standard question used widely in voting surveys to ascertain the incidence and direction of partisanship: *“Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular party?”*, followed by a response set consisting of the main parties that stood at the respective election, in addition to a “No” or *“Don’t usually think of myself in this way”* option.⁴⁴ People who respond “No” then answer a follow-up question on whether they feel *“a little closer to one of the parties than the others”*, while people who respond affirmatively answer a follow-up question on the *strength* of their partisan feelings. However, this thesis does not explore either of these follow-up questions, focusing solely on the first question as a measure of party identification or preference.⁴⁵

7.1.1 Bivariate analysis

The response options to the partisanship question naturally varied from wave to wave depending on which parties existed at the time and stood at each election. Because of this variability, the response options were condensed into ‘Labour’, ‘National’, and ‘Other’ (all other parties), plus the ‘No’ option. The results are presented in Table 7.1a.

The results show that, over the 1996 to 2011 period, a significant plurality (42.4 per cent) of respondents did not consider themselves close to any particular party. Such electors are typically labelled as ‘independents’ or ‘non-identifiers’. The next largest groups were Labour identifiers (24.8 per cent), then National identifiers (21.3 per cent), and finally all other parties (11.5 per cent). However, party identification differed significantly between Pacific

⁴⁴ In the 2002 and 2005 surveys, the question was worded *“Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as National, Labour, Act, Greens, New Zealand First, or some other, or don’t you usually think of yourself in this way?”* The 1999 question was worded similarly, except “Alliance” substituted for “Act” and “Greens”.

⁴⁵ This method of measuring party identification is consistent with that used by the NZES researchers (Vowles & Aimer, 1993e, p. 20). See footnote 16 in Section 2.1.3.

and non-Pacific respondents; Pacific respondents were less likely to be independents (37.4 per cent) and, especially, National identifiers (3.4 per cent), and were considerably more likely to be Labour identifiers (47.7 per cent). They were just as likely as non-Pacific respondents to identify with a minor party.

Table 7.1a Partisanship by Pacific Ethnic Status^a

		Respondent					
		Non-Pacific		Pacific		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Usually close to a particular party	No	7037	(42.5)	88	(37.4)	7125	(42.4)
	Labour	4047	(24.4)	112	(47.7)	4159	(24.8)
	National	3570	(21.6)	8	(3.4)	3578	(21.3)
	Other	1910	(11.5)	27	(11.5)	1937	(11.5)
	Total	16564	(100.0)	235	(100.0)	16799	(100.0)

a. Pearson chi-square=87.71, df=3, $p<0.001$; Goodman and Kruskal's gamma=-0.071.

7.1.2 Multivariate analysis

Because Labour partisanship is so strong among Pacific communities, a binary logistic regression was conducted to predict Labour partisanship from nine socio-economic and demographic factors: gender, age, education, sector of employment, occupation, housing tenure, religion, Pacific ethnic status, and whether someone in the household receives a government benefit. The dependent variable was dichotomised into those who identified with Labour (coded as 1) versus all other respondents (coded as 0). The results are presented in Table 7.1b. A separate logistic regression was run for National partisanship, using the equivalent dichotomisation of the dependent variable and regressed against the same set of predictors, the results of which are reported in Appendix Table 7.1 (in Appendix 2).

Casewise exclusion of missing values left 11,216 cases for inclusion in each model. A test of the full Labour model against a constant-only model was statistically significant, χ^2 (22, $N=11,216$) = 455.90, $p<0.001$, indicating that the predictors as a set reliably distinguish between Labour identifiers and all other

respondents. However, the model explained only a small proportion of the variability in partisanship (Nagelkerke $R^2 = 6.0$ per cent). It correctly predicted 76.0 per cent of cases.⁴⁶

The Wald statistic shows that all predictors made a statistically significant contribution to the Labour model after adjusting for confounding factors, except for gender and religion. The odds of being a Labour identifier generally increased with age and decreased with amount of education. Those aged 25 to 34 years were not significantly different from those aged 18 to 24 years in terms of Labour partisanship, however those 35 and older *were* significantly different, especially 55 to 64 year-olds who had an OR of 2.51, 95% CI [1.90, 3.31]. Compared to those with only a primary education, those with a university degree had an OR of 0.65, 95% CI [0.53, 0.79]. Compared to the self-employed, those employed in the private, public, and mixed or non-profit sectors were more likely to be Labour partisans, especially public sector employees who had an OR of 2.76, 95% CI [2.38, 3.22]. Those in manual occupations were significantly more likely to be Labour identifiers compared to managers, professionals, and technicians, with an OR of 1.36, 95% CI [1.21, 1.53]. Those with mortgages or who rent or board were more likely to be Labour partisans compared to freehold owners, as were respondents from households that received a benefit compared to those who did not.

⁴⁶ A test of the full National model against a constant-only model was also statistically significant, χ^2 (22, N=11,216) = 846.02, $p < 0.001$, explaining 11.0 per cent of the variation in partisanship and correctly classifying 77.1 per cent of cases. See Appendix Table 7.1 in Appendix 2.

Table 7.1b Binary Logistic Regression Predicting Labour Partisanship as a Function of Socio-Economic and Demographic Variables^{a,b}

Variable	Category	B	S.E.	Wald χ^2	p	OR	95% CI	
							LL	UL
Gender	Female					1.00		
	Male	-0.02	0.05	0.19	0.661	0.98	0.89	1.08
Age	18-24			87.38	<0.001	1.00		
	25-34	0.24	0.14	3.18	0.075	1.28	0.98	1.67
	35-44	0.51	0.14	14.09	<0.001	1.67	1.28	2.17
	45-54	0.80	0.14	33.94	<0.001	2.23	1.70	2.92
	55-64	0.92	0.14	42.07	<0.001	2.51	1.90	3.31
	65+	0.87	0.15	34.14	<0.001	2.39	1.79	3.21
Education	Primary			43.54	<0.001	1.00		
	Secondary	-0.35	0.09	14.57	<0.001	0.71	0.59	0.85
	Tertiary	-0.64	0.10	39.73	<0.001	0.53	0.43	0.64
	University degree	-0.44	0.10	17.90	<0.001	0.65	0.53	0.79
Sector of employment	Self-employed			179.47	<0.001	1.00		
	Private	0.60	0.07	70.76	<0.001	1.82	1.58	2.09
	Public	1.02	0.08	171.10	<0.001	2.76	2.38	3.22
	Mixed/Non-profit	0.90	0.11	72.75	<0.001	2.46	2.00	3.02
	Never worked	0.45	0.45	1.02	0.313	1.57	0.65	3.78
Occupation	Managers, professionals			25.98	<0.001	1.00		
	Clerical, service, sales	0.10	0.06	2.40	0.121	1.10	0.98	1.24
	Manual	0.31	0.06	25.67	<0.001	1.36	1.21	1.53
Housing tenure	Own freehold			35.49	<0.001	1.00		
	Own mortgaged	0.22	0.06	13.06	<0.001	1.24	1.11	1.40
	Rent or board	0.44	0.07	35.09	<0.001	1.56	1.34	1.80
Religion	None			2.25	0.522	1.00		
	Trad. Christian	-0.08	0.06	2.04	0.153	0.92	0.83	1.03
	Non-trad. Christian	-0.09	0.08	1.05	0.305	0.92	0.78	1.08
	Non-Christian	-0.03	0.13	0.05	0.818	0.97	0.75	1.26
Pacific ethnic status	Non-Pacific					1.00		
	Pacific	1.20	0.19	39.34	<0.001	3.32	2.28	4.83
Beneficiary in household	No					1.00		
	Yes	0.16	0.05	8.69	0.003	1.17	1.05	1.29

a. The method was forced entry.

b. Nagelkerke $R^2=0.060$; Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test gave $\chi^2 (8, N=11,216) = 13.59, p=0.093$.

