

https://dspace.org/

The effective of redistricting on South Africa's electocal process: the case of Gauteng

Agrizzi, Giancarlo

2017

https://hdl.handle.net/10539/27038

Agrizzi, Giancarlo (2017) The effects of redistricting on South Africa's electoral processes: the case of Gauteng, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, https://hdl.handle.net/10539/27038

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to analyse the effects of redistricting on the South African electoral processes, placing specific focus on the region of Gauteng and the three metropolitan municipalities located within it. While significant research on South Africa's electoral system has been conducted, not much has been done with regards to the demarcation process in South Africa. Elections have been suggested to form a fundamental part of any democratic system, which coincides with the idea that institutional integrity ensures a strong democracy. In the context of constituency-based systems, many countries have displayed elements of using the process of redistricting to gain political advantage over another party. The act of redistricting manipulation was later referred to as gerrymandering, which is the manipulation of district lines by one political party to gain an advantage over another.

The original contribution of this thesis lies primarily in its investigation into the effects of redistricting on electoral processes, which make use of a multiple case study research design to identify redistricting and demarcation tools and techniques aimed at resolving the past inequalities and ensuring effective elections. This approach has been adopted because multiple cases allow for a wide-range of perspectives on the study to be gathered and establishes a platform for comprehensive generalisations. Repeated evidence from multiple case studies assists in better supporting these generalised findings. Complementary to the multiple case study approach, this thesis makes use of qualitative data obtained from the Independent Electoral Commission and Municipal Demarcations Board.

This thesis makes two fundamental arguments regarding the effects of redistricting on South Africa's electoral processes. Firstly, that the changes to wards through the process of redistricting in the South African case has on occasion lead to a change in the electoral outcomes because the significance of voting districts can be altered through the changing of their location. Secondly, having considered external factors such as a change in voting patterns and voter turnout and found no empirical reasons for above mentioned experiences it would seem necessary for further research to be conducted which could highlight the possibility of gerrymandering, given that it is clear that redistricting processes do effect the electoral processes within South Africa.