As expected, Pacific respondents were significantly more likely to be Labour identifiers compared to non-Pacific respondents, OR = 3.32, 95% CI [2.28, 4.83], after taking into account the other socio-economic and demographic variables. In contrast, the National model showed that Pacific respondents were significantly less likely to identify with National, OR = 0.09, 95% CI [0.02, 0.36], compared to non-Pacific respondents (see Appendix Table 7.1 in Appendix 2).

7.2 Voting choices

The NZES asked whether respondents voted or not, and if so, who they voted for, with the following questions: “Thinking now of the party vote, which party did you vote for in the [most recent] election?” and “What about the electorate vote in the [most recent] election? Which party’s candidate did you vote for?” The bracketed words in the questions contained the relevant year of the election.

7.2.1 Bivariate analysis

As with the partisanship question, the response options to the vote choice questions varied from wave to wave depending on which parties competed at each election, and thus were collapsed down to ‘Labour’, ‘National’, ‘Other’, and ‘Non-vote’ (see Table 6.1a for further analysis of non-voting). The answers to these questions are displayed in Tables 7.2a and 7.2b.

Table 7.2a Party Vote Choice by Pacific Ethnic Status^a

		Respondent					
		Non-Pacific		Pacific		Total	
		N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Party vote at most recent election	Non-vote	900	(5.3)	18	(7.8)	918	(5.4)
	Labour	5893	(34.9)	160	(69.0)	6053	(35.4)
	National	4555	(27.0)	18	(7.8)	4573	(26.7)
	Other	5531	(32.8)	36	(15.5)	5567	(32.5)
	Total	16879	(100.0)	232	(100.0)	17111	(100.0)

a. Pearson chi-square=130.12, df=3, $p<0.001$; Goodman and Kruskal’s gamma=-0.496.

Table 7.2b Electorate Vote Choice by Pacific Ethnic Status^a

		Respondent					
		Non-Pacific		Pacific		Total	
		N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Electorate vote at most recent election	Non-vote	943	(5.6)	21	(9.0)	964	(5.7)
	Labour	6240	(37.2)	161	(69.1)	6401	(37.6)
	National	4930	(29.4)	16	(6.9)	4946	(29.1)
	Other	4662	(27.8)	35	(15.0)	4697	(27.6)
	Total	16775	(100.0)	233	(100.0)	17008	(100.0)

a. Pearson chi-square=120.46, df=3, $p<0.001$; Goodman and Kruskal's gamma=-0.477.

As expected, the results show that compared to all other respondents, Pacific respondents were more likely to be non-voters for both types of vote, were substantially more likely to vote for Labour for both types of vote, and were substantially less likely to vote for National or a minor party. Additionally, as Tables 7.2a and 7.2b suggest and further analysis not shown here confirms, Pacific respondents were significantly more likely to be 'straight' voters and significantly less likely to be 'split' voters (that is, they were less likely to give their electorate vote to a candidate from a party that was different to their party vote).

At most NZES waves, non-voters (from the party vote question) were directed to answer the following hypothetical question: *"If you didn't manage to cast a party vote in the [most recent] election, which party would you have voted for if you had been able to?"*⁴⁷ Non-voters choose from the same list of parties as in the previous questions, or they can select *"I chose not to vote for a party"* if their decision to abstain was deliberate. Responses to this question were condensed as before and are shown in Table 7.2c.

⁴⁷ Not asked at the 2011 wave.

Table 7.2c Non-Voters' Hypothetical Party Vote Choice by Pacific Ethnic Status^a

		Respondent					
		Non-Pacific		Pacific		Total	
		N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Non-voters hypothetical party vote	I chose not to vote	327	(18.1)	7	(12.7)	334	(18.0)
	Labour	733	(40.6)	39	(70.9)	772	(41.5)
	National	287	(15.9)	2	(3.6)	289	(15.5)
	Other	457	(25.3)	7	(12.7)	464	(25.0)
	Total	1804	(100.0)	55	(100.0)	1859	(100.0)

a. Pearson chi-square=21.22, df=3, $p<0.001$; Goodman and Kruskal's gamma=-0.247.

The results show that between 1996 and 2011 most non-voters (41.5 per cent) would have voted for Labour if they had been able to, followed by one of the minor parties (25.0 per cent), followed by intentional abstention (18.0 per cent), and lastly for National (15.5 per cent). Pacific non-voters were significantly more likely to hypothetically vote Labour (70.9 per cent) compared to all other non-voters (40.6 per cent), but were less likely than other non-voters to hypothetically vote for a minor party (12.7 per cent compared to 25.3 per cent) or deliberately abstain (12.7 per cent compared to 18.1 per cent).

7.2.2 Multivariate analysis

As with the model predicting partisanship (Section 7.1.2), a binary logistic regression predicting party vote choice was performed with a dependent variable that dichotomised responses into party votes for Labour (coded as 1) versus party votes for all other parties (coded as 0). This was regressed against the following 10 predictors: direction of partisanship, gender, age, education, sector of employment, occupation, housing tenure, religion, Pacific ethnic status, and whether someone in the household receives a government benefit. The results are presented in Table 7.2d. A separate logistic regression was run for National party vote, using the equivalent dichotomisation of the dependent variable and regressed against the same set of predictors. The results appear in Appendix Table 7.2 in Appendix 2.

After missing values were excluded casewise, 10,703 cases were available for inclusion in the full Labour party vote model. A test of this model against a constant-only model was statistically significant, χ^2 (25, $N=10,703$) = 4,192.71, $p<0.001$, indicating that the predictors as a set reliably distinguish between Labour voters and all other voters. The model explained 44.8 per cent of the variation in party vote choice (Nagelkerke R^2) and correctly classified 80.1 per cent of cases.⁴⁸

The statistically significant predictors were partisanship, gender, age, sector of employment, occupation, housing tenure, and Pacific ethnic status. Education, religion, and receipt of a benefit within the household made no significant explanatory contribution net of the effects of other variables. Not surprisingly, compared to independents, Labour identifiers were significantly more likely to vote for Labour, having an OR of 8.09, 95% CI [7.20, 9.10]. Males were significantly less likely to vote Labour compared to females, OR = 0.73, 95% CI [0.66, 0.81]. Those employed in the private, public, and mixed or non-profit sectors were all more likely to vote Labour compared to the self-employed, especially public sector employees, OR = 1.72, 95% CI [1.46, 2.03]. Manual workers were significantly more likely to vote Labour compared to managers, professionals, and technicians, as were renters and boarders compared to those who own their home freehold.

Pacific respondents had an OR of 2.86, 95% CI [1.69, 4.85], compared to non-Pacific respondents, indicating that they were significantly more likely to give their party vote to Labour compared to other respondents even after controlling for partisanship and socio-economic and demographic confounders.

⁴⁸ A test of the full National model against a constant-only model was also statistically significant, χ^2 (25, $N=11,002$) = 4,366.73, $p<0.001$, explaining 47.0 per cent of the variation in party vote choice and correctly classifying 83.1 per cent of cases. See Appendix Table 7.2 in Appendix 2.

Table 7.2d Binary Logistic Regression Predicting Labour Party Vote as a Function of Partisanship and Socio-Economic and Demographic Variables^{a,b}

Variable	Category	B	S.E.	Wald χ^2	p	OR	95% CI	
							LL	UL
Partisanship	None			2411.70	<0.001	1.00		
	Labour	2.09	0.06	1221.08	<0.001	8.09	7.20	9.10
	National	-2.38	0.11	479.23	<0.001	0.09	0.07	0.11
	Other party	-1.33	0.10	194.55	<0.001	0.26	0.22	0.32
Gender	Female					1.00		
	Male	-0.31	0.05	33.20	<0.001	0.73	0.66	0.81
Age	18-24			8.94	0.111	1.00		
	25-34	0.34	0.14	5.74	0.017	1.41	1.06	1.87
	35-44	0.28	0.14	3.79	0.051	1.32	1.00	1.75
	45-54	0.38	0.15	6.78	0.009	1.46	1.10	1.95
	55-64	0.34	0.15	4.78	0.029	1.40	1.04	1.89
	65+	0.43	0.16	6.96	0.008	1.54	1.12	2.11
Education	Primary			1.62	0.654	1.00		
	Secondary	0.07	0.11	0.33	0.564	1.07	0.86	1.33
	Tertiary	0.02	0.12	0.03	0.853	1.02	0.81	1.30
	University degree	-0.02	0.13	0.02	0.877	0.98	0.77	1.25
Sector of employment	Self-employed			43.15	<0.001	1.00		
	Private	0.41	0.08	28.71	<0.001	1.51	1.30	1.75
	Public	0.54	0.08	41.22	<0.001	1.72	1.46	2.03
	Mixed/Non-profit	0.37	0.12	9.94	0.002	1.45	1.15	1.83
	Never worked	0.61	0.53	1.31	0.252	1.85	0.65	5.26
Occupation	Managers, professionals			8.22	0.016	1.00		
	Clerical, service, sales	0.13	0.07	3.56	0.059	1.14	1.00	1.30
	Manual	0.19	0.07	7.43	0.006	1.21	1.05	1.38
Housing tenure	Own freehold			7.12	0.028	1.00		
	Own mortgaged	-0.02	0.07	0.10	0.755	0.98	0.86	1.12
	Rent or board	0.18	0.09	4.39	0.036	1.20	1.01	1.41
Religion	None			4.05	0.256	1.00		
	Trad. Christian	-0.02	0.06	0.10	0.753	0.98	0.87	1.11
	Non-trad. Christian	-0.18	0.10	3.70	0.054	0.83	0.69	1.00
	Non-Christian	-0.04	0.14	0.08	0.782	0.96	0.72	1.27
Pacific ethnic status	Non-Pacific					1.00		
	Pacific	1.05	0.27	15.31	<0.001	2.86	1.69	4.85
Beneficiary in household	No					1.00		
	Yes	0.06	0.06	0.99	0.320	1.06	0.94	1.19

a. The method was forced entry.

b. Nagelkerke $R^2=0.448$; Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test gave $\chi^2 (8, N=10,703) = 11.93, p=0.154$.

7.3 Conclusion

In summary, compared to all other respondents, Pacific respondents had a relatively high prevalence of partisanship, particularly for Labour, although close to two-in-five were independents. Their voting for Labour was even higher than their identification with Labour, at about 70 per cent for both types of MMP vote. They were significantly more likely to vote Labour compared to all other respondents, even after controlling for partisanship and socio-economic and demographic variables. Voting for National was comparatively low among Pacific respondents, being just as likely as non-voting, and the incidence of split voting was minimal. Compared to all other non-voters, Pacific non-voters were substantially more likely to have reported an intention to vote Labour if they had been able to cast a ballot, and were less likely to have deliberately abstained.

CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION

This chapter summarises the results (by chapter) of the preceding statistical analyses of political engagement among Pacific and non-Pacific NZES respondents, and discusses these findings in relation to the relevant literature.

8.1 Political efficacy

Pacific respondents showed a reasonably high level of interest in politics, with a majority being very or fairly interested. Encouragingly, they were just as likely as non-Pacific respondents to be very interested; however, they were more likely to be slightly or not at all interested. About two-thirds of Pacific respondents found politics to be sometimes too complicated for them to understand, and a similar proportion did not correctly identify the most important vote in determining the number of MPs a party gets in Parliament, both results being significantly higher than for non-Pacific respondents. The finding that a third of Pacific respondents correctly identified the most important vote was very close to the 33 per cent of Pacific respondents who gave the correct answer in the Electoral Commission's (2009a) most recent (2008 post-election) survey on public understanding of MMP. However, it must be remembered that the results in this thesis are based on responses from throughout the 1996 to 2011 period and thus potentially conceal changes over time such as improvements in understanding of MMP.

After adjusting for other factors (including age, education, and interest in politics), Pacific respondents were still significantly less likely to understand MMP compared to non-Pacific respondents. Having an understanding of MMP was associated with having an interest in politics, having a sense of civic duty, following the campaign in the media, turning out to vote, and having a relatively high level of education.

Half of Pacific respondents believed people like themselves do not have any say about what the government does, similar to non-Pacific respondents. In

addition, 60 per cent of Pacific respondents believed politicians and public servants do not care what people like themselves think, significantly higher than for non-Pacific respondents.

Taking the two forms of efficacy together, these results indicate that Pacific peoples have a reasonably healthy interest in politics but feel less competent in their ability to understand and participate effectively in politics than the general population (that is, they have relatively low internal efficacy). The results also indicate many Pacific peoples are cynical about the democratic process and feel their voices are not heard or heeded in the corridors of power (that is, they have relatively low external efficacy). Low levels of external efficacy were prevalent in the sample as a whole, consistent with findings from the New Zealand Values Survey which found that “the level of influence respondents perceived the public or average person had on government was generally not high” (Rose et al., 2005, p. 32) and that “relatively few people believe that central government is responsive to the public”, indicating “a high degree of cynicism about the functioning of democracy” in New Zealand (Perry & Webster, 1999, p. 92).

Further analysis revealed that much of this cynicism (and the additional cynicism held by Pacific respondents over non-Pacific respondents) was primarily accounted for by the belief that government is dominated by a relatively small élite representing powerful business and state interests. In my merged dataset, 53 per cent of respondents with valid (non-missing) responses agreed with this statement, somewhat higher than the 44 per cent of respondents in the 2005 New Zealand Values Survey (Rose et al., 2005) who agreed with a similar statement.⁴⁹

In terms of internal efficacy, the analysis suggests political knowledge can be increased by further stimulating an interest in politics among Pacific and other electors who feel politically uninformed and ineffective. In every

⁴⁹ Their question read “*Generally speaking, would you say that this country is run by a few big interests looking out for themselves, or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?*” (Rose et al., 2005, p. 17).

regression model in which it was included as an IV, interest in politics was significantly associated with political engagement, and always in the expected direction (that is, higher levels of interest were associated with higher levels of engagement). The importance of having an interest in politics to levels of political engagement finds support in Vowles's (2006) comprehensive analysis of the generational effect on turnout in New Zealand between 1949 and 2005 (with a pooled sample of approximately 25,000 respondents), which found that lower interest in politics, along with an attenuated sense of civic duty, provided most of the explanation for lower turnout in the more recent generations. Likewise, research commissioned by the Chief Electoral Office (2005) and by Local Government New Zealand (Cavana et al., 2004) found that a lack of interest was one of the most common reasons proffered for not voting at general and local elections, respectively.

Believing that voting is a civic duty is important because it eliminates the known effect that the competitiveness of elections has on turnout, namely that elections which are perceived by electors as being one-sided contests with a predictable outcome attract a lower turnout than elections which are perceived to be close contests with an indeterminate outcome (Franklin, 2004; Vowles, 2006). Having a sense of civic duty offsets this effect because if an elector believes that voting is a public duty then the competitiveness of an election becomes irrelevant to that elector's decision to vote or not. In New Zealand, close elections are associated with higher turnout, especially among younger people (Vowles, 2002b, 2006; Vowles & Aimer, 1993a), and thus presumably more so among the relatively youthful Pacific population compared to other New Zealanders. Instilling a sense of civic duty among young Pacific peoples is therefore crucial to increasing their turnout at elections and their wider participation in New Zealand's political life.

8.2 Political participation

In general, Pacific respondents demonstrated typical levels of electoral participation. Compared to all other respondents, they had comparable rates of voting, contributing money to a political party or candidate, attending political meetings and rallies, and following the campaign in the media. Pacific respondents appeared to have a particular penchant for political meetings and rallies and watching the campaign on television. Over three-quarters of Pacific respondents also reported discussing politics with others during the campaign, although this lagged behind the rest of the sample.

Approximately 92 per cent of Pacific respondents voted, while 8 per cent did not, a result not significantly different from all other respondents. However, these results almost certainly under-estimate the true extent of non-voting among Pacific and other New Zealanders. Other research (reviewed in Section 2.2.1) indicates that Pacific peoples are indeed significantly more likely to be non-voters compared to the general population, and their actual prevalence of non-voting is likely to be at least three times what was found here, given findings from other surveys (Electoral Commission, 2009a, 2011b; Statistics New Zealand, 2009, 2011). As discussed in Section 3.3, this inconsistency may be explained by the sampling method used in the NZES; all respondents are eligible electors who had registered on the electoral roll and were willing to complete a written (or online) survey. It is therefore probable that a self-selection bias exists such that respondents are more likely to be those who are interested in, and familiar with, New Zealand politics. Indeed, non-voters are normally under-represented in voting surveys because they have a tendency either to report having voted (mostly for reasons of social desirability) or to not respond to questionnaires (Karp & Brockington, 2005; Vowles & Aimer, 1993d). This has occurred in the NZES, which under-represents non-voters (see Appendix II in Vowles & Aimer, 1993d).⁵⁰ Given their lower enrolment, lower

⁵⁰ Vowles and Aimer (1993d, p. 248) acknowledge that non-voting is a “difficult subject to study using survey data”, but that respondents who misreport having voted do not bias analysis of non-voting because these respondents tend to “form an intermediate group with characteristics

voter turnout, and general political marginalisation, we would expect Pacific peoples to not only be under-represented in the NZES (as they are; see Section 3.3), but Pacific *non-voters* to be particularly under-represented. On the other hand, Pacific peoples who are interested in politics and active in their participation are more likely to participate in the NZES and are therefore likely to be *over*-represented.

Turnout was associated with having an interest in politics, believing voting is a civic duty, identifying with a party, being aged 45 years and older, having a high level of education, and owning a home. Multivariate analysis also revealed that Pacific respondents' relatively high level of involvement in meetings and rallies is mainly accounted for by their generally lower external efficacy, their high prevalence of Labour partisanship, their over-representation in manual occupations, and their relatively youthful population. In other words, people who are younger, identify with Labour, work in a blue-collar job, and lack confidence in the responsiveness of government are more likely to attend political meetings or rallies, and Pacific peoples are more likely to fit this description compared to the general population. This result finds some support in analysis of 1993 NZES data which showed that while Māori and 'Polynesians' were less likely to vote, they were "unexpectedly more attracted to campaign activities than Pakehas", which included attending political meetings or rallies, contributing money to, or working for, a party or candidate, and meeting an MP or attending a meeting with an MP (Vowles et al., 1995a, p. 145).

Engaging in political discussion or persuasion was associated with understanding MMP, having an interest in politics, following the campaign in the media, being aged 45 years and older, and having a high level of education. Following the campaign in the media was associated with understanding MMP, having an interest in politics, having high external efficacy, and identifying

midway between voters and other nonvoters". In any case, since 1999 the NZES has validated reported vote by inspection of the marked electoral rolls and adjusted for misreported voting.

with a party. It also showed an age gradient such that the likelihood of following the campaign progressively increased as age increased.

Pacific respondents indicated relatively low levels of non-electoral participation. While a majority had signed a petition, much smaller proportions (between one-in-ten and two-in-ten) had engaged in other non-electoral activities. Compared to non-Pacific respondents, Pacific respondents were less likely to have signed a petition, written to a newspaper, and boycotted a product or service. However they were just as likely to have participated in a protest, march, or demonstration and to have phoned talkback radio. Their lower levels of non-electoral participation may be due to their concentration in low-income communities which “lack the economic resources to have their say via consumer boycotts, and these same groups have the lowest household penetration of Internet technologies, making new forms of e-democracy comparatively inaccessible” (Hayward, 2006, p. 521).

Non-electoral participation was associated with understanding MMP, having an interest in politics, turning out to vote, being female, being aged between 25 and 64 years, having a tertiary qualification, and being employed in a managerial or professional occupation.

8.3 Partisanship and voting choices

About half of Pacific respondents thought of themselves as close to Labour, nearly 40 per cent as not close to any party, and 3 per cent as close to National. Pacific respondents were more likely to be Labour partisans, and less likely to be independents and National partisans, compared to all other respondents.

Approximately 70 per cent of Pacific respondents gave their party vote to Labour, 16 per cent to a minor party, and 8 per cent to National. Results were very similar for the electorate vote, and, interestingly, for the hypothetical vote of non-voters. Pacific respondents were more likely to vote Labour and less likely to vote National compared to other respondents, even after controlling for factors such as partisanship, age, gender, and occupation.

Qualitative research with Sāmoan and Tongan youth from South Auckland conducted by Baice (2011) found that the participants' families played a significant role in their voting decisions, including whether to vote and who to vote for. Many reported basing their voting decisions on which party would benefit their family as a unit, rather than themselves as individuals. The research also indicated a considerable degree of inter-generational transfer of party identification (mostly for Labour), concluding that "the family has an immense impact on the way in which youth were...able to make clear distinctions about what party clearly stood for them and their families"(p. 80).

This suggests the psychological approach to voting choice has particular relevance to Pacific peoples' voting decisions, and explains their pervasive identification with, and vote for, Labour. However, Pacific respondents remained more likely to vote for Labour compared to all other respondents even after controlling for partisanship and other socio-economic and demographic variables known to affect voting choice in New Zealand (such as occupational class, housing tenure, and gender). This may suggest that the sociological model also operates on the voting choices of Pacific peoples, insofar as being a member of the social group known as 'Pacific peoples' engenders a preference for Labour that is widely held within the social group. While class, as measured by occupation, *did* have an effect on vote choice for the two main parties, the effects were not large and being a Pacific respondent exerted a stronger influence on vote choice over and above the effect of occupation.

Confirming findings from Vowles (2002c, 2004b), a plurality of non-voters (about 40 per cent) had *intended* to vote for Labour. Just over 70 per cent of Pacific non-voters reported an intention to vote Labour, significantly higher compared to all other non-voters. Encouragingly, only 13 per cent of Pacific non-voters deliberately abstained, significantly lower than for other respondents. This suggests a substantial proportion of Pacific non-voters are not contemptuous of democratic politics in New Zealand and could potentially be mobilised to vote.

8.4 Implications

Overall, there appear to be several important factors influencing Pacific peoples' political engagement in New Zealand. Some are 'enabling' factors that tend to promote political engagement; others are 'constraining' factors which tend to inhibit engagement; and yet others have the potential to either enable or constrain engagement. All, however, have implications for Pacific peoples' involvement in politics and suggest potential opportunities for increasing their levels of engagement.

The first factor is the widespread identification with Labour amongst a significant proportion of Pacific peoples. Analysis in this thesis showed that, compared to independents, people who feel close to a political party (partisans) have more trust and less cynicism in politicians, are more likely to vote, are more likely to engage in political discussion or persuasion, and are more likely to follow election campaigns. In addition, Labour identifiers are more likely to attend political meetings or rallies compared to independents. The considerable degree of Labour partisanship among Pacific peoples could therefore be exploited in order to increase their political engagement.

Research has shown that political parties play a major role in fostering political engagement and mobilising voters (Vowles, 1994a, 2002a, 2002b), and that Labour "has been the political party organisation in New Zealand most concerned to mobilise those otherwise less prone to participate" (Vowles, 1994a, p. 103). Analysis by Vowles (1994a, p. 110) has found that turnout "is largely 'elite-directed', dependent on the extent to which elites, through mass organisations, can link people into the electoral process" and that turnout decline in New Zealand "is closely associated with partisan dealignment and the electoral demobilisation it implies." Later research by Vowles (2002b, p. 113) revealed that the decline in turnout between the 1996 and 1999 elections was principally due to a lack of voter mobilisation by organisations such as political parties and unions, and could be reversed by "the recruitment of union members, and the revival of party organisations and of individual loyalties to political parties." Park (2010) found that being contacted by a political party

was the strongest factor to have encouraged the turnout of Asian New Zealanders. Given that all party votes are of equal value under MMP regardless of where they are cast, it is in the interests of all parties to place effort and resources into actively mobilising, and appealing to, all electors, particularly among groups known to have high rates of non-voting such as Pacific peoples and other minorities. However, electors need to play their part by joining political parties where they see this as being in their interests, because declining membership means parties have fewer resources to call on for fundraising and campaign activity, which has led them to focus their campaigns on leadership and mass advertising at the expense of grass-roots voter mobilisation (Hayward, 2006; Miller, 2005; Vowles, 2002c).

Parties also need to place more focus on issues and problems that are relevant to Pacific peoples. Baice's (2011, p. 92) Sāmoan and Tongan participants were generally sceptical of politicians because they were perceived as making "little or no effort to reach out to them and their communities, and what little effort they did make [was] seen merely as gimmicks to secure votes". Parties also need to select more Pacific representatives to ensure that Pacific peoples have equitable descriptive representation in the legislature, which is of symbolic importance because it "shows whether or not they have fair access to political power" (McLeay & Vowles, 2007, p. 88). Labour, with its organisational support structures for its Pacific members and candidates, its strategy of mobilising the Pacific vote, and its popularity with Pacific peoples, is in prime position to take advantage of non-voting among Pacific communities and to more broadly promote their political engagement.

The second factor is that Pacific peoples appear to prefer political activities which are collective efforts, rather than individual acts, as shown by Pacific respondents' greater likelihood of attending political meetings and rallies and epitomised by the Advance Pasifika march discussed in Chapter One. Their inclination for political meetings and rallies may be partly related to the fact that, compared with their proportion of the labour force, Pacific peoples are more likely than other New Zealanders to be union members (Blackwood,

Feinberg-Danieli, & Lafferty, 2006; Feinberg-Danieli & Lafferty, 2007; May, Walsh, & Otto, 2004; State Services Commission, 2004). It is also worth noting here that Pacific peoples recorded the highest rate of voluntary work compared to all other New Zealanders in the Ministry of Social Development's *Social Report 2010*, suggesting a strong desire for community engagement (Ministry of Social Development, 2010). Collective actions such as rallies and union membership likely provide Pacific peoples with the confidence and solidarity that is necessary for a disadvantaged ethnic minority to be heard within the political arena. This suggests that individuals and organisations wishing to involve Pacific peoples in forms of political action are more likely to gain their buy-in if the type of political participation being solicited is collective and social in nature, such as those mentioned previously, rather than individual and private, such as signing a petition or writing to an MP.

The third factor with implications for the political engagement of Pacific peoples is the increasing proportion of this population whose birthplace is New Zealand, which has increased from 49 per cent in 1986 to 60 per cent in 2006 (Statistics New Zealand and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, 2010a). Many New Zealand-born Sāmoan, Tongan, Cook Islands, and other Pacific peoples have grown up in similar social, economic, and even geographical situations, and this has given rise to a distinct multi-ethnic 'Pacific' identity and culture within New Zealand (often self-proclaimed as 'PIs' or 'Tagata Pasifika') which differs from that of both their migrant parents (or grandparents) and the 'mainstream' majority. In particular, compared to Pacific peoples born overseas, those born and raised in New Zealand have had more exposure to its societal norms, values, and institutions, especially through the education system, and thus have more confidence in their ability to deal with the state (Macpherson, 1996). While inter-ethnic co-operation among previous Pacific generations was impeded by the absence of a common language and culture, this is less true of New Zealand-born Pacific peoples today who either speak only English or share it as a *lingua franca* and have similar cultural backgrounds based on the shared experience of growing up as a Pacific descendant in the urban, cosmopolitan context of New Zealand. As Macpherson (2006, p. 112) has

conjectured, this common socialisation and cultural capital may permit an “understanding of political realities [that] leads them to appreciate the socio-political benefits of cooperation and presentation of a united Pacific front”. Thus, as the Pacific population increasingly becomes a New Zealand-born one, and as their levels of formal education rise, the prospects of a more cohesive Pacific community and an organised pan-Pacific political movement that could successfully engage, mobilise, and represent Pacific peoples may become correspondingly more feasible.

On the other hand, there may be good reasons to expect that any such unification and co-operation among the various Pacific ethnic groups will not eventuate. For a start, the ethnic differences may simply be too great and the cultural commonalities over-stated. Anae (1997, p. 132), for example, acknowledges the existence of a pan-Pacific identity among the younger generations based on shared socialisation experiences, but believes “the differentiation in terms of culture, language, philosophies, and respective histories [of the various Pacific ethnic groups] far outweigh the one commonality of shared New Zealand experiences”. Island-born Pacific peoples, in particular, are said to define their personal identities and interests in terms of “family, village, religious affiliation and national origin in that order” and most do not see themselves as members of a coherent Pacific community, as they are “well aware of social distinctions both within and between the various migrant sub-populations” (Macpherson, 1996, p. 129). Furthermore, Pacific peoples are experiencing increased social stratification, as some in the community attain upward economic mobility, become secularised, and develop more diverse personal and professional social networks (including via inter-ethnic marriage), while others do not. This may lead to a further divergence in the economic and political interests present within Pacific communities which in turn could hinder the likelihood of a pan-Pacific political movement (Macpherson, 1996, 2004).

In her sample of Asian electors in New Zealand, Park (2010) found that those who held a sense of ‘pan-Asian’ ethnic identity were no more likely to

participate in politics than those who did not hold such a view. She suggested this may be because such an identity was not developed in response to any particular threat and hence the identity never became politicised to the point where it could be used to mobilise Asian New Zealanders.

Research suggests race-based prejudice and hostility is especially likely to arise when a dominant in-group feels threatened – economically, politically, and in other ways – by a subordinated out-group (Brewer, 1999). Such a situation surfaced in the 1970s, during which a climate of Pākehā hostility towards Pacific peoples culminated in the ‘overstayers crisis’ and the resulting ‘dawn raids’.⁵¹ It was also during this period that the National Party ran an overtly racist television advertisement as part of its 1975 election campaign in which it portrayed Pacific peoples as aggressive, violent, and a growing cost to the state (Fleras et al., 1999). According to Macpherson (2006), the purpose of this and other similar political ploys was to ‘explain’ the deterioration in economic conditions for electoral advantage by scapegoating migrants as being responsible for the country’s economic and social problems. The Polynesian Panther Movement, a Pacific political front established mainly by Pacific youth in the Auckland suburb of Ponsonby in 1971, protested against this racial discrimination and sought class-based solidarity with the Māori liberation struggle. However, the movement eschewed parliamentary politics in favour of community-based radical social change (M. Anae, 2012; M. Anae et al., 2006).

Today, however, there is noticeably less antagonism towards Pacific peoples and thus Macpherson (1996, p. 139), echoing Park’s (2010) contention, believes that the potential for a united pan-Pacific community is currently limited by “the absence of a clearly defined and hostile enemy in relation to which a Pacific Islands grouping might define itself and its common interests”.

⁵¹ The overstayers crisis and the dawn raids saw the Government enforcing immigration laws which it had conveniently over-looked during periods of high domestic labour demand (Macpherson, 2006). Enforcement was, however, discriminatory, as subsequent research by the Race Relations Office showed that Pacific peoples constituted one-third of all illegal immigrants yet 86 per cent of those prosecuted, while visitors from North America and the United Kingdom also represented one-third of illegal immigrants yet only five per cent of prosecutions (Fleras, Spoonley, Bedford, Macpherson, & Goodwin, 1999; Spoonley, 1993).

Furthermore, the increasing visibility of the Pacific middle class “makes it more difficult to use ‘blocked mobility’ arguments to produce unity within the Pacific Islands population” and gives the impression that personal rather than structural factors are the main obstacles to success, despite evidence to the contrary (Macpherson, 1996, p. 139).

The final important factor affecting the political engagement of Pacific peoples is their relatively youthful population. Younger people, especially those aged between 18 and 24 years, are less likely than older people to vote and be politically involved (Curtin, 2010; Electoral Commission, 2008b; Rose et al., 2005; Vowles & Aimer, 1993a; Vowles et al., 1995a). For example, at the 1999, 2002, and 2005 elections, turnout amongst those aged between 18 and 24 years was between 15 and 19 per cent lower than the overall turnout (Catt & Northcote, 2006). In this thesis, respondents aged between 18 and 24 years were less likely to vote and to follow the campaign in the media compared to older respondents. According to Franklin (2004), the political engagement of young people is particularly important because voting is learned behaviour that sets a pattern for the rest of one’s life, and thus the first experience of voting is critical. He contends that a young person who votes at their first opportunity to do so is more likely to develop a habit of voting, while someone who forgoes this opportunity is more likely to be a repeat non-voter. In addition to this life-cycle effect, there is the ‘generational effect’ identified in Europe by Franklin (2004), in the USA by Putnam (2000), and in New Zealand by Vowles (2006), all of whom found that more recent generations were less likely to vote and be civically engaged than older generations were at the same age. The younger age structure of the Pacific population clearly renders them more susceptible to these life-cycle and generational effects that yield lower turnout and civic involvement.

Qualitative research with young non-voters commissioned by the Electoral Commission (2008d) suggested many young people have a strong desire to participate in politics but they do not know how to vote, find it difficult to decide who to vote for, find polling places unfamiliar and

intimidating, and often view not voting as preferable to making an uninformed or misinformed choice. Others were completely disinterested in politics and claimed that voting competed with the demands and commitments of their lifestyles. Similarly, many youth non-voters in Sheerin's (2007, p. 120) qualitative study reported a lack of knowledge about politics and admitted to having "little idea about the differences between the political parties or about what the important political issues were". Research by Wilson-Kelly and Hayward (2009) found that many of their young female participants did not feel they knew enough, or were smart enough, to vote, and this lack of information undermined their motivation to vote. Baice (2011, p. 77) found that a majority of his Sāmoan and Tongan youth participants "did not participate in democratic election processes because they feel they are not at the stage of development in which they are able to make proper and informed decisions" and that politics was seen as an "abstract concept" with little relevance to their lives.

Thus, lower levels of political engagement among younger people in New Zealand appear to be primarily due to deficits in political knowledge and voter education and a consequent lack of self-confidence to become politically involved. This is consistent with theorising in the rational choice tradition, which posits that there are significant personal costs to be incurred from becoming sufficiently informed to make a rational choice among the competing parties, and that casting a vote in the absence of such information is psychologically risky (Vowles, 2006). However, general increases in formal education per se will not improve levels of political ignorance or civic engagement, because as the average level of education in New Zealand and other established democracies has risen over time, voter turnout has declined over the same period (Franklin, 2004; Vowles, 2006). This is because "it is not just years of education but the amount of political knowledge possessed that predicts political participation" (Dudley & Gitelson, 2002, p. 178). Political knowledge helps citizens understand their interests as individuals and as members of groups, and equips them to better understand the impact of public policies on their interests and how they can more effectively promote these interests in the political process (Galston, 2007). Consequently, as recommended

by two select committees (Catt, 2006) and many researchers in New Zealand and abroad (Catt, 2005, 2006; Galston, 2007; Vowles, 2004a), citizenship education, political literacy, and civic engagement need to be strengthened in schools and tertiary education institutions to overcome these informational and motivational deficits. The research also indicates that such programmes are of limited value if they simply focus on institutions and processes, and have more success where they address controversial issues and current events involving critical thought and group-based deliberation and discussion (Dudley & Gitelson, 2002; Galston, 2007). From a comparative perspective, the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS), involving 38 countries, found that year nine students in New Zealand significantly outperformed the international average on civic knowledge, but ranked sixteenth of the 21 participating OECD countries⁵² and reported average levels of interest in political and social issues (Ministry of Education, 2012).

8.5 Limitations

This thesis has a number of limitations. Firstly, Pacific peoples were significantly under-represented in the NZES, comprising 1.4 per cent of the merged sample of 17,876 respondents. The small size of this sub-sample limits the generalisability of the findings to the wider Pacific population. Additionally, due to the way in which ethnicity information was collected in the NZES (see Section 3.3), it is unknown whether the Pacific sub-sample was ethnically representative; however, it *is* known that the Pacific sub-sample was older, more female, more educated, more religious, and had a higher proportion in white-collar employment, compared to the total Pacific population (Statistics New Zealand, 2012a). As discussed in Section 8.2, non-voters were also under-represented in the merged sample. The findings in this thesis should therefore be interpreted in light of the presence of this sampling bias.

⁵² Australia, Canada, and the USA did not participate in the ICCS.

Secondly, short-term influences on electoral behaviour, which mainly fall under the rational choice approach to voting and include such factors as issues, party leaders, and campaign effects, were not explored in this thesis due to their variability from election to election which presented significant methodological difficulties to their incorporation into the merged dataset. Such influences are of considerable importance to individual voting decisions. Their absence from certain multivariate analyses (particularly those in Chapter Seven) may have produced an ‘omitted variable bias’, in which an important causal variable is absent from the model and the model consequently over- or under-estimates the effects of other factors. Had these variables been included in these models, the amount of variation in the DV that was explained may have increased.

Thirdly, other variables that *were* merged were subsequently excluded from multivariate analysis due to a large number of missing responses. This was particularly the case for personal and household income, both of which attracted a significant amount of non-response (mostly objections to answering or ‘don’t know’) and led to their omission from all logistic regression analyses. Plainly, large numbers of missing responses also occurred where a question had not been asked at one wave (but asked at the other five). Still other variables could not be merged at all. For example, all NZES surveys have included the question “*In what country were you born?*” For reasons outlined in Section 8.4, this variable is of relevance to Pacific peoples’ political engagement. However, it could not be merged due to the NZES’s use of an unknown coding frame at two waves; that is, the numbered responses (values) to this question in the 1996 and 2002 datasets had no corresponding country names (value labels), so they could not be merged with the other waves and hence the question was left out of my merged dataset.

Fourthly, as with much survey research based on self-report, respondents’ answers were likely subject to recall and social desirability biases. Respondents may simply have forgotten whether they had engaged in a particular form of political participation, for example. Or to some questions they may have given answers that they perceived as being more socially

acceptable; for example, claiming to be interested in politics when they were in fact not at all interested. Nevertheless, social desirability bias may have been reduced given that all surveys were answered anonymously.

Fifthly, due to the need to limit the scope of this thesis, many interesting and potentially revealing avenues of research or analysis could not be pursued. For example, my merged dataset contained a large number of variables that were not explored in this thesis. Most of these unexplored variables derived from questions which solicited political opinions, such as views on immigration, the welfare state, levels of taxation, government ownership and privatisation, the electoral system, whether or not New Zealand should become a republic, and many other social issues. These variables were not investigated for the obvious reason that this thesis did not examine political opinions on social issues. Nevertheless, such opinions are undoubtedly relevant to partisanship and voting choices, and perhaps to political participation. Also uncharted were changes in electoral behaviour and political engagement over time. For example, it may have been instructive to compare levels of support for Labour amongst Pacific peoples before and after the passing into law of socially liberal policies (the 'anti-smacking', 'civil union', and prostitution reform legislation) under the fifth Labour Government. Or to investigate whether there have been improvements or reductions in Pacific peoples' political efficacy over time. Unfortunately the constraints of space simply did not permit such inquiries.

8.6 Conclusions

A high level of voting and political engagement among citizens is widely perceived to be an indicator of a healthy democracy because it gives legitimacy to the elected government, affirms a commitment to principles of democracy, and arguably produces better decisions. It also has numerous pro-social spin-offs, such as the cultivation of community values of sympathy, solidarity, and tolerance. However such engagement needs to be socially and demographically

unbiased. In New Zealand, equitable engagement by Pacific peoples is important because “the extent of an ethnic minority group’s political participation is a reflection of how democratic New Zealand truly is” (Park, 2010, p. 549). If a significant proportion of Pacific peoples do not participate, they are deprived of their fair share of political power and political élites may be less inclined to take account of their interests, and could even neglect these interests altogether without suffering adverse reactions at the polls (Mulgan & Aimer, 2004). Biased representation gives groups with higher turnout a disproportionate influence on the composition of government, the issues that reach the political agenda, and ultimately on policy outcomes.

Estimates are that Pacific peoples may grow to around 12 per cent of New Zealand’s population by 2051, by which time one in five New Zealand children will be of Pacific descent (L. Cook, Didham, & Khawaja, 2001; Statistics New Zealand, 2002). They will also make up a growing proportion of the workforce that will be supporting a growing older population. Given this increasing electoral significance, their younger age structure, and their over-representation among non-voters, it is important that efforts be made now to increase the political engagement of Pacific peoples before habits of non-voting and civic apathy become established and pervasive behaviours, with serious implications for future trends in turnout. This thesis has shown that many Pacific peoples are currently deprived of the cognitive resources they need to participate effectively in political life. Pacific peoples will be more likely to vote and engage in politics if they feel knowledgeable about politics and have confidence in their ability to participate. There is much evidence that public investment in school-based civics instruction generates competent democratic citizens. Such an investment is of fundamental importance to Pacific peoples’ political engagement and the legitimacy of New Zealand’s democracy.

APPENDIX 1: Table 3.4 Recoding of Demographic and Socio-Economic Variables in NZES Surveys 1996-2011

Variable	Question wording	Recoded response category	Code	Original response option	Waves
Education	<i>Which of the following indicates your highest educational qualification?</i>	Primary	1	<i>Incomplete primary education/none</i>	All
				<i>Primary School completed</i>	
		Secondary	2	<i>Secondary education without UE or 6th form certificate</i>	1996-2002
				<i>Secondary education to School Certificate or National Certificate</i>	2005-2011
				<i>Complete Secondary education</i>	1996-2002
		Tertiary	3	<i>UE, Bursary, Higher School or Higher Leaving Certificate</i>	2005-2011
				<i>Nondegree professional, trade, or technical tertiary qualification</i>	All
		University degree	4	<i>Incomplete university degree</i>	1996, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2011
				<i>University degree</i>	1996, 1999, 2011
Housing tenure	<i>Do you -</i>	Own freehold	1	<i>Own your house or flat mortgage free</i>	All
				<i>Own your house or flat with a mortgage</i>	
		Rent or board	3	<i>Rent your house privately as a family</i>	1996
				<i>Rent a state house/flat or one owned by a local authority</i>	
				<i>Rent a house/flat from Housing Corporation or local authority</i>	1999-2011
				<i>Board or live in a hotel or rest home</i>	1996
				<i>Board or live in a hotel, hostel, rest home, or temporary accommodation</i>	1999-2011
				<i>Rent your house with a group of individuals</i>	All
				<i>Live with your parents</i>	1996
				<i>Live at your parents or other family members home</i>	1999-2011

Variable	Question wording	Recoded response category	Code	Original response option	Waves
Religion	What is your religion, if you have one?	None	0	No religion	All
		Traditional Christian	1	Anglican	
				Presbyterian	
				Catholic	
				Methodist	
				Baptist	
		Non-traditional Christian	2	Latter Day Saints	1999-2011
				Ratana	
				Independent-Fundamentalist Church	1996-2002
				Independent-Fundamentalist-Pentecostal Church	2005-2011
		Non-Christian	3	Other Christian (Please specify)	All
				Non-Christian (Please specify)	
Sector of employment	Who do you now work for or, if you are not working now, who did you work for in your last job in paid employment?	Self-employed	1	I am/was self-employed	All
		Private	2	I am/was paid a wage or salary by a private company or business	
		Public	3	Central or local government RHA, CRI, Public Educational/Research Institution State owned enterprise, other public agency	1996
				I am/was paid a wage or salary by a State or Public agency or enterprise, central or local	1999-2011
		Mixed/Non-profit	4	Mixed public/private Non-profit/community organisation	1996
				I am/was paid a wage or salary by a mixed public/private, or non-profit organisation	1999-2011
		Never worked	5	Never been in paid employment	All
		[Missing]	9	Don't know	

Variable	Question wording	Recoded response category	Code	Original response option	Waves
Occupation	What kind of paid work do you do, or did you do in your last paid job? Remember, if you are retired or not working for pay now, please describe your last regular paid job.	Managers, professionals, technicians	1	<u>ISCO-88 major groups (first digit code)</u> Legislators, senior officials and managers (1) Professionals (2) Technicians and associate professionals (3)	All
		Clerical, service, sales	2	Clerks (4) Service workers and shop and market sales workers (5)	
		Manual	3	Skilled agricultural and fishery workers (6) Craft and related trades workers (7) Plant and machine operators and assemblers (8) Elementary occupations (9) Armed forces (0)	
Personal and household income	What was your personal income before tax between 1 April [year prior to survey] and 31 March [year of survey]? What about the total income before tax of all members of your household in the same year?	Low	1	No income Lowest four income brackets Lowest three income brackets	All 1996 1999-2011
		Middle	2	Fourth and fifth income brackets	All
		High	3	Sixth and seventh (the two highest) income brackets	
		[Missing]	9	Don't know	

APPENDIX 2: Table 7.1 and Table 7.2

Appendix Table 7.1 Binary Logistic Regression Predicting National Partisanship as a Function of Socio-Economic and Demographic Variables^{a,b}

Variable	Category	B	S.E.	Wald χ^2	p	OR	95% CI	
							LL	UL
Gender	Female					1.00		
	Male	0.09	0.05	3.22	0.073	1.09	0.99	1.21
Age	18-24			37.61	<0.001	1.00		
	25-34	-0.22	0.15	2.15	0.143	0.80	0.60	1.08
	35-44	-0.26	0.15	3.05	0.081	0.77	0.57	1.03
	45-54	-0.50	0.15	10.52	0.001	0.61	0.45	0.82
	55-64	-0.35	0.16	4.99	0.025	0.70	0.52	0.96
	65+	-0.05	0.17	0.08	0.782	0.96	0.69	1.32
Education	Primary			25.42	<0.001	1.00		
	Secondary	0.55	0.12	21.07	<0.001	1.74	1.37	2.20
	Tertiary	0.63	0.13	24.51	<0.001	1.88	1.46	2.41
	University degree	0.52	0.13	15.90	<0.001	1.68	1.30	2.17
Sector of employment	Self-employed			193.59	<0.001	1.00		
	Private	-0.47	0.06	61.23	<0.001	0.62	0.56	0.70
	Public	-0.98	0.07	178.23	<0.001	0.38	0.33	0.43
	Mixed/Non-profit	-0.90	0.12	61.06	<0.001	0.41	0.32	0.51
	Never worked	0.17	0.50	0.11	0.736	1.19	0.44	3.18
Occupation	Managers, profs.			40.26	<0.001	1.00		
	Clerical, service, sales	-0.12	0.06	3.65	0.056	0.89	0.78	1.00
	Manual	-0.40	0.06	40.17	<0.001	0.67	0.59	0.76
Housing tenure	Own freehold			101.44	<0.001	1.00		
	Own mortgaged	-0.11	0.06	3.19	0.074	0.90	0.80	1.01
	Rent or board	-0.90	0.09	94.25	<0.001	0.41	0.34	0.49
Religion	None			193.50	<0.001	1.00		
	Trad. Christian	0.72	0.06	140.61	<0.001	2.05	1.82	2.31
	Non-trad. Christian	-0.02	0.11	0.03	0.855	0.98	0.80	1.21
	Non-Christian	-0.18	0.17	1.11	0.291	0.84	0.61	1.16
Pacific ethnic status	Non-Pacific					1.00		
	Pacific	-2.43	0.72	11.48	0.001	0.09	0.02	0.36
Household receives	No					1.00		

benefit	Yes	-0.43	0.06	54.58	<0.001	0.65	0.58	0.73
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a. The method was forced entry.

b. Nagelkerke $R^2=0.110$; Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test gave $\chi^2 (8, N=11,216) = 11.02, p=0.200$.

Appendix Table 7.2 Binary Logistic Regression Predicting National Party Vote as a Function of Partisanship and Socio-Economic and Demographic Variables^{a,b}

Variable	Category	B	S.E.	Wald χ^2	p	OR	95% CI	
							LL	UL
Partisanship	None			2269.88	<0.001	1.00		
	Labour	-2.53	0.13	367.25	<0.001	0.08	0.06	0.10
	National	2.15	0.06	1312.98	<0.001	8.62	7.68	9.69
	Other party	-1.68	0.13	165.92	<0.001	0.19	0.14	0.24
Gender	Female							
	Male	-0.19	0.06	11.11	0.001	0.83	0.74	0.92
Age	18-24			37.28	<0.001	1.00		
	25-34	-0.40	0.15	7.60	0.006	0.67	0.50	0.89
	35-44	-0.67	0.15	19.95	<0.001	0.51	0.38	0.69
	45-54	-0.68	0.15	19.70	<0.001	0.51	0.37	0.68
	55-64	-0.49	0.16	9.32	0.002	0.61	0.45	0.84
	65+	-0.30	0.17	3.08	0.079	0.74	0.53	1.04
Education	Primary			4.33	0.228	1.00		
	Secondary	0.13	0.14	0.92	0.338	1.14	0.87	1.48
	Tertiary	0.14	0.14	0.93	0.336	1.15	0.87	1.52
	University degree	0.01	0.15	0.00	0.970	1.01	0.76	1.34
Sector of employment	Self-employed			27.08	<0.001	1.00		
	Private	-0.07	0.07	1.05	0.306	0.93	0.81	1.07
	Public	-0.35	0.09	17.07	<0.001	0.70	0.60	0.83
	Mixed/Non-profit	-0.44	0.13	11.24	0.001	0.64	0.50	0.83
	Never worked	-0.46	0.66	0.49	0.482	0.63	0.17	2.28
Occupation	Managers, professionals			7.28	0.026	1.00		
	Clerical, service, sales	-0.19	0.07	6.94	0.008	0.83	0.72	0.95
	Manual	-0.11	0.07	2.21	0.137	0.90	0.78	1.03
Housing tenure	Own freehold			35.41	<0.001	1.00		
	Own mortgaged	0.11	0.07	2.54	0.111	1.12	0.97	1.28
	Rent or board	-0.42	0.10	17.79	<0.001	0.66	0.54	0.80
Religion	None			37.72	<0.001	1.00		
	Trad. Christian	0.14	0.07	4.70	0.030	1.15	1.01	1.31
	Non-trad. Christian	-0.31	0.11	7.87	0.005	0.73	0.59	0.91
	Non-Christian	-0.69	0.19	13.30	<0.001	0.50	0.35	0.73
Pacific ethnic status	Non-Pacific					1.00		
	Pacific	-0.55	0.43	1.63	0.201	0.58	0.25	1.34
Household receives	No					1.00		

benefit	Yes	-0.38	0.07	33.78	<0.001	0.68	0.60	0.78
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a. The method was forced entry.

b. Nagelkerke $R^2=0.470$; Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test gave $\chi^2 (8, N=11,002) = 16.42, p=0.037$.

